

JUNE 2006



APPROVED AND ADOPTED
DAMASCUS MASTER PLAN

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION



2006 APPROVED AND ADOPTED DAMASCUS MASTER PLAN

A comprehensive amendment to the Damascus Master Plan, 1982; the 1993 Amendment to the Damascus Master Plan; the Functional Master Plan for the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space, 1980; The General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District within Montgomery and Prince George's Counties; the Countywide Park Trails Plan; the Master Plan of Highways within Montgomery County; and the 1993 Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed.

Prepared by:

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning
8787 Georgia Avenue
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Approved by:

THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL

May 25, 2006

Adopted by:

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

June 21, 2006

ABSTRACT

TITLE: Approved and Adopted Damascus Master Plan

AUTHOR: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

SUBJECT: Comprehensive amendment to the Damascus Master Plan, 1982

DATE: June 2006

PLANNING AGENCY: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
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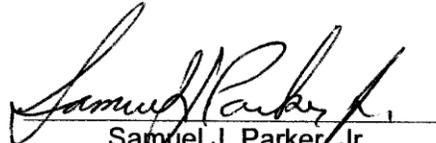
ABSTRACT: This Master Plan is a comprehensive AMEMDMENT of land use, housing, zoning, transportation, environmental resources, and community facilities in the planning area.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL AND ADOPTION

This Comprehensive Amendment to the Approved and Adopted Damascus Master Plan, 1982, and the 1993 Amendment to the Damascus Master Plan; the General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, as amended; the Countywide Park Trails Plan; the Master Plan of Highways within Montgomery County, as amended; and the 1993 Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed, has been approved by the Montgomery County Council, sitting as the District Council, by Resolution No. 15-1485 on May 25, 2006, and has been adopted by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission by Resolution No. 06-11 after duly advertised public hearings pursuant to Article 28 of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

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The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission is a bi-county 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:

1. The preparation, adoption, and, from time to time, amendment or extension of The General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties;
2. The acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of a public park system; and
3. 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.

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NOTICE TO READERS

This area Master Plan, after approval by the County Council and adoption by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, constitutes an amendment to the General Plan for Montgomery County. It provides a set of comprehensive recommendations and guidelines for the use of publicly and privately owned land within its plan area. This Master Plan provides a vision of future development that responds to the unique character of the local community within the context of a countywide perspective. Together with relevant countywide functional master plans, this master plan should be referred to by public officials and private individuals when decisions are made that affect the use of land within the Plan's boundaries.

Master plans generally look ahead 20 years from the date of adoption, although they should be updated and revised every ten to fifteen years. Maintaining relevance is important, as the circumstances at the time of plan adoption will change, and specific elements of any master plan will become less relevant as time passes.

THE MASTER PLAN PROCESS

STAFF DRAFT PLAN — This document is prepared by the Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning for presentation to the Montgomery County Planning Board. The Planning Board reviews the Staff Draft Plan, makes preliminary changes as appropriate, and approves the Plan for public hearing. When the Planning Board's changes are made, the document becomes the Public Hearing (Preliminary) Draft Plan.

PUBLIC HEARING (PRELIMINARY) DRAFT PLAN — This document is a formal proposal to amend an adopted master plan or sector plan. Its recommendations are not necessarily those of the Planning Board; it is prepared for the purpose of receiving public hearing testimony. The Planning Board holds a public hearing and receives testimony on the Draft Plan. After the public hearing record is closed, the Planning Board holds public worksessions to review the testimony and to revise the Public Hearing (Preliminary) Draft Plan as appropriate. When the Planning Board's changes are made, the document becomes the Planning Board (Final) Draft Plan.

PLANNING BOARD (FINAL) DRAFT PLAN — This document is the Planning Board's recommended Plan and it reflects the revisions made by the Board in its worksessions on the Public Hearing (Preliminary) Draft Plan. The Regional District Act requires the Planning Board to transmit the Master Plan directly to the County Council with copies to the County Executive. The Regional District Act then requires the County Executive, within sixty days, to prepare and transmit a fiscal impact analysis of the Planning Board (Final) Draft Plan to the County Council. The County Executive may also forward to the County Council other comments and recommendations regarding the Planning Board (Final) Draft Plan within the sixty-day period.

After receiving the Executive's fiscal impact analysis and comments, the County Council may hold a public hearing to receive public testimony on the Master Plan. After the record of this public hearing is closed, the Council's Planning, Housing, and Economic Development (PHED) Committee holds public worksessions to review the testimony and then makes recommendations to the County Council. The Council holds its own worksessions, then adopts a resolution approving the Planning Board (Final) Draft Plan, as revised.

ADOPTED PLAN — The Master Plan approved by the County Council is forwarded to The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission for adoption. Once adopted by the Commission, the Plan officially amends the various master or sector plans cited in the Commission's adoption resolution.

THE DAMASCUS MASTER PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCES

Community participation in the Damascus Master Plan was achieved through a series of Task Forces that addressed various elements. Membership on all of these Task Forces was open to any interested participant. Each Task Force held two to four meetings. Over 100 participants, many participating in multiple Task Forces, cumulatively comprised the Master Plan Review Committee. The Task Force groups included:

	<u>Participants</u>
▪ Town Center Charrette	58
▪ Land Use, Housing, and Historic Preservation Task Force	56
▪ Environment Task Force	33
▪ Transportation Task Force	53
▪ Parks, Trails, Open Space, and Community Facilities Task Force	44

This Master Plan specifically recognizes the contributions and commitment of David Bernard, Wayne and Pamela Bussard, Michael Cohn, Chris and Nancy Doyle, Bruce Hall, Katie Junghans, Dan King, Jane King, Mary King, Douglas King, Bernard and Melanie Lauer, Charles Limparis, George and Alice Moy, Sara and Joseph Rice, J.R. Smart, Joan Snow, John and Cindy Snow, Frank Stodolsky, James Varley, Debbie Weinman, Mary White, and especially Gary Richard (who attended the most meetings), all of whom participated in 4 or 5 Task Forces.

The listing or names of members of the Master Plan Review Committee (MPR) and Task Forces does not indicate approval or disapproval of this document by any MPR Committee or individual Task Force member. The Master Plan Review Committee and Task Forces provided recommendations regarding the problems, needs, and views of individuals, groups or areas. These views were considered by the staff in its deliberations regarding the Master Plan.

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INTRODUCTION

This Master Plan amends the General Plan...on Wedges and Corridors. This Master Plan addresses the need to:

- Assess the impact of construction since the 1982 Damascus Master Plan was completed.
- Provide recommendations to revitalize the Town Center as a compact mixed-use center of locally oriented commercial activity and additional housing opportunities.
- Build a strong transportation network by layering pedestrian access, bicycle connections, and regional trails.
- Add moderate additional residential opportunities on the perimeter of the Town Center, primarily through the creation of additional TDR receiving sites.
- Reflect environmental protections in the Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed and protect other environmentally sensitive areas.

COMMUNITY VISION

Damascus is a small town surrounded by the agricultural and rural open spaces of the County's Agricultural Reserve. It is a town that offers community oriented commercial uses, a variety of housing types, a mix of uses in the Town Center, and a Town Center surrounded by single-family residential neighborhoods. The protected area of agricultural and rural open spaces buffers Damascus from the more intense growth patterns in adjoining master plan areas and adjoining counties. The Plan provides a moderate amount of planned growth in the area, oriented primarily in and adjoining the Town Center. The Master Plan establishes the following goals for the Damascus community:

- Establish a Town Center identifiable as the community's heart by creating a moderate intensity mix of uses in the Town Center, emphasizing design and scale over separation of uses, and increasing housing opportunities.
- Fulfill the vision of Damascus as a community with a mixed-use center, connected with its residential neighborhoods, and surrounded by rural open space.
- Create livable neighborhoods clustered near the Town Center, cluster development to provide a stronger community edge, use transferable development rights (TDRs) to provide additional growth potential, and provide a range of housing types and lot sizes within neighborhoods.
- Provide a variety of housing options including affordable housing and housing opportunities for seniors suitable to the small town character of Damascus.

- Provide greater connectivity within, to, and around the town by increasing pedestrian and bicycling connections to the Town Center and pedestrian and bicycling opportunities along all major roadways and at other appropriate locations, emphasizing multi-use aspects of all roadways in planning for safety and access, and evaluating the necessity for alternate routing for through commuter traffic.
- Improve the efficiency of the roadway network, provide road improvements, expand the pedestrian and bicycle path networks, and improve the potential for intercepting commuters through expanded transit options.
- Protect and enhance the local and surrounding environment by clustering new development to achieve greater overall environmental protection, protecting stream valleys, steep slopes and forest resources, and reducing land use density in the Patuxent Watershed beyond immediate proximity to the Town Center to meet the goals of the Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed.
- Support agriculture and rural open space, continue the use of the Rural Density Transfer Zone, create zoning appropriate for rural crossroad communities, and support agricultural uses on rural land.
- Maintain the quality and integrity of the outstanding natural systems within the Damascus Master Plan area, enhance water quality in the Patuxent River Watershed, and mitigate the impacts of future development.
- Provide a network of local and countywide parks that offer recreational activities, support an interconnected trail system, protect important natural features, and create attractive settings for cultural and historic resources. Provide sufficient public facilities to support the neighborhoods of Damascus, and linkages to access local facilities and institutions safely and efficiently.
- Protect the important historic and archeological resources in the area.

PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

A primary goal of this Master Plan is to enhance the identity of central Damascus as the heart of the community. Major recommendations of this Plan include:

Land Use and Zoning

This Plan supports a moderate level of residential growth, strengthening the potential for multifamily residential and mixed-use development in the Town Center. Mixed-use and residential developments are encouraged in the Town Center, and cluster development is preferred in the Transition Areas immediately beyond the Town Center. In addition, this Plan supports the continuing viability of major institutional uses, such as churches and schools that are an intrinsic part of the character of Damascus.



- **Town Center** – Mixed-use zoning is recommended. The zoning will emphasize proportion, design, and an architectural context of structures rather than separation of uses. Commercial uses concentrated along Main Street and at major downtown intersections will create opportunities for residential development that will support retail and service businesses in the core. Added residential densities are achieved mainly through the use of transferable development rights. Guidelines for future development and redevelopment are designed to create an identity for Main Street that will improve mobility and connectivity, and will enhance Community Open Space.
- **Transition Areas** – Cluster designs are encouraged on properties immediately accessible to the Town Center. These properties are suitable for additional growth and will establish a strong edge between the town and rural areas beyond. Most growth potential is tied to receiving areas for transferable development rights. The Plan recommends including the potential to transfer development from the rural area to the Rural Neighborhood Cluster (RNC) Zone.
- **Rural Area** – The Plan supports the existing extent of the Rural Density Transfer (RDT) Zone with adjustments for rural village centers. Emerging agricultural methods and practices, and agriculturally related businesses are endorsed as the most efficient, effective, and economical means to maintain a viable agricultural economy and protect the Agricultural Reserve. The Plan recommends the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone for three rural villages. This zone is designed to protect and maintain their existing scale of development through appropriate types of uses and limited levels of intensity. Guidelines are provided for development in the RDT Zone for protection of rural vistas and to guide subdivision design.

Public Sewer Service

For community design and environmental protection goals, this Plan recommends community sewer service for designated properties, including all of the RNC/TDR Zone properties if they are developed using the cluster method. A comprehensive study of designated neighborhoods for alternative ways to address failing septic systems is also recommended.

Housing

To support a range of housing options, this Plan recommends providing moderate-density development within the Town Center, including senior housing opportunities. Beyond the Town Center, the small town character of Damascus will be maintained through limited additional density, and the use of small-lot clustered development that will create a distinct edge between urban and rural areas.

Transportation

To improve pedestrian and bicycle access, as well as vehicle movement, this Plan recommends establishing a multi-functional transportation network through methods that include: use of context-based street design techniques, retaining the existing two-lane road network outside the Town Center, creating a trigger to evaluate the need for a bypass after the completion of Woodfield Road Extended, augmenting pedestrian and bikeway access, and increasing transit options.



Environment

To support goals for protection of environmental resources, this Plan recommends protecting existing forest corridors by encouraging reforestation of stream valleys and protecting high priority forest stands. Additional goals support and encourage development techniques that will minimize forest fragmentation, connect existing forest stands, and promote the use of forest banking.



Parks, Trails and Open Space

The Park system within this Planning Area will be augmented by developing or improving existing facilities at: Seneca Springs Local Park, Woodfield Local Park, Damascus Recreational Park, and completing the Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park Trail to a terminus in the Town Center. Park acquisition is recommended for properties within the Little Bennett Creek Watershed Headwaters and the stream valley of the Western Tributary of Seneca Creek. The Countywide Park Trails Plan will be amended to add an east-west natural surface trail corridor to link the Seneca Trail to the west to the Little Bennett Trail system, along Valley Park Drive with access to Magruder Branch Trail, and special treatment at the Ridge Road intersection to ensure safety. Additionally, specific properties are recommended for Legacy Open Space protection as natural resource sites through parkland acquisition (in the Little Bennett watershed) or easements (in the Bennett Creek Headwaters and Upper Patuxent River Forest Area).

DESCRIPTION OF MASTER PLAN AREA

Changes to the Planning Area Boundaries

The boundaries of the Damascus Master Plan differ from the Plan boundaries of the 1982 Master Plan and the 1993 Amendment. Certain areas west of Woodfield Road have been deleted from the Master Plan area, and certain areas east of Woodfield Road have been added to the Master Plan area. The Master Plan boundaries now duplicate the boundaries of traffic zones. Portions of Planning Areas #10 and #14 were removed from the Master Plan area. These locations are primarily in the Rural Density Transfer Zone, and will remain subject to the recommendations of the 1982 Damascus Master Plan.

Regional, County, and Planning Area Context

Damascus anchors the northwest tip of Montgomery County. It is surrounded by agricultural and rural open space. The town is situated on high ground that divides four watersheds. Major roads are built on the ridgelines.

Within Montgomery County, Damascus adjoins the Clarksburg, Olney, and the Agricultural and Rural Open Space Master Plan areas. Damascus has much lower development potential than Clarksburg or Olney due to limited sewer access and its location in the heart of the Agricultural Reserve removed from major job centers and transit opportunities. Beyond Montgomery County, the Master Plan area abuts Frederick, Howard, and Carroll counties. Damascus serves as a market hub for this rural area, providing service and specialty retail for its residents that complement and supplement the larger commercial areas in Clarksburg to the south and Mt. Airy to the north.

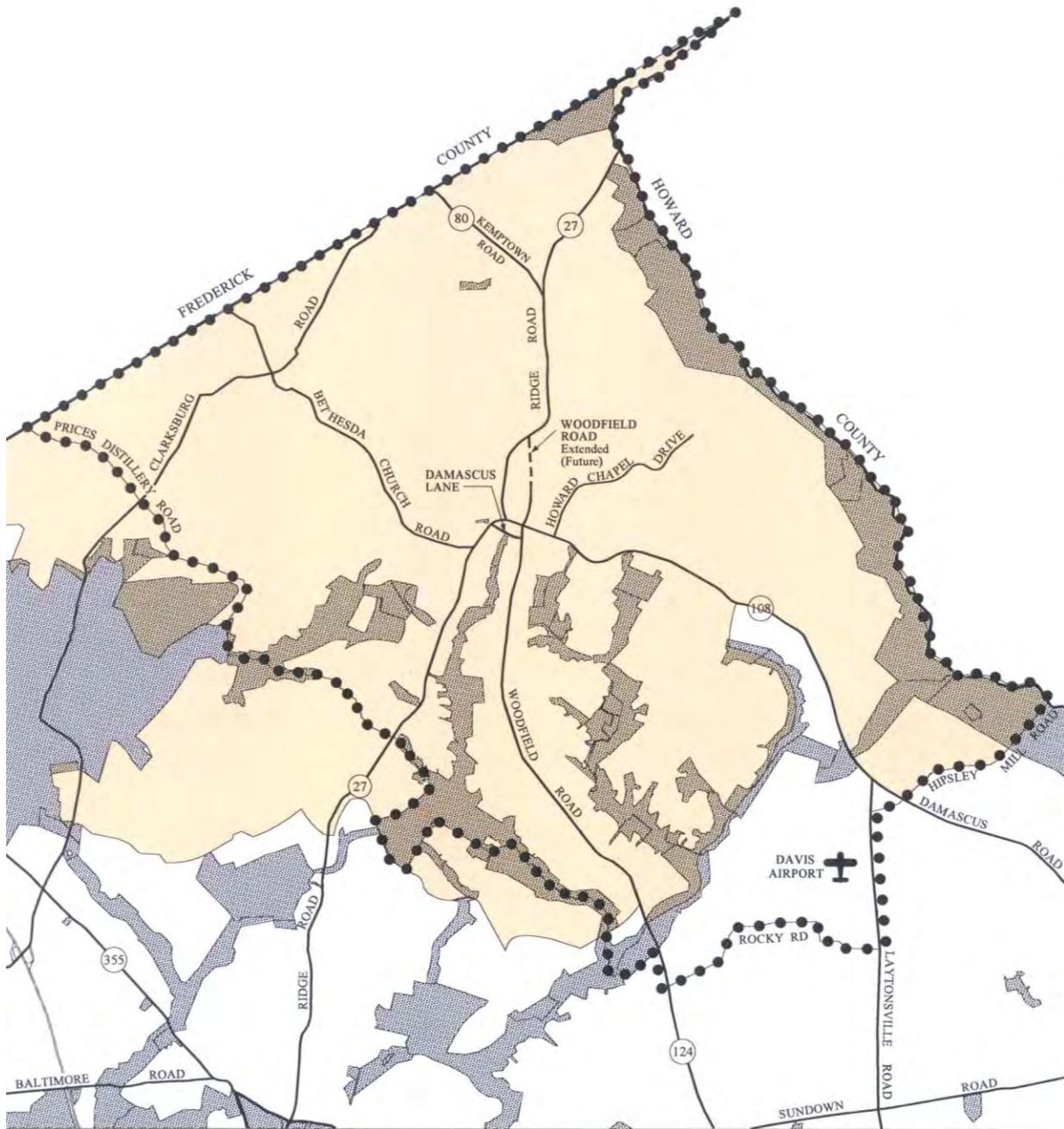
Damascus provides a unique contrast to the extensive development in nearby Clarksburg and adjoining counties. Maintaining this unique difference is a paramount goal of this Master Plan. Extensive suburban growth in the Mt. Airy area and job growth along the I-270 Corridor contribute extensively to commuter traffic congestion in Damascus. Additional growth beyond Montgomery County is anticipated, and will increase through traffic in Damascus, a primary conduit for commuters to jobs in Montgomery County and the District of Columbia.

Planning in Adjoining Counties

Because the Damascus Master Plan area is directly impacted by growth in three adjoining counties, this Plan explored current master plans in those counties.

- **Frederick County** – The Urbana Region of Frederick County abuts the western County line and the Master Plan boundary. The population in this area is expected to significantly increase by 2010. In 2002, Frederick County began a new master plan process for the region. The draft plan recommends generally rural neighborhoods, conservation areas, and agricultural areas adjacent to the Damascus Master Plan area.
- **Howard County** – The portion of Howard County that lies northeast of the Master Plan area is planned for low-density residential development.
- **Carroll County** – The northern tip of the Damascus Master Plan area adjoins the Carroll County border. This area is designated as a Community Planning Area in the Carroll County Master Plan - one of five where the majority of residential, commercial and industrial development should be concentrated. A significant amount of new residential growth is anticipated. Mt. Airy provides substantial commercial opportunities in this area.

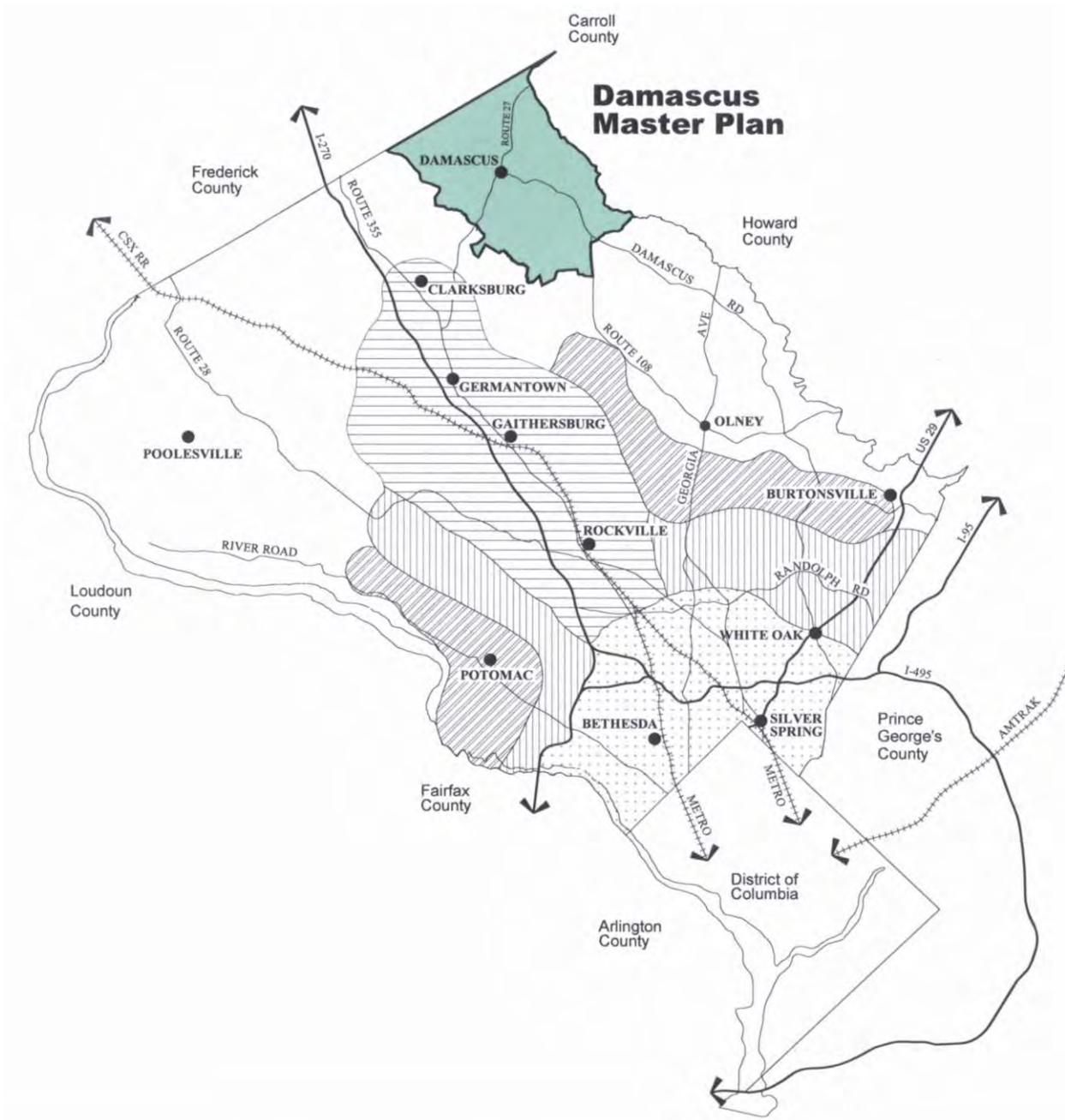
Previous and Current Master Plan Boundaries



- Current Master Plan Area Boundary
- Previous Master Plan Area Boundary
- Existing and Proposed Parkland



Wedges and Corridors



-  Urban Ring
-  I-270 Corridor
-  Suburban Communities
-  Residential Wedge
-  Agricultural Wedge



MASTER PLAN FRAMEWORK

Existing Land Use

- **Town Center** - The Town Center of Damascus contains commercial and light industrial uses along Main Street and in two small shopping centers along main entry roads and along Main Street. Some multifamily housing is also located in the Town Center.
- **Transition Areas** - Adjoining the Town Center land use is primarily residential and institutional along the major highway corridors (Ridge Road and Woodfield Road), and within the Magruder Branch Valley. This pattern reflects historic development patterns and the availability of public water and sewer. Beyond the core, development becomes less intense and older residential areas at one and two-acre densities are interspersed with open land and some agricultural uses.
- **Rural Areas** - Open space and agricultural uses predominate in the Rural areas, interspersed with some older subdivisions on smaller lots and a few older villages including Lewisdale, Browningsville, Purdum, and Etchison.

Demographic Characteristics Summary

While the County census tracts do not fully match the Damascus Master Plan area, an evaluation of the generally proximate tracts provides a portrait of the Damascus area. The 2000 Census indicated that approximately 16,639 persons reside in the Damascus Master Plan area. Population growth was modest between 1990-2000, increasing approximately four percent compared to the County growth of 15.4 percent.

Damascus is more stable than the County in that 43.1 percent of its residents have lived at their current address for more than 10 years, compared to 34.5 percent for the County residents overall. The predominant housing type is single-family detached, and the number of persons per household (3.04) is larger than the County overall (2.66). This reflects the larger number of children in Damascus households.

Damascus residents are younger than the County overall, with a median age of 35.1, compared to 36.8 countywide. Residents younger than 19 years old comprise over one-third of the population, and the area has a relatively small 6.3 percent of seniors 65 years or older, compared to 11.2 percent countywide. Ethnically, Damascus is more homogenous than the County. Few residents are foreign born; most residents (90.7 percent) identify themselves as European-American, compared to 64.8 percent Countywide. Less than 10 percent of Damascus residents identify themselves as members of a racial minority, compared to over one-third of the County (35.2 percent).

Income levels in Damascus are somewhat lower than the County - a median household income of \$60,812 for Damascus and \$71,551 for the County. Overall, there is a stronger percentage of middle-income ranges, and lower percentages of very high and very low-incomes. The area gained 666 persons and 223 dwellings since the 1990 Census, with the more rural areas showing small losses in population and dwellings, and the central areas showing the largest gains. The areas with the largest growth include the central Magruder Branch Valley and the areas along Hawkins Creamery Road where there has been significant residential development over the decade.

Plans and Policies Affecting the Master Plan Area

The County and State plans and policies that influenced the recommendations of this Plan include:

- 1982 – The *Damascus Master Plan* confirmed the vision of Damascus as a town of low to moderate density residential neighborhoods surrounded by the Agricultural Reserve.
- 1992 – The *Maryland Planning Act* confirmed the need to limit housing growth in rural areas and reinforce the rural town centers.
- 1993 – The *Montgomery County General Plan Refinement* confirmed the rural community vision for Damascus. The General Plan...on Wedges and Corridors supports rural zoning to provide greenbelts that visually separate rural towns from the corridor cities.
- 1993 – The *Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed* increased environmental protection for the tributaries of the Patuxent River.
- 1993 – The *Damascus Master Plan Amendment* considered alternative through-traffic access around central Damascus.
- 1997 – *The Maryland Smart Growth Act* endorsed limiting housing growth in rural areas.
- 2002 – The *Montgomery County Transportation Policy Report* recommended locating the majority of new development in the County near transit stations or the I-270 Corridor, reducing future development in rural areas of the County.
- 2003 – The *Montgomery County Council Action Plan for Affordable Housing* encouraged using a range of housing types to meet the diverse needs for housing in the County.

LAND USE PLAN

GOAL: Fulfill the vision of Damascus as a community with a mixed-use center, connected with its residential neighborhoods, and surrounded by rural open space.

INTRODUCTION

Land use in Damascus is characterized by a core of greatest density in the commercial center surrounded by progressively lower density residential areas and rural land beyond. The physical focus of Damascus is its elevated location at the headwaters of four major watersheds. This geographic reality has strongly influenced the development patterns for this community.

Land Use Concept

The recommendations in this Plan maintain and strengthen existing land use patterns, enhancing their ability to evolve within the framework of the town vision as an attractive small town with an identifiable core and livable neighborhoods, surrounded by agricultural and rural open space. As noted in the 1993 Refinement to the Montgomery County General Plan:

It is essential that the small-town appearance and feel of the rural centers be maintained. Reinforcing historic elements of rural centers, confining growth in the centers, and exercising opportunities to cluster development, when appropriate, are initiatives that will help further define the Agricultural Wedge.

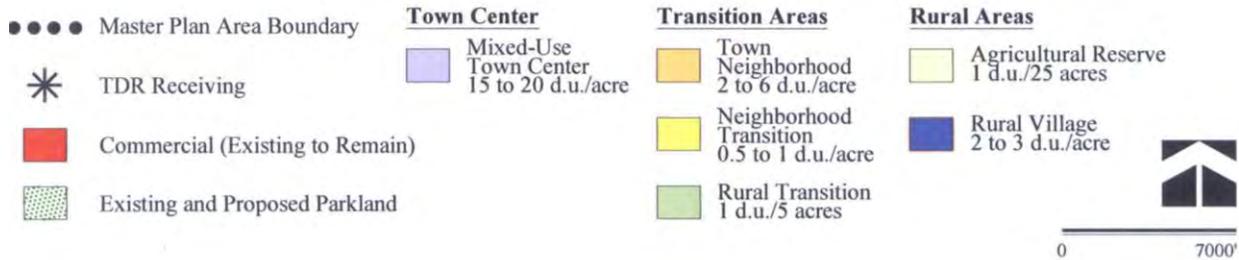
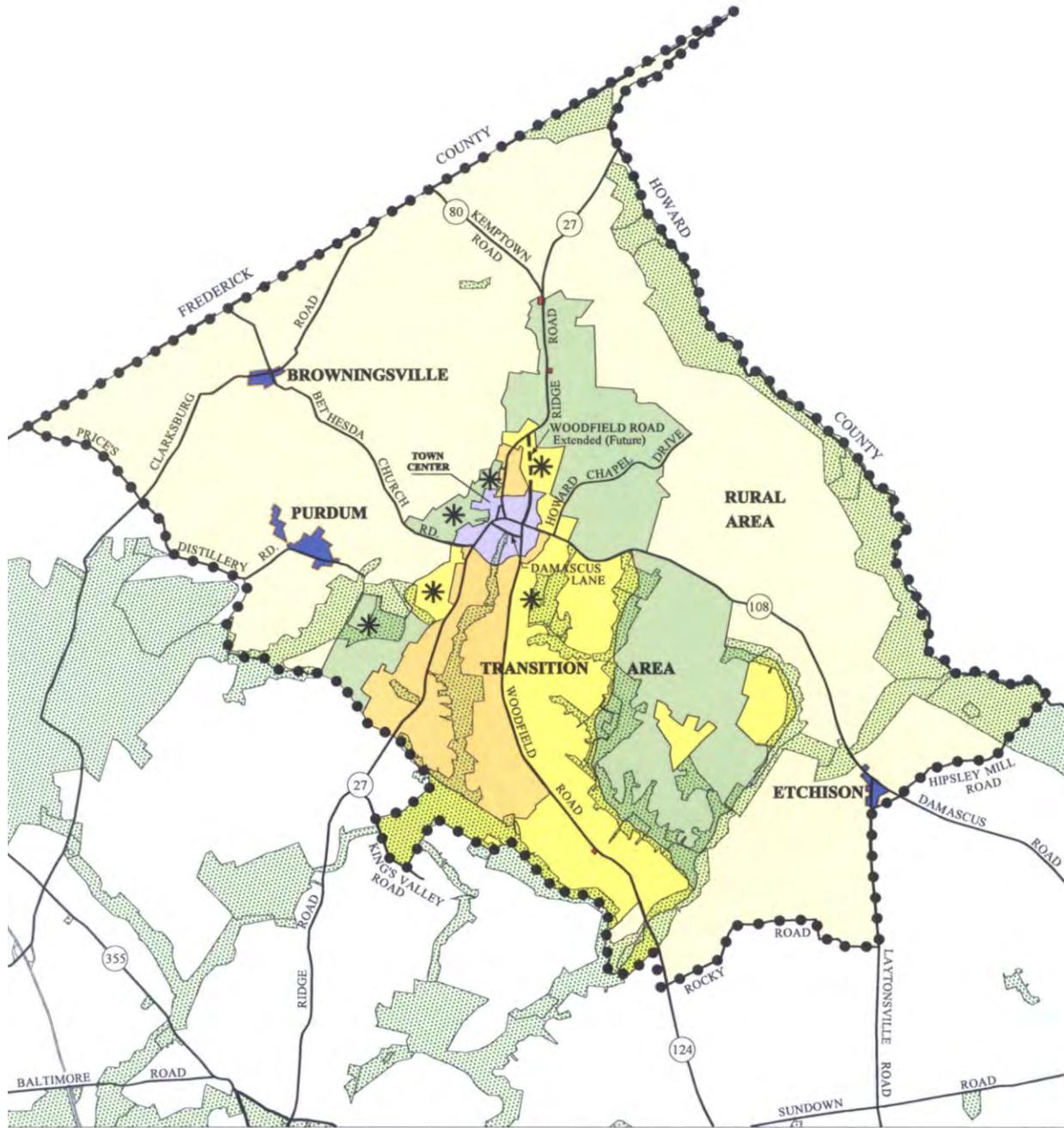
Other major land use issues include connectivity, expanding local retail and residential opportunities within and near the Town Center, enabling limited growth beyond the Town Center, and protecting the surrounding rural areas. Major goals of the Plan include:

- **Town Center** – Provide opportunities for mixed-use development that enhances the ability to support more locally based retail and to provide a greater variety of housing opportunities.
- **Transition Areas** – Encourage the use of clustering, provide a moderate increase in housing through the use of transfer of development rights, and protect the Patuxent River watershed beyond the vicinity of the Town Center. Topography and other environmental constraints, the long distance to jobs, and the limited transit opportunities make Damascus inappropriate for extensive additional development.
- **Rural Areas** – Protect existing rural crossroad villages, provide guidance for subdivision design in the Rural Density Transfer Zone, provide guideline for special exceptions that could impact rural vistas, and support the evolution toward sustainable agricultural practices.

Special Exception Guideline for Rural Vista Protection

To ensure careful consideration of the long rural vistas that are a unique aspect of this community, this Plan strongly encourages the protection of the rural vistas that are intrinsic to the character of the Damascus vicinity. This is a town set on a hill, and the long vistas outside the Town Center provide the most distinctive visual element for the community. Land uses that impede those vistas should be discouraged. Because of the uniqueness of the rural areas surrounding Damascus that are at the highest elevations in the County, this Plan recommends language in the Implementation Chapter to guide review of special exception uses proposed in the Transition and Rural Areas.

Proposed Land Use and Density



TOWN CENTER

The Damascus Town Center reflects the town patterns and design elements of traditional Maryland small towns. The “center of town” contains a variety of uses that primarily serve the residents of the community. While land uses in the center are predominantly commercial, a balanced mix of uses will create a more sustainable heart for the community.

Community Vision

The vision for the Damascus Town Center reflects a desire to strengthen the town’s sense of place as a true town core, not allowing further diffused suburban patterns. It reflects a desire for a sustainable future of compact development patterns and protection of the surrounding rural environment. It calls for renewing the town’s former retail vitality, and addressing quality of life issues for current and future residents. The community vision for the Town Center follows:

The community vision for the Damascus Town Center is a viable, walkable, human-scaled town easily identifiable as the heart of the surrounding community. The Town Center should reflect the compact urban forms of traditional Maryland rural towns and provide a vibrant quality of life for its residents. The Town Center should respect the legacy of the past and its agrarian context, while maintaining a framework for the market needs of future generations and anchoring the northern borders of Montgomery County.

Framework

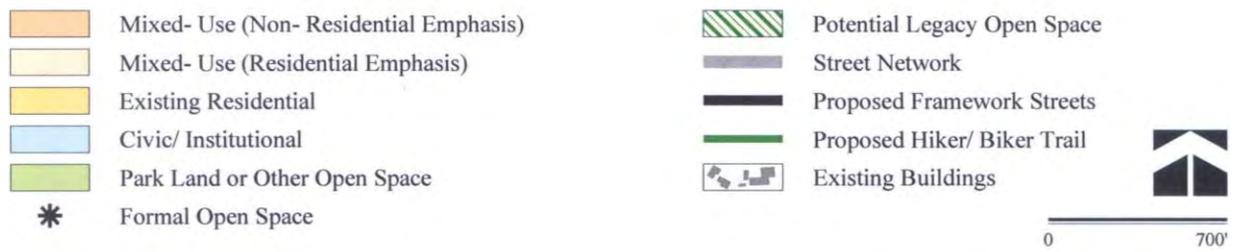
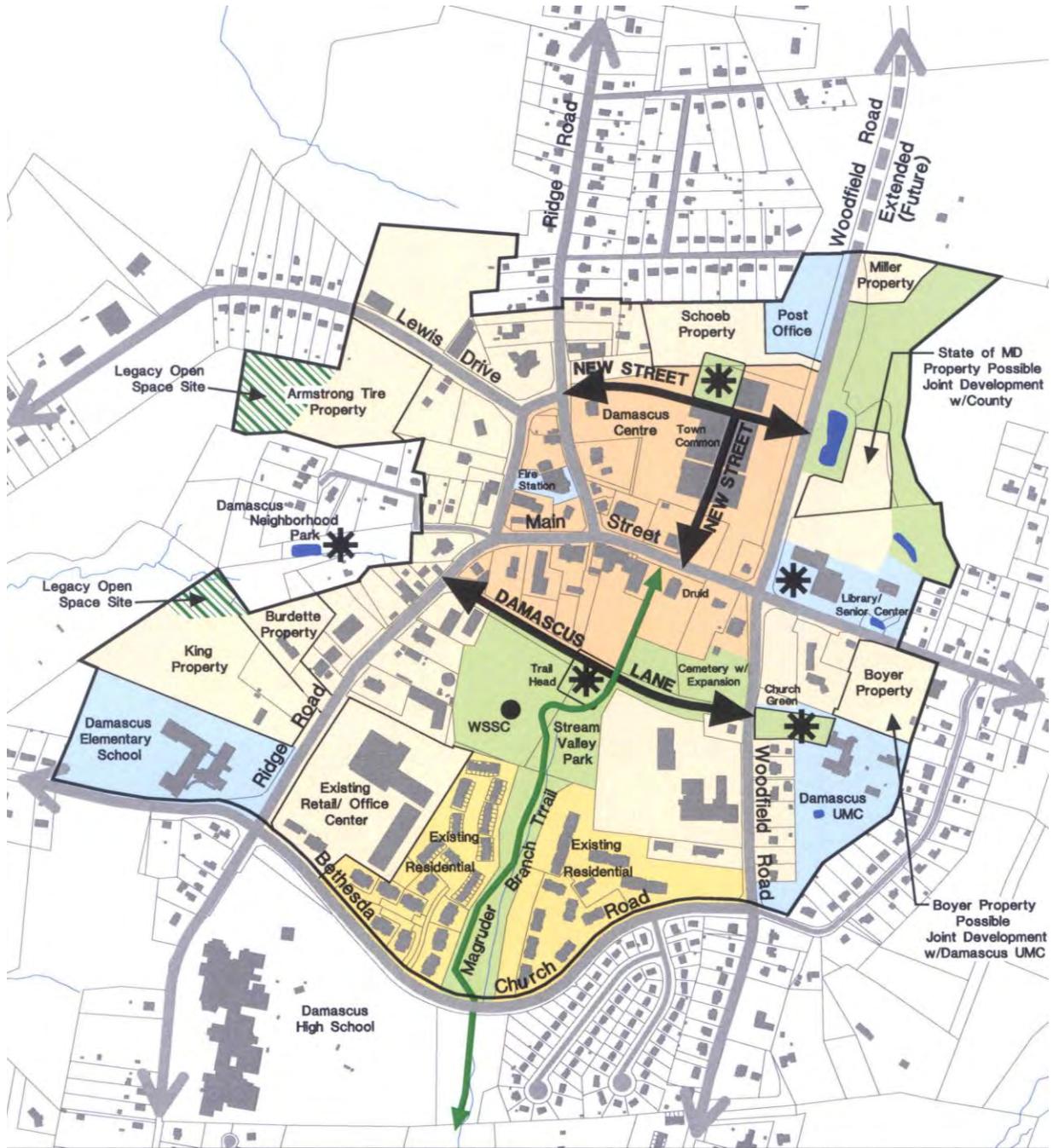
This Plan recommends concentrated densities within the Town Center, improved mobility, mixed-use development, and additional green space. These tools allow the town to evolve and adjust to changing market realities, while retaining and enhancing its rural town character. Commercial uses are concentrated within the historic core and near Main Street, while allowing a broad range of appropriate commercial, office, residential and light industrial uses. The Plan also creates additional opportunities for residential development that will support increased retail and service businesses in the core.

This framework brings the community closer to its legacy and history, as healthy small towns have always had mixed-use centers. The development regulations proposed in this Plan focus on appropriate standards for scale, intensity, and design rather than separation of uses. The proposed density of development in the core and the immediate transition areas reflect the moderate intensity and scale of traditional towns in Maryland. Appropriately compact density in a town core will create vitality. Pedestrian activity is enhanced by the design of the streets, buildings and public spaces. The town-scale envisioned for Damascus will increase opportunities for human interaction at community gathering places.

Another major element of the framework for the Damascus Town Center is to increase the interconnectivity of vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle access. This Plan recommends changes that will result in a town that is more easily and safely accessed by all, and a street network that allows more opportunities for residents to access retail areas. This Plan also recommends creating new public parks and privately maintained open spaces within the Town Center that will serve as community gathering places and as thresholds for access to the surrounding neighborhoods, parks, and rural areas.

The land use recommendations for the Town Center create a mixed-use core supporting residential densities of 15 to 20 dwelling units per acre and commercial densities with a floor area ratio of 0.5 to 1.0.

Town Center Framework



Land Use Recommendations

This Plan embraces core concepts for land use in the Town Center that emphasize its centrality and includes enhancing the identity of the Town Center and the Damascus Main Street, expanding and enhancing community mobility and connectivity, providing open spaces, and establishing guidelines for development or redevelopment in the Town Center. The recommendations include:

Enhance Town Center Identity

The Damascus Town Center will contain places that reflect common identity and shared experiences. Storefronts and retail spaces provide a framework for establishing the primacy of the Town Center. Distinct focal points within the center such as the steeple on the Damascus United Methodist Church and the water tower are highly visible community icons that identify the Town Center from a distance. Local retail institutions such as the former Druid Theater and Jimmie Cone also provide a sense of place because they reflect its history and shared town traditions.

This Plan proposes additional “placemaking” tools that create opportunities to strengthen the sense of place, including compact town-scale intensity. Concepts to achieve this goal include:

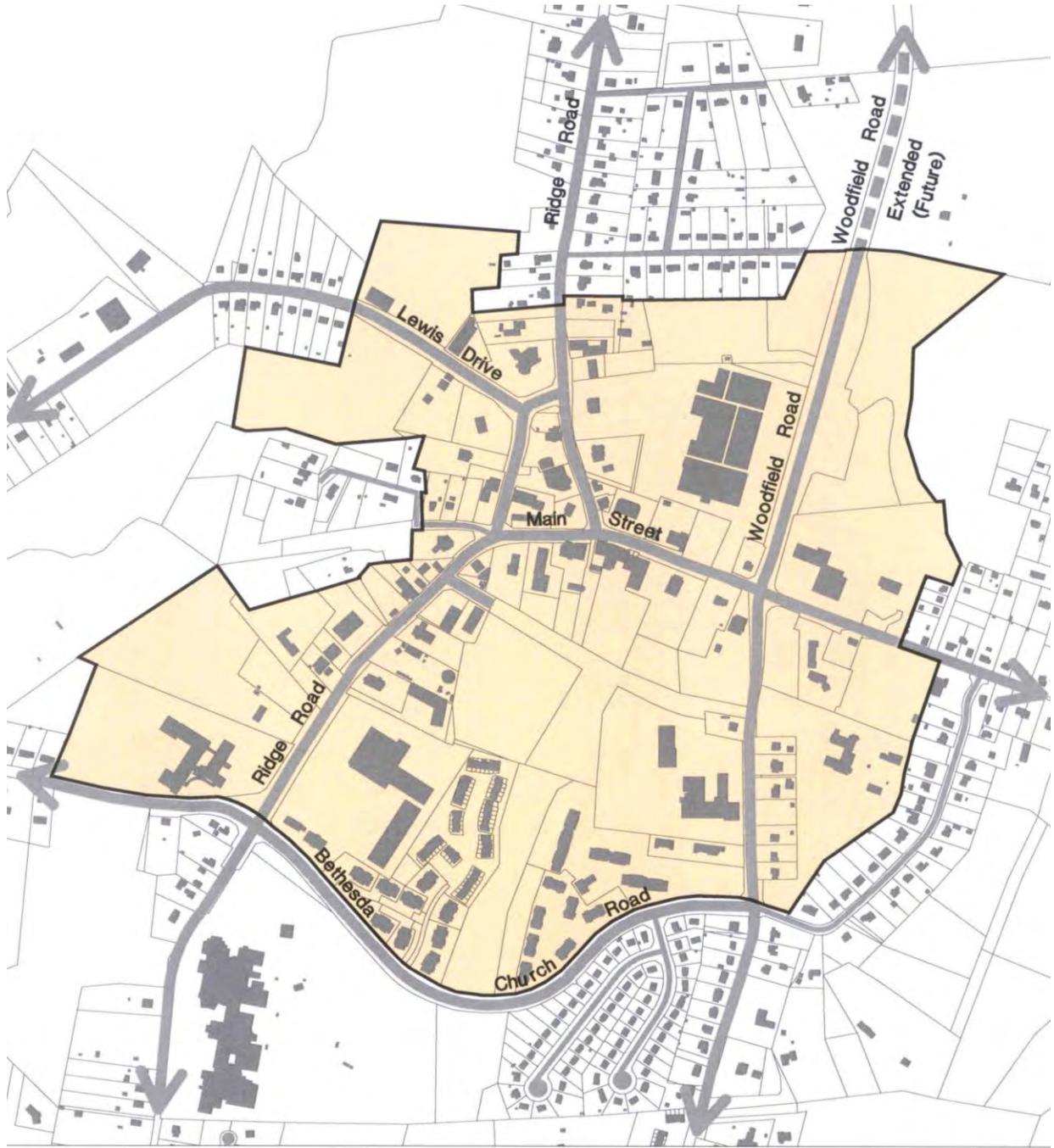
- **Transition Experience** – Enhance the experience of transition at Town Center entrances from rural to neighborhood to town character on approaches to the Town Center.
- **Town Identification Features** – Provide attractive and distinctive gateway features (such as freestanding monuments or signs) to mark the thresholds of entry to the Town Center and define its boundaries for residents and visitors.
- **Vistas and Views** – Protect and enhance views of town focal points and public spaces by preserving selected views toward and away from the surrounding countryside. This will enhance the experience of living and working in a town that is surrounded by the rural vistas of the Agricultural Reserve. Views of important focal points (such as the Damascus United Methodist Church steeple) must be maintained from various vantage points throughout the town core and from major street approaches. New streets should terminate with a view to an important building, or architectural feature.
- **Encourage Evening Activities** – Provide wide, well-lit sidewalks, seating, and gathering spaces to create a physical environment that will support and encourage evening activities. Such activities create vitality in the Town Center. Evening activities could include performances, eating at restaurants, strolling between community open spaces, and going to a well-lighted park or other center for recreation.

Enhance Main Street Identity

The Main Street of Damascus is a powerful symbol of the community’s shared experience and should be easily recognizable as the focus of the Town Center. This Plan augments the identity of Main Street by design standards and enhancements to the pedestrian realm as follows:

- **Building Orientation** – Orient buildings toward streets to enhance spatial definition.
- **On-Street Parking** – Provide continuous on-street parking where possible to add to the viability of the local businesses, and provide a buffer between vehicular travel lanes and pedestrians on sidewalks. Some on-street parking exists along Main Street, and this Plan encourages adding more on-street parking.

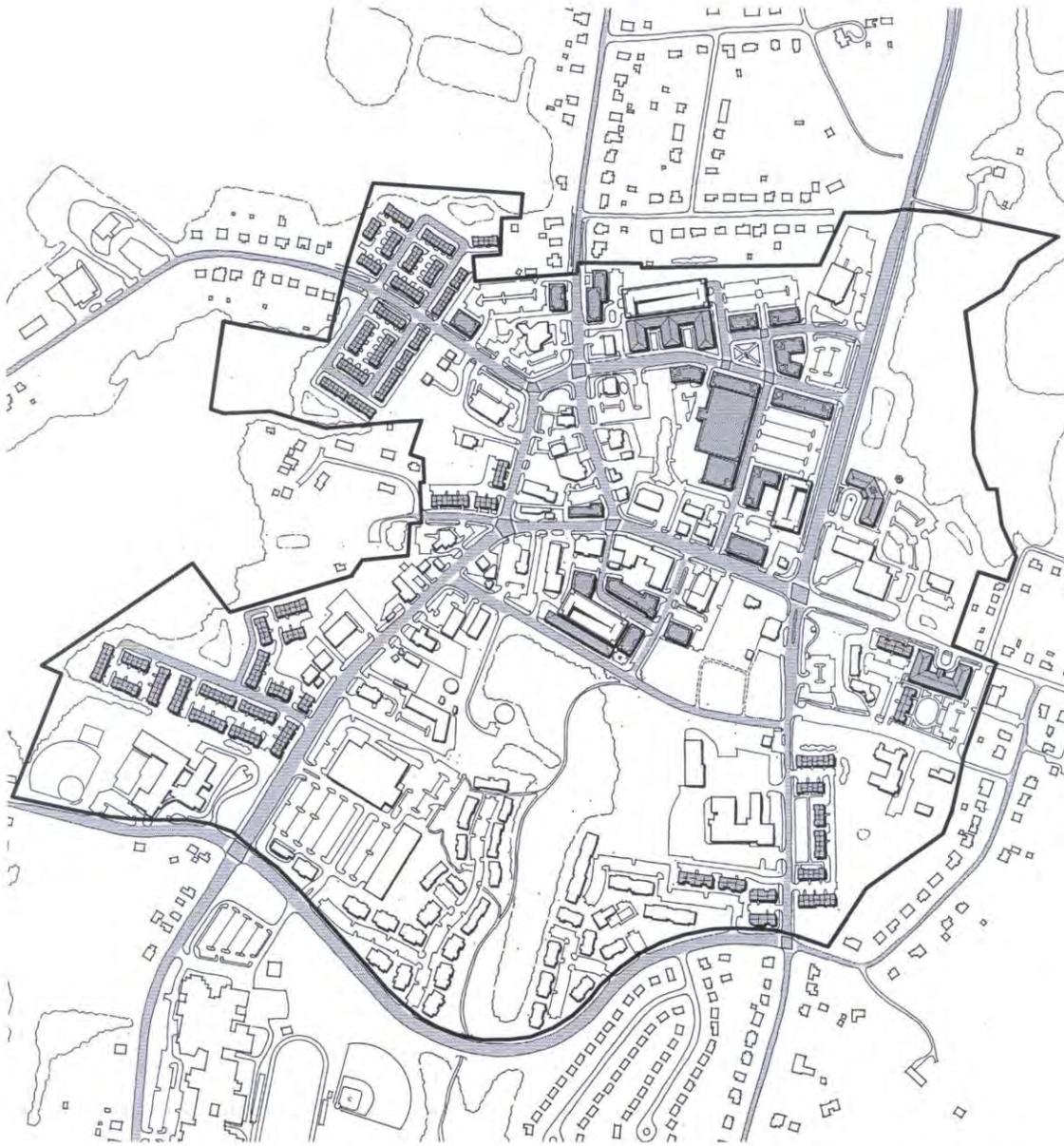
Town Center Boundary

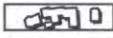


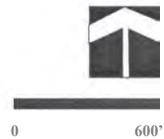
-  Limits of the Town Center
-  Street Network
-  Existing Buildings



Town Center Illustrative



- Limits of the Town Center
-  Existing Building
-  Potential New Buildings



- **Main Street Redesign Potential** – Through traffic that uses Main Street to get from Ridge Road to Woodfield Road is anticipated to significantly decrease after Woodfield Road Extended (A-12) is completed. Decreased traffic congestion should result in a more pedestrian friendly environment along the segment of Main Street from Ridge Road to Woodfield Road. Main Street can be greatly enhanced through redesign if through traffic is reduced as anticipated. If redesign is considered, desirable features include more on-street parking, streetscape treatments, and a dedicated center turning lane. The best combination of features should be determined through a project planning study or in a redevelopment review process.
- **Streetscape Treatment** – Enhance the streets in the Town Center with street trees, uniform lighting treatment and special paving. A continued commitment to the implementation of the Damascus streetscape treatment should be extended to all streets within the Town Center. New treatments should be explored as new street types and street amenities are created and implemented.

Expand and Enhance Mobility and Connectivity

Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity are critical for Damascus. Although adequate sidewalks exist within the core and all destinations in the Town Center area are within a ten-minute walking distance (a half mile), pedestrian activity is minimal. One reason is the limited sidewalk connections to the surrounding neighborhoods and schools adjacent to the Town Center. The primary street framework lacks a secondary street network to serve local businesses and patrons. Because of the limited sidewalks and bicycle lanes, vehicular travel on major roadways serves as the primary means of mobility within the Town Center.

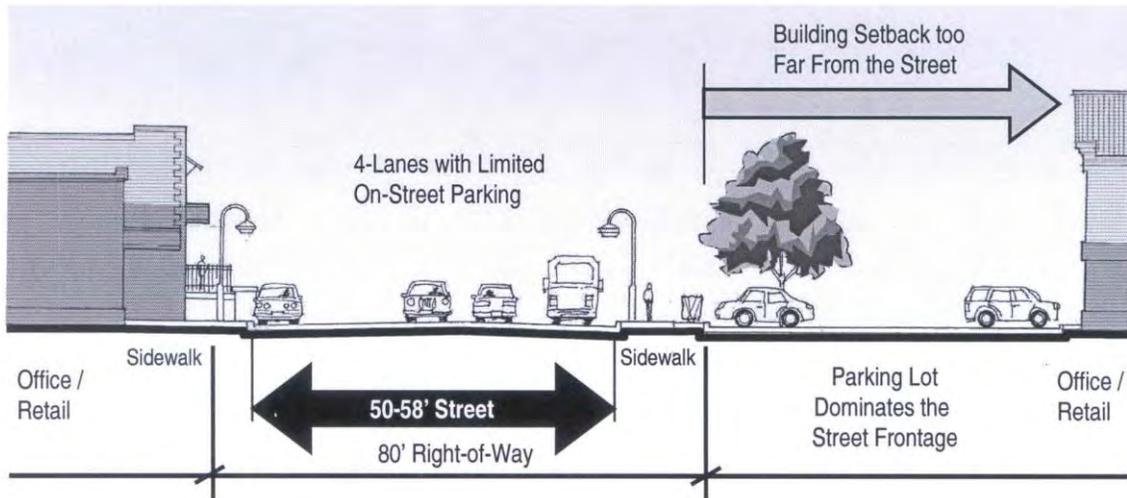
This Plan recommends modifications to create new access points and to provide a more grid-like street pattern. Interconnected streets that provide intuitive circulation alternatives for pedestrians and motorists are needed. Recommendations to achieve these goals include:

- **New Streets** – Add new streets parallel to Main Street from Ridge Road to Woodfield Road. A road connection through the Damascus Centre site on the north will provide additional access to that site and the Post Office, enhancing retail potential and improving mobility options for residents.

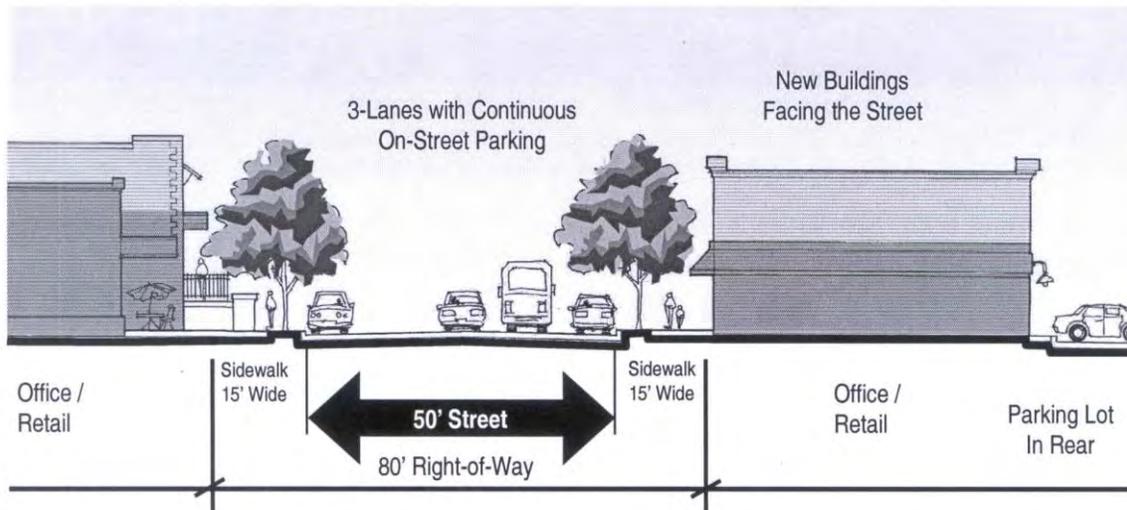
Completing the stub street behind the buildings on the south side of Main Street (Damascus Lane) will provide access to these under-utilized areas. The street is envisioned as a small local road or “lane”, and will also provide access to a “trailhead” for the Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park. The street (discussed further in the Transportation Chapter and the Parkland section of the Community Facilities Chapter) should integrate a bikeway and sidewalks, and be designed as a narrow local street due to environmental and topographic constraints (see Damascus Lane illustration).

- **Sidewalk Widths** – The optimum sidewalk width for major business streets in the Town Center with street facing buildings is 15 feet. This will give pedestrians an environment that is safe, pleasant and interesting.
- **Pedestrian Crosswalks** – Provide clearly marked and distinctively designed crosswalks at all intersections for pedestrian safety.
- **Sidewalk Connections** – Provide an extended sidewalk system to encourage more pedestrians from adjacent neighborhoods to walk into the Town Center.
- **Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park Trail** – Complete the trail into the Town Center and provide a trailhead. This extension will allow safe access to the Town Center.

Town Center Main Street Concept



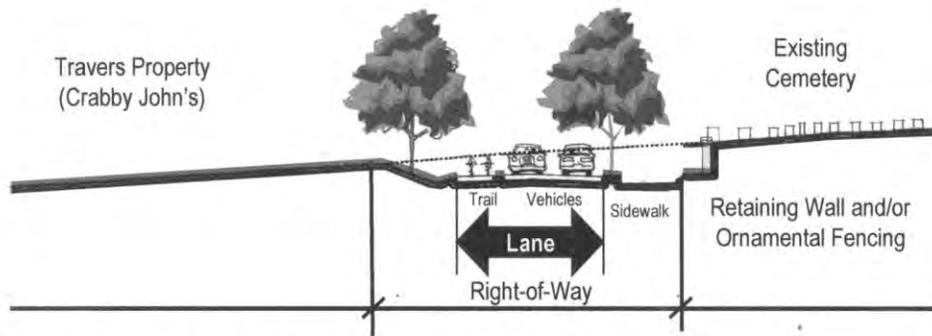
Existing Condition



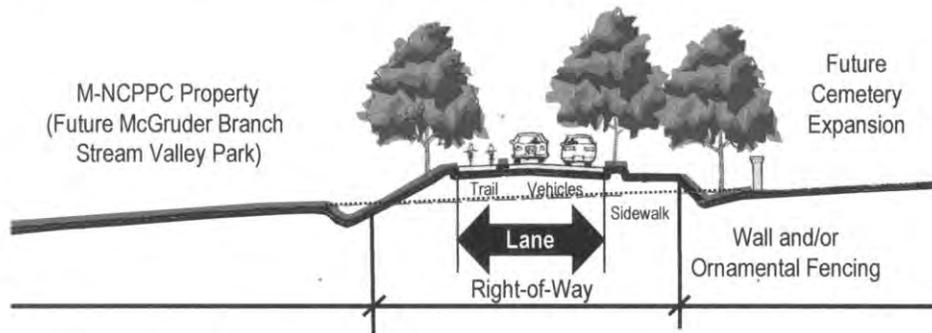
Proposed Condition

Not to Scale

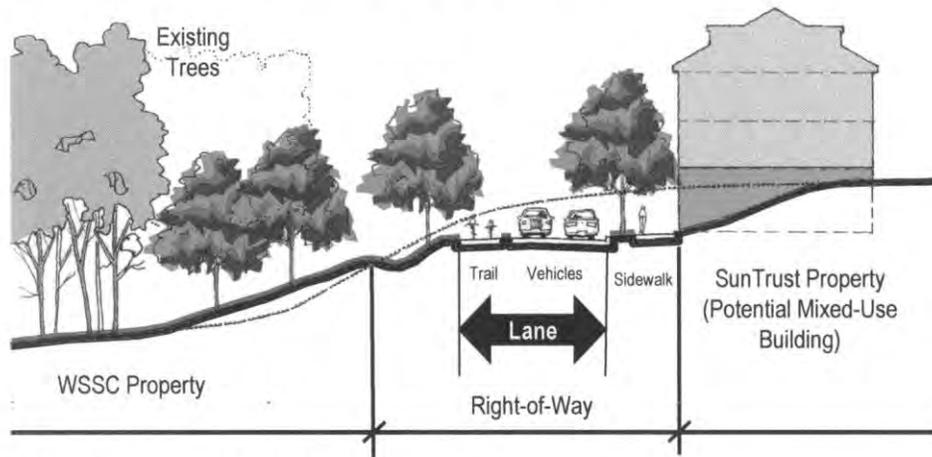
Damascus Lane Concept



Section at the Travers Property



Section at the M-NCPPC Property



Section at the SunTrust Property

Not to Scale

- **Traffic Management** – Implement appropriate traffic calming and context-based design measures, particularly at the gateway points. Context-based street design and traffic-calming tools encourage slower speeds and add awareness of the presence of pedestrians. This Plan recommends tools that provide visual cues at the gateways into the Town Center such as narrower vehicle travel lanes, reconfigured travel lanes, and street trees.

Expand and Enhance Community Open Space

This Plan encourages a compact town-scale intensity of uses within the Town Center. Modifications are proposed that will decrease imperviousness in the Town Center, and provide more community gathering places, including:

- **Town Commons** – Create a significant public green space or town commons to provide a place for people to gather, and provide a green focal point for the Town Center. The commons should be appropriately scaled and contained by a combination of building edges and street frontage. The space should be designed for a diversity of functions and must be clearly perceived as public. The Damascus Centre is the preferred location.
- **Trailhead for the Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park** – Provide an appropriate location along the proposed new street south of Main Street (Damascus Lane) for the trailhead for the Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park to encourage more pedestrian activity in the Town Center.
- **Damascus Neighborhood Park** – Enhance and enlarge this existing park adjoining the Town Center on Locust Drive to provide a pleasant oasis in proximity to the central business area.
- **Open Spaces** – Create additional formal open spaces in the Town Center, such as small urban public parks or privately maintained open spaces. Even small seating areas and pedestrian walkways add character and places for human interaction. The spaces should be safe, comfortable, accessible, and highly visible.

Guidelines for Development and Redevelopment

Future development and redevelopment will provide an environment that reinforces the entire range of activities and uses for a desirable Town Center. Recommendations for future development include:

- **Housing Types** – Provide a range of housing types in the Town Center that will accommodate varied lifestyle choices. The heart of the community should offer opportunities for multifamily housing, including affordable housing options. Flexibility to permit varied housing types will accommodate future housing within a town-scale framework. Additionally, residential opportunities in the Town Center will add vitality and a stronger market for locally oriented commercial activity.
- **Senior Housing** – Two parcels of land located near the Damascus Library and Senior Center are prime locations for age-restricted housing. Residents at either of these sites would be within walking distance to the stores and services located on Main Street as well as transit, and the amenities in the Senior Center. The property located adjacent and north of the Library is currently owned by the State and might provide the opportunity for joint development. The Boyer property, a vacant site located on the south side of Main Street at the eastern gateway to the Town Center, would also be appropriate for senior housing. The Boyer property is adjacent to the Damascus United Methodist Church property immediately to the south. Joint development of the Boyer property and the church may be mutually beneficial.

- **Damascus Centre Shopping Center** – This Plan recommends redevelopment of the Damascus Centre using a ~~main street~~ approach in the redesign of the center. The 15-acre site is the largest commercial parcel under single ownership within the Town Center, but it has long suffered from poor visibility and dated design. The property has excellent potential to redevelop into an attractive retail center with a mixed-use potential incorporating a significant green space as well as housing.
- **Miller Property** – This Plan recommends that the portion of this property located west of the Town Spring Tributary stream buffer (approximately eight acres) be included in the Town Center boundary. Although approximately eighty percent (80%) of this property is restricted by stream buffers, a small area near the Post Office is potentially developable.
- **Commercial Uses** – This Plan recommends zoning that will concentrate and focus commercial uses along Main Street and at major arterial intersections. This will allow a greater chance of success for these businesses. The commercial property owners between these optimal locations can redevelop as mixed-use, residential, and commercial uses.
- **Residential Uses** – This Plan recommends that careful attention be given at the time of subdivision or site plan to proposed new residential development that directly adjoins existing single-family residential development, ensuring compatibility of scale, height, and proportion. Such review may limit development potential below that allowed in the zone.
- **Parking Concepts** – This Plan supports concepts for parking in the Town Center as follows:
 - **Shared Parking Within the Town Center** – Shared parking would help achieve the vision for the Town Center. Businesses with different peak demands for parking can mutually benefit by shared parking agreements.
 - **Parking Lots Located Behind Buildings** – Parking lots should be located behind buildings and in limited situations, on the side of buildings in a safe and convenient way.
 - **Green Islands** – Providing ~~green~~ “green islands” in parking lots that are adequately sized for shade trees that offset urban heat effects.
- **Building Orientation** – As also noted in the recommendations for increasing Main Street identity, buildings within the Town Center should be street-oriented. Storefronts should be oriented to make the uses inside visible from the sidewalk. Residential buildings should have entrances facing the street in order for visitors to instinctively know where to enter, to encourage social interaction, and to promote natural surveillance and safety.
- **Mixed-Use Buildings** – Mixed-use (residential and commercial) buildings promote a compact town form and encourage walking and less dependency on motor vehicles. Damascus already has a variety of mixed-use buildings within the Town Center. The Plan encourages their development in the future.

TRANSITION AREAS

The Plan establishes three Transition Areas that reflect decreasing residential density – the *Town Neighborhood*, the *Neighborhood Transition*, and the *Rural Transition Areas*. These Transition Areas serve as a bridge between the higher density development in the Town Center and the surrounding Rural Areas. Density is moderately increased through the use of TDR receiving sites, and clustered in small-lot, single-family neighborhoods that ring the Town Center.

Vision

The major land use recommendations for the Transition Areas balance countywide housing needs with the need to protect the headwaters of streams that define the geography of Damascus. The Plan recommendations for the Transition Areas are designed to reduce imperviousness of the eventual build-out, protect scenic vistas, allow greater connectivity to activity centers, and provide “small town” design patterns. Agricultural preservation goals are also enhanced through the creation of new TDR receiving sites where appropriate increases in density permit.

Framework

The primary means to achieve these goals within the Transition Areas is the extensive use of small-lot cluster zoning. The recommendations will allow a few additional moderate density neighborhoods, located near the Town Center, with an emphasis on internal and external connectivity including pedestrian and bicycle connections to the Town Center, schools, and recreational opportunities. They will also provide connections to the Countywide Trail system by paved pathways and trails into the stream valley park systems in the Plan area. This will create neighborhoods accessible to the services of the Town Center that open visually into preserved rural vistas and protected stream valleys. The result will be a town with a more clearly defined edge between the town and the surrounding rural area.

Town Neighborhood Area

This area includes neighborhoods within the upper watershed of *Magruder Branch* (see Proposed Land Use and Density map), and for many years was the primary growth area in Damascus. Growth between Ridge Road and Woodfield Road south of town reflects historic settlement patterns, Master Plan guidance, and the availability of public sewer. Few developable properties of significant size remain, and this Plan recommends modifying the zoning on these properties to conform to existing lot sizes.

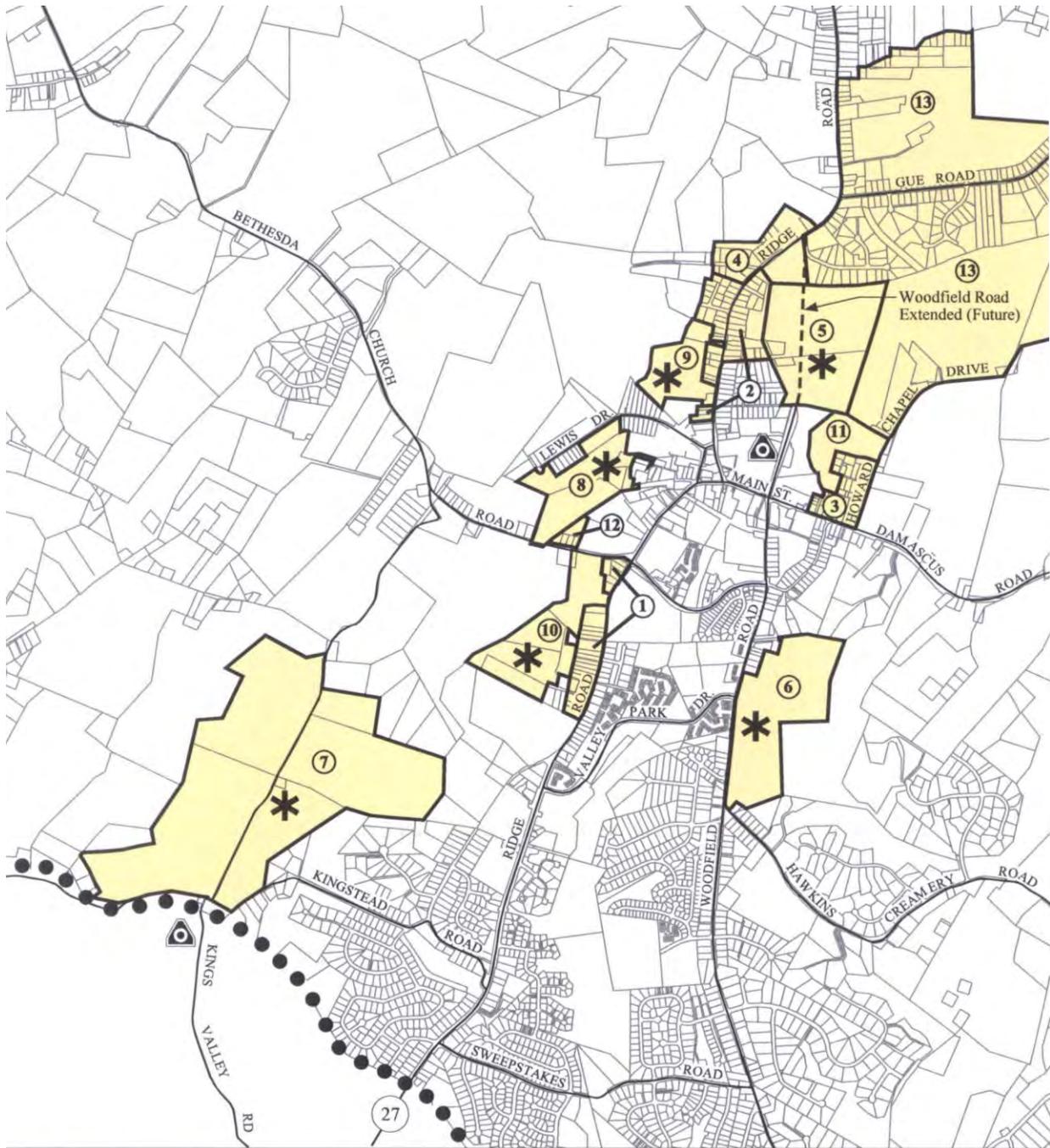
Neighborhood Transition Area

This area includes the upper watersheds of the *Town Spring Tributary*, *Upper Great Seneca Creek*, *Bennett Creek*, and *Little Bennett Creek* (see Proposed Land Use and Density map). It reflects a mixture of residential development near the Town Center and along Ridge Road and Woodfield Road, and open rural areas beyond. Topography and other sensitive environmental features in this area results in restricted access to existing public sewer and affords limited opportunity to significantly increase development potential without negative environmental consequences to the forested stream valleys in these headwater areas. Under the RNC Zone, the provision of sewer service and increased development potential, which confers the private benefit of community sewer service on the property owner, requires provision of increased open space in return. Evaluation of developable properties in these areas reflect this concern.

Rural Transition Area

This area contains agricultural uses interspersed with older subdivisions, and the Plan recommendations encourage a mix of low-density residential and agricultural uses. Most of this area allows five-acre density although there are some areas of two-acre density (usually reflecting older subdivisions). Properties beyond the immediate proximity to the Town Center in the Patuxent River Watershed face limited development potential due to a combination of County water and sewer policy, soil types, and environmental considerations, and the Plan proposes additional protection through lower density zoning. Because of the high threshold for protection of lands draining to the Patuxent River drinking water reservoirs, limited development with limited imperviousness is encouraged.

Transition Areas – Developable Sites



- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| ● ● ● Master Plan Area Boundary | ⑦ Kingstead/ Leishear | △ Existing Sewage Pump Stations |
| * TDR Receiving | ⑧ Casey/ Lewis | ◻ Pump station may be needed to serve cluster development |
| ① Ridge Road South Neighborhood | ⑨ Stanley/ Leishear - Day ◻ | |
| ② Ridge Road North Town Neighborhood | ⑩ Smart/ Miner/ Rice/ Conway ◻ | |
| ③ Town Spring Neighborhood | ⑪ Miller | |
| ④ Ridge Road North Neighborhood Transition | ⑫ Souder and Vicinity | |
| ⑤ Burdette ◻ (Relocate/ reduce existing pump station on Damascus Center) | ⑬ Patuxent River Watershed Properties | |
| ⑥ Warfield | | |



The bulk of the southeast portion of the Master Plan is in the upper watershed of *Great Seneca Creek* (see Proposed Land Use and Density map), an area of two or five acre development. Much of this area has already been developed, as this area experienced the most extensive residential growth in the Damascus area in the 1990's. Recommended densities reflect the continuing environmental concerns. This Plan recommends no land use changes to this area.

Development Guidance for Transition Area Cluster Development

Wherever clustered development is recommended in this Plan, the following development guidance is to be considered:

- Minimize impervious surfaces through environmentally sensitive site design techniques (for example, the use of shared driveways, pervious pavement, and narrow roads that still meet safety requirements).
- Provide stormwater management controls utilizing environmentally sensitive design techniques that avoid concentrating stormwater runoff into high quantity flows, with a preference for on-lot quantity and quality treatment options (or alternatives that provide similar environmental benefits) and disconnected imperviousness design techniques, infiltration of runoff, and open section roadways.
- Design to allow views of protected open space and vistas of surrounding rural areas.
- Protect sensitive environmental features, minimizing development impact.
- Protect important historic or archeological sites and their settings.
- Create a defined "edge" clearly separating the developed neighborhood from the rural open space that is preserved.
- Provide internal and external connections for easy non-vehicular access using trails, sidewalks, and bicycle paths.
- Replicate the scale, design and pattern of historic small town residential neighborhoods.
- Locate a minimum of three-fourths of the lots in the clustered small lot portion of the development unless the Planning Board finds that fewer clustered lots would better implement the goals of the Master Plan.

Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

The modifications in the Transition Areas reinforce the Plan's vision of strengthening the Town Center, and limiting growth on the perimeters.

Town Neighborhood Area

The Plan recommends rezoning four older neighborhoods from RE-2C to R-200 or RE-1 to better reflect the existing lot sizes in these neighborhoods. In these areas immediately adjoining the Town Center, few developable parcels remain. The lot sizes reflect the half-acre to one-acre zoning in effect when these neighborhoods were developed. Little additional development potential is anticipated for any of these neighborhoods, as few parcels have subdivision potential. They include:

- **Ridge Road South Neighborhood** – The R-200 Zone is proposed in this neighborhood located along the west side of Ridge Road between Bethesda Church Road and Oak Drive. Although few properties without homes remain, some lots are large enough that some re-development might occur.

- **Ridge Road North Town Neighborhood** – The R-200 Zone is proposed in this neighborhood located immediately north of the Town Center. Making the zoning consistent with the existing lot pattern will make it more logical to extend sewer to this area as needed to replace failing septic systems on existing lots.
- **Town Spring Neighborhood** – The RE-1 Zone is proposed in this neighborhood north of MD 108 and west of Howard Chapel Drive, a small neighborhood of older homes.
- **Ridge Road North Transition Neighborhood** – The RE-1 Zone is proposed in this neighborhood located north of the Ridge Road North Town Neighborhood, forming the northern edge of the town’s developed area.
- **Other Properties in the Town Neighborhood Area** – The existing zoning is retained on all other properties in the Town Neighborhood Area.

Neighborhood Transition Area

The Plan recommends a moderate increase in density – primarily adjoining the Town Center and primarily through the creation of six transferable development rights (TDR) receiving areas. The Plan also recommends limited additional density on certain properties near the Town Center.

The Master Plan proposes creating TDR receiving ability for the RNC Zone for six property groups at locations that have, or can be easily served by, sewer. While there is conformity of zoning, actual development potential may be curtailed by other elements of this Plan, especially environmental criteria. Small lot, cluster development will be permitted to address environmental and vista protection goals, neighborhood design goals, and enhanced connectivity goals. In order to address agricultural protection goals, additional density yields are achieved through the use of a new Transferable Development Rights (TDR) zone.

- **Burdette Property**

Allow the following range of densities if the specified conditions are met:

Standard Method	RNC 0.2
Optional Method	RNC 0.4 (community sewer service) if TDRs are not used RNC 1.0 (community sewer service) with TDRs used to secure the additional density

Potential for 16 to 100 dwelling units (including MPDU bonus and 65 TDRs).

The 82-acre Burdette property is located north of the Damascus Town Center and is bisected by the planned route of Woodfield Road Extended (A-12). Because the property is located immediately adjacent to the Town Center within walking distance of shopping, services, and institutional uses, an increased density is appropriate. The RNC Zone will provide protection of the Patuxent River Watershed by requiring small building lots near the Town Center and along the route of Woodfield Road Extended, reducing the extent of roads and sidewalks needed. Actual development potential will be limited due to environmental considerations. This property is currently in agricultural use with 22 acres of contiguous forest. It contains streams with large associated wetlands, seeps and springs that contribute to the high quality water in the Upper Patuxent River watershed. Lots clustered away from the Patuxent Primary Management Area on this property will protect existing streams and forest cover, preserve rural vistas, and create a stronger urban edge with a sense of proximity to the rural heritage in Damascus. Smaller lots with a large area of protected open space are more protective of the Upper Patuxent River Watershed. Lots clustered away from the headwater tributaries in the eastern portion of the property (with shorter streets) would result in lower overall imperviousness.

Development Guidance:

- Comply with the guidance for development in the Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed and to the guidelines for cluster development in this chapter.
- Preserve forested stream valleys with wetlands, seeps and springs that contribute to the high quality water in the Upper Patuxent watershed. All contiguous existing forest should be maintained and development must be clustered away from the Primary Management Area.
- Building lots for two new homes may be allowed within the rural open space area of this property for members of the Burdette/Walker families.
- Limit cluster development to areas that can be served by grinder systems and gravity sewer lines that minimize stream or stream buffer impacts. Any new pump station intended to replace the existing pump station on the Damascus Centre property should be located to avoid stream crossings, and minimize impacts to environmental buffers. A relocated pump station may modify or expand the areas on the Burdette property that can be served by public sewer, and may also provide service to nearby areas with failing septic systems.

▪ **Warfield Property**

Allow the following range of densities if the specified conditions are met:

Standard Method	RNC 0.2
Optional Method	RNC 0.4 (community sewer service) if TDRs are not used RNC 0.75 (community sewer service) with TDRs used to secure the additional density

Potential for 15 to 71 dwelling units (including MPDU bonus and 42 TDRs).

The modification in density is appropriate because the property is in immediate proximity to the Town Center and within walking distance of shopping, services, and institutional uses. This 78-acre property is a former dairy farm located east of Woodfield Road, just south of the Town Center area. It is the most visually significant developable property in close proximity to the Town Center. It is largely open, with forest primarily lining the headwaters of two tributary streams that feed into Great Seneca Creek. The property contains historic structures and presents one of the more important remaining vistas along the approach to Damascus on Woodfield Road. West of Woodfield Road there are small lot, clustered neighborhoods, and to the east the property descends into the valleys and woodlands of the Great Seneca Creek headwaters. Actual development potential may be limited due to environmental considerations. Because of its proximity to the Town Center, a cluster design will enable better environmental protection and preserve rural vistas. The smaller lots permitted in the RNC Zone allow more design flexibility to protect the historic farm site and existing forest, and to replicate the small town lot patterns across Woodfield Road. The clustering will include a trail system that will implement the recommendations for connectivity of the Countywide Park Trails Plan.

Development Guidance:

- Comply with the guidance for cluster development in this chapter.
- Enhance the headwaters of two tributary streams. Along the northern primary stream there is a spring or seep covered with concrete. Any development must restore wetlands, remove the concrete, and protect other wetland and stream buffer areas as a part of the required rural open space.

- Dedicate seven acres of very high quality forest area located along the northeastern edge of the property, connected to a much larger forest stand on adjacent parkland.
- Protect and reforest stream valleys just beyond this forest. All contiguous forest must be protected as a part of any development proposal, and all unforested tributary streams must be reforested.
- Protect historic structures.

▪ **Kingstead/Leishear Properties**

Allow the following range of densities if the specified conditions are met:

Standard Method	RNC 0.2
Optional Method	RNC 0.2 (community sewer service), if TDRs are not used
	RNC 0.5 (community sewer service) with TDRs used to secure the additional density

Potential for 27 to 84 dwelling units (including MPDUs and 41 TDRs).

The largest developable area in this Plan includes the Kingstead Farm and the adjoining Leishear property. The Plan evaluated the 138-acre site on the east side of Kings Valley Road, which consisted of three properties in the Rural Cluster and RE-2C Zones. The residual portion of the Kingstead Farm is 159 acres in the Rural Density Transfer (RDT) Zone along the west side of Kings Valley Road. The 13-acre Leishear property was evaluated for joint development with the Kingstead Farm. Actual development potential is likely to be limited due to other Master Plan elements, especially environmental considerations.

The Kingstead/Leishear properties occupy a uniquely sensitive headwater area of the Little Bennett watershed, containing numerous springs, seeps, and wetlands that are critical to maintaining downstream water quality. The quality of these resources can be quickly and permanently degraded by the addition of impervious surfaces that alter surface and subsurface flows, and the construction of sewer lines that disturb stream valleys. Therefore impervious surfaces should be minimized and mitigated where possible. The small headwater streams in the area are very susceptible to damage from even small changes in runoff volume and can be degraded by the location and concentrated flows from storm drain outfalls.

Development must be carefully managed to minimize disturbances to the high quality wetlands. Additional density is recommended to take advantage of existing gravity sewer potential, to provide for a modest number of TDRs, and to obtain historic preservation benefits, park and trail connections, and affordable housing benefits. Due to the environmental sensitivity of this site, higher densities are recommended for only the southern section of the property, in order to limit impervious surfaces and stormwater impacts, and avoid the need for sanitary sewer access to the entire property.

The Kingstead Farm was a major dairy farm for many years, and the family still operates a dairy cow breeding operation. The property contains open pastures, large areas of extensive forest and forested stream valleys. The RDT Zone property includes a headwater tributary of Little Bennett Creek. It is located south of Oak Ridge Conservation Park spanning both sides of Kings Valley Road. The Leishear property similarly contains both field and forest.

The Kingstead properties were considered as a TDR receiving site during the 1982 Master Plan and the 1993 Damascus Master Plan Amendment. No change was ultimately recommended in either Plan due to undeveloped intervening properties along Kingstead Road. Those properties are now developed and this Plan recommends a TDR receiving site on the properties. Use of a moderate density cluster development is recommended to achieve the following:

- **Environmental** – Protect extensive natural resources including an upland forest and the Little Bennett Creek Stream Valley Park tributary stream system – an area deemed vital for natural resource protection in the Legacy Open Space program.
- **Historic Preservation** – Offer the best opportunity to protect the historic Kingstead Farm core area in its environmental setting.
- **Trails** – Allow the extension of a planned trail through Little Bennett Creek Stream Valley Park serving this portion of Damascus and connecting it through the development to the recreational resources along Oak Drive and through to Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park Trail.
- **Connectivity** – Allow a neighborhood design dense enough to provide community amenities such as interior sidewalks connecting to the trail.
- **Agricultural Preservation** – Provide the opportunity for the property owner to either transfer TDRs on the RDT Zone portion of the Kingstead Farm or purchase TDRs from other properties.
- **Sewer** – Much of the property is within the drainage area of the nearby Spring Meadows pumping station allowing a gravity sewer access for most of the developable portion of site.
- **Housing** – Provide additional housing potential in close proximity to schools, trails, and the recreation center.
- **Transportation** – Will not have a detrimental impact on the transportation grid, as these residents are more likely to use Kings Valley Road as their primary access rather than Ridge Road, and development will require improving the offset intersection of Kings Valley Road (classified as a Primary Road at this location in the Master Plan) and Kingstead Road.

Despite these advantages, there are significant environmental concerns that constrain development. These include:

- **Water Resources** – Little Bennett Creek, as a Use III stream, already has strong protective measures including stream buffers and wetland buffers that must be applied during the development process. Extension of sewer within the environmental buffers of Little Bennett Creek and its tributaries to achieve full density potential would conflict with longstanding policies that protect the stream headwaters. There is an outstanding 45-acre forested wetland with 14 springs on the property designated for parkland acquisition. In addition, an important tributary with forested wetlands crosses the property from the east to join the main stem of Little Bennett Creek. This system is a critical element in maintaining the high water quality in the downstream portions of Little Bennett Creek. Full density potential may not be achieved due to these environmental constraints.

- **Forest Resources** – The properties contain 120 acres of forest, including approximately 80 acres associated with the large wetland and other riparian areas. Forests on steep slopes and in stream buffers have a high priority for preservation and enhancement. There are 40 acres of upland forest, primarily on the eastern part of the Rural Cluster portion of the property that are high quality forest preservation areas. Development must be clustered in the open areas and preserve the forest stand between the Little Bennett Creek tributary in the eastern portion of the property and Oak Ridge Conservation Park to provide an undisturbed tree canopy.

Development Guidance:

- **Design** – Comply with the guidance for cluster development in this chapter, and avoid vistas of backyards from Kings Valley Road, Kingstead Road or adjacent streets.
- **Environmental Concerns** – Residential development east of Kings Valley Road must use cluster development to protect the steep slopes, erodible soils, forest cover, and high quality streams on the property. Resources can be protected through parkland dedication (see Community Facilities Chapter) and the rural open space requirement of the zone. Homes should be clustered on smaller lots in less sensitive areas to reduce negative environmental impacts, preserve existing forest and the environmental buffers.

Existing water quality and aquatic habitat of Little Bennett Creek must be maintained. Limited imperviousness and stormwater management measures will also be needed to minimize negative water quality impacts.

Homes should be clustered on lots that are small enough to achieve the goals of neighborhood cluster design, yet with sufficient frontage and setbacks so that as much area as possible can be accessed by open section roadways to minimize the concentration of stormwater runoff. Development areas must be located in the least sensitive areas to reduce negative environmental impacts, preserve existing forest, and the environmental buffers.

Maintain and protect existing hydrology by limiting activities that will alter groundwater flow, springs and seeps, wetlands, and streams.

Forests, particularly those on steep slopes and in environmental buffers (approximately 40 percent of the site), should remain undisturbed. Development must preserve the forest between the Little Bennett tributary in the eastern portion of the property and Oak Ridge Conservation Park to provide an undisturbed tree canopy.

- **Parkland** – Dedicate and/or acquire, as appropriate, the designated portions of the land along the headwaters of Little Bennett Creek (discussed in the Parkland and Open Space portions of the Community Facilities Chapter) traversing the property to the M-NCPPC as parkland. Determine the extent and importance of the archeological features on the site. If appropriate, the site containing archeological features should be added to the adjacent area to be dedicated/acquired as parkland.
- **Transportation** – Provide a comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle circulation system linking internal areas and linking to the Countywide Trails system; and reconfigure the intersection of Kings Valley Road and Kingstead Road to eliminate the offset alignment.

- **Sewer Service** – Development on this property should uphold the years of policy that have protected the Little Bennett Creek headwaters. If the cluster option is used, most of the density should be concentrated in the southern area, and community sewer service provided only to those areas that can be served by gravity outside environmental buffers to existing community sewer systems. The northern area is limited to the use of individual septic systems. This will avoid a stream crossing and the need to fragment the existing forest and wetland. This will also avoid future requests for community sewer access further north in the watershed. Development must not disturb the Little Bennett Stream Valley for sewer or stormwater conveyance.

- **Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway Properties**

Allow the following range of densities if the specified conditions are met:

Standard Method	RNC 0.2
Optional Method	RNC 0.4 (community sewer service), if TDRs are not used RNC 1.0 (community sewer service) with TDRs used to secure the additional density

Potential for 10 to 61 dwelling units (including MPDU bonus and 40 TDRs).

The modification in density is appropriate because the properties are in close proximity to the Town Center, schools, shopping, and institutional uses. Residents will be able to walk to these community uses. The modification would allow smaller lot clustering (with community water and sewer) on this approximately 50-acre site. The site has frontage west of Ridge Road on Bethesda Church Road, directly across from the Damascus Elementary School and along Ridge Road to the south. The property contains a headwater tributary of Little Bennett Creek. Its proximity to the Town Center, and the ability to access sewer in Ridge Road make this area a suitable location for clustered development, with measures to protect environmental features and the headwaters of Little Bennett Creek.

The Smart/Miner properties were proposed for the RNC Zone in the Public Hearing Draft Plan. The Rice/Conway properties were proposed for additional density during Work Sessions No. 3 and 4. Assembly of these properties is now anticipated. The Smart/Miner properties would also be designed in conjunction with the Kings Valley property. The proposed development plan would create a pleasant neighborhood with three primary development areas, very close to the Town Center, within easy walking distance to schools, shopping, recreation, and services. A new sewer pump station may be needed to serve optional method development especially in the range of higher densities with TDRs. The pump station should be located to avoid stream crossings and minimize impacts to environmental buffers.

These properties are the northern-most extreme of Little Bennett Creek, and they include 14 acres of stream valley, 7 acres of wetlands, and 8 acres of forest. An important feature of these properties is the headwater spring that forms the beginning of Little Bennett Creek. This forested wetland area should be left undisturbed. Development on these properties should use open areas rather than disturbing forest, wetland, and environmental buffers.

Increasing development on all sides of this forested stream valley also increases the potential for impacting the headwaters through forested lots, connector roads, sewer easements and safe conveyance of stormwater to the stream. Optional method development should not be approved on this property unless all the environmental recommendations are addressed by the proposed development. Meeting all the recommendations may result in less than the full density on any or all of these properties.

Development Guidance

- Extend the Little Bennett Stream Valley conservation park to include its headwater spring.
- Community sewer is subject to approval of new pressure systems or pump station by WSSC and in accordance with their policies at time of development.
- Efforts should be made to restore the existing easternmost headwater wetland to the size and condition that existed prior to disturbance and clearing for farming activities. This will not decrease the developable area of this site shown elsewhere in this Plan.
- Consolidate development areas to avoid the stream valley and avoid stream crossings.
- Limit most development to open areas.
- Protect all critical natural resources through park dedication or conservation easements.
- Minimize and mitigate the effects of the existing powerline located in the stream valley buffer by examining alternatives at the time of development, including the following:
 - Work with the electric power utility to relocate the existing powerline outside of the stream valley buffer where there is significantly less encroachment into the stream buffer, and to replant/reforest the area. The landowner is only expected to provide easements for the new alignment.
 - If relocation is not deemed feasible or cost-effective, develop a more environmentally sensitive landscaping plan for the utility area, including selective clearing to control invasive plants and large trees, while retaining low growing shrubs and ground cover consistent with the goals of a stream valley buffer.
- Comply with the guidance for cluster development in this chapter.
- Design development to avoid disturbance to the Little Bennett Creek headwaters area on the property, which contains multiple springs and seasonal wetlands. Maintain and protect existing hydrology by limiting activities that will alter groundwater flow, springs, and seeps.
- Configure lots of sufficient size and appropriate shape to apply the use of open-section road standards, on-lot infiltration of storm water on the majority of the developed area, and narrow roads that still meet safety requirements.
- Maintain stream buffers and existing forest areas and allow sufficient area outside stream buffers for stormwater management.

▪ **Casey/Lewis Properties**

Allow the following range of densities if the specified conditions are met:

Standard Method	RNC 0.2
Optional Method	RNC 0.4 (community sewer service) if TDRs are not used RNC 0.5 (community sewer service) with TDRs used to secure the additional density

Potential for 9 to 27 dwelling units (including MPDU bonus and 13 TDRs).

This approximately 45-acre site consists of six properties and contains two relatively flat areas, one fronting on Lewis Drive and one on Bethesda Church Road. Beyond these more easily developed areas, the properties drop steeply into a stream valley that is a headwater tributary of Bennett Creek, a Use I stream with good water quality and stream habitat conditions. Preserving the large forested areas that buffer the streams in the upper part of this watershed is essential to protecting existing stream quality. This site is appropriate for limited additional density because of its location in immediate proximity to the Town Center, offering easy access to shopping, services, and institutional uses. Density must remain limited due to the extensive environmental restrictions on the site that leave only small developable areas that meet the county's environmental regulations.

Most of this site is not appropriate for development due to the slopes that are associated with the wide stream valley. While these properties are close to the Town Center, steep topography historically limits development potential. Development should not disturb the stream valley or disturb slopes that exceed 15 percent. The development area should be clustered within the level areas along Bethesda Church Road and Lewis Drive. The forested stream valley and associated springs, wetlands, and steep slopes 15 percent and greater should be protected within a contiguous open space area. This would require that no more than 60 percent of the dwelling units be located either along Bethesda Church Road or on the larger Lewis Drive site. Development potential will be limited due to other Master Plan elements, especially environmental considerations.

There are 33 acres of significant forest, including five acres of interior forest, and 14 acres of sensitive areas within the stream valley including seeps, springs, wetlands, and extremely steep slopes that extend beyond the sensitive areas protected by the Environmental Guidelines. There are also 1,300 feet of power lines located on or adjacent to the western edge of the property.

The Bennett Creek headwater stream that bisects the property is Use I, with good water quality and habitat conditions. The Legacy Open Space program has identified this property as part of the Bennett Creek Headwaters, unique because practically the entire headwater stream valley is forested and relatively undisturbed by development. (See the Open Space portion of the Community Facilities Chapter.)

Development Guidance:

- Comply with the guidance for cluster development in this chapter. Design of development on these properties should reflect the surrounding development pattern, and be compatible with these residential neighborhoods.
- Limit development to the less topographically challenged areas along the ridgelines of Bethesda Church Road and Lewis Drive.
- Limit community sewer service to only those areas that can be served by grinder systems, pressure sewers, or gravity connections to the existing public sewer.
- Limit the disturbance of the slopes in the Bennett Creek stream valley that exceed 15 percent, and avoid disturbance of the Bennett Creek stream valley with stormwater and sewer conveyance systems.
- Locate no more than 60 percent of allowable development along Bethesda Church Road or at the Lewis Drive site.
- Evaluate potential for Legacy Open Space easement for identified portions of the properties (see Community Facilities Chapter), as most of the headwater stream valley is forested and relatively undisturbed by development.

▪ **Stanley/Leishear-Day Properties**

Allow the following range of densities if the specified conditions are met:

Standard Method	RNC 0.2
Optional Method	RNC 0.4 (community sewer service) if TDRs are not used RNC 1.0 (community sewer service) with TDRs used to secure the additional density

Potential for 5 to 32 dwelling units (including MPDU bonus and 21 TDRs).

This 27-acre site consists of three properties and is directly adjacent to the north side of the Town Center.

This group of properties contains a headwater area of the Bennett Creek watershed, a Use I stream with good water quality and habitat conditions. There are approximately 16 acres of forest on the site with two stream valleys. The stream valleys, wetlands and adjacent steep slopes total over 12 acres of environmental buffers on site. The Legacy Open Space program has identified the forested stream valleys of these properties as part of the Bennett Creek Headwaters, unique because the headwater stream valley is forested and relatively undisturbed by development. Actual development potential may be limited due to other Master Plan elements, especially environmental considerations.

The modification in density is appropriate because of the location of the properties in immediate proximity to the Town Center. Residents will have walkable access to shopping, services, and institutional uses. The recommended land use will allow protection of the stream valley and Legacy area by clustering the development on small lots on the high, open land, close to Ridge Road. This will maximize the open space and preserve sensitive natural areas.

Development Guidance:

- Comply with the guidance for cluster development in this chapter and the recommendations for community water and sewer service in the Implementation Chapter.
- Address environmental constraints and topographic limitations. Environmental constraints and other Master Plan elements, including land use recommendations for avoiding stream valley disturbance to provide sewer, may limit the actual development potential of this area.
- Single-family housing should be the primary development type used, with some use of attached housing that is built to resemble large single-family housing. Development types, such as rows of townhouses, should be avoided.
- Avoid disturbance to slopes that exceed 15 percent. Development must be planned to maximize the open space and preserve sensitive natural areas.
- Establish and designate open space area to include in the Legacy Open Space program, either through conservation easements or dedication, as part of the subdivision of these properties.
- Locate a pump station to provide sewer service for cluster development on this property and to potentially serve an area of failing septic systems to the north. The location of a potential pump station should minimize impacts to environmental buffers. The pump station should be located to avoid stream crossings.

- **Miller Property
(RE-1 Zone with Potential for 21 to 25 dwelling units)**

The site consists of approximately 21 acres located between Howard Chapel Drive and the “Town Spring” stream tributary, a Use III tributary to the Upper Patuxent River and the drinking water reservoirs. The residual portion of the property, located west of the Town Spring Tributary, is included in the Town Center. Although smaller lot clustering would be helpful in addressing some environmental goals, sewer is needed for a viable cluster development and community sewer is not recommended due to potential for impact on the Town Spring tributary headwaters. Actual development potential may be limited.

The modification is appropriate because this property is close to the Town Center (approximately one-half mile), and because of its regulatory history. This recommendation aligns development on the Miller property with properties in the Town Spring Neighborhood to the south, and reflects the recommendations in the Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed.

Development Guidance:

- Protect natural resources. Development should be limited to those areas currently unforested, and forest planting in the unforested portions of the stream valley should be a part of development plans.
- Protect extensive forested wetlands on this property. Development potential will be limited by septic system requirements. The development guidelines in the Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed are essential for water quality and wildlife habitat, which must be protected. These constraints will also limit development potential.
- Use of Best Management Practices.
- Extend community water service.

- **Souder/Adjoining Properties
(R-90 Zone with Potential for up to 14 dwelling units)**

If all or a portion of this property is jointly subdivided and site planned comprehensively with the adjacent King/Souder property, every effort should be made to facilitate joint development. This small property group (approximately 3.7 acres) is located just west of the Damascus Elementary School along Bethesda Church Road. It consists of four developed lots and one vacant property. Because of the location at the edge of the Town Center, this Plan recommends some additional density, but assembly would be required. Although this assembly is not likely to happen soon, during the life of the Master Plan this level of additional density and clustering would be appropriate at this location.

Development Guidance:

- Development must avoid disturbance on slopes exceeding 15 percent.
- Ensure at time of subdivision that the design of development on these properties is compatible with the existing development pattern.

- **Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer**

The Church is located north of the Damascus Town Center, immediately southwest of the intersection of Ridge Road and Faith Lane, and immediately southwest of the future intersection of Woodfield Road Extended (A-12). An unnamed tributary to the Patuxent River runs through the southern portion of the Church’s property. Woodfield Road Extended will cross this tributary

on land that currently belongs to the Church and will run directly adjacent to the Church's existing stormwater management pond before intersecting with Faith Lane and Ridge Road.

Because the Church faces particularly difficult expansion problems due to its location within the Primary Management Area for the Patuxent River watershed, and along the path of the extension of Woodfield Road; this Plan provides the following guidance regarding their proposed building and parking lot expansion plans:

- Initially, this Plan recommends that the Church be permitted to utilize a proposed Park and Ride lot that:
 - Would be located on the west side of Ridge Road, directly across from the Church;
 - Would be designated and constructed to accommodate at least 200 vehicles; and;
 - The Church and the County enter into a long-term shared parking agreement that addresses their mutual needs for parking at this location and provides the Church with the use of the Park and Ride Lot for as long as this Church is located on this site.

- To facilitate this arrangement, this Plan recommends:
 - A feasibility study begin immediately following the Plan adoption; and
 - Significant progress be made so that within Fiscal Year 2009 the necessary construction funding for the Park and Ride Lot be included in the County's Capital Improvements Program budget and that the construction of the Park and Ride Lot be completed by the summer of 2011 or soon after.
 - To foster a close working relationship and better understanding between the parties, that the County and the Church maintain a regular dialogue on the progress of construction of Woodfield Road Extended (A-12) and the Park and Ride Lot.

- This Plan further recommends that if the dates and requirements noted above are not met:
 - The Plan supports the Church's proposal to construct a 145-space parking facility in the area currently occupied by its stormwater management pond and a portion of the stream valley buffer immediately south and to pursue either an off-site or on-site stormwater management plan.
 - If final engineering determines there is adequate storage capacity and the necessary approvals can be obtained, stormwater management could be provided in a surface pond to be located on property south, and by expanding that pond to the north, and jointly used to provide stormwater management for Woodfield Road Extended, proposed development on the Burdette/Walker property, and the Church. The cost of expanding the pond beyond the capacity needed for the Woodfield Road Extended project would be shared proportionately (as measured by a percentage of the contributing runoff volume) by the Church and the developer of the Burdette/Walker property if they need the capacity. If this solution is determined to be infeasible, stormwater management could be located on-site in an underground facility.
 - Within this option, the Church would provide mitigation for any resulting clearing in the Patuxent watershed as mitigation is similarly provided by the County for any clearing resulting from the construction of Woodfield Road Extended.

▪ **Other Properties in the Neighborhood Transition Area**

The existing zoning is retained on all other properties in the Neighborhood Transition Area.

Rural Transition Area

- **Patuxent Neighborhood Properties Recommendation**

- **Rural Cluster Zone for 260 properties on approximately 560 acres**

- This area is located northeast of Ridge Road (MD 27) and west of Howard Chapel Drive within the Patuxent River watershed. Putting these properties in this agricultural zone will also increase their potential eligibility for conservation easements. The recommendation reflects the environmental considerations of the Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed. Because several older subdivisions in the area face failing wells or septic systems, this area is also recommended for extension of public water.

- **Other Properties in the Rural Transition Area**

- The existing zoning is retained on all other properties in the Rural Transition Area.

RURAL AREAS

Damascus continues to be a community surrounded by agriculture and rural open space, and many active farms operate in the Master Plan area. Damascus links and provides continuity for the western and eastern agriculturally oriented areas of the County. This area includes the Rural Density Transfer Area and Rural Village Communities.

Vision

This Plan recommends continued support for the goals of the Agricultural Reserve. The Damascus Rural Area should be an area of agricultural uses, with some low density housing. Existing rural hamlets should be protected and enhanced.

Framework

Much of the land area within the Damascus Master Plan boundary is within the Agricultural Reserve, primarily within the Rural Density Transfer (RDT) Zone, the focus of the County's farmland preservation policies. Approximately 1,050 acres within the Damascus Master Plan area are protected for agricultural and rural open space uses by use of the RDT Zone. Farms and rural landscapes are interspersed with older subdivisions and historic crossroads communities that include residential and some commercial uses.

Lands within the Agricultural Reserve are given special protections from urban and suburban development pressures. Non-agriculturally related commercial, industrial, or institutional uses are discouraged. Farming and agriculturally related activities are encouraged.

Preserving farmland in Montgomery County is a means to achieve quality of life, and economic and environmental goals. Agricultural land preservation in Damascus is important for maintaining the County's agricultural base, and in strengthening the role of Damascus as the rural market focus in this part of the County.

This Plan recommends focusing residential development around the center of Damascus to strengthen the Town Center and to preserve the surrounding farmland and rural landscapes. Other County programs are working on the important issues related to enhancing and protecting farming as an important business for the County. This Plan reinforces those programs by recommendations to keep this prime farmland and forest open and available for agriculture.

Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

The Plan reaffirms the rural protections of the RDT Zone in the Damascus Master Plan area and recommends three rural village areas for increased protection. Recommendations include the following:

- Retain the existing boundaries of the RDT Zone, except as noted, and support agriculture and agriculturally related business.
- Endorse and support criteria for evaluation of agriculturally related special exceptions.
- When evaluating compatibility with surrounding land uses, the impact of agriculturally related special exceptions in agricultural zones do not necessarily need to be controlled as stringently as the impact of a similar special exception in a residential zone.
- Establish guidelines for development in the Rural Density Transfer Area.
- Establish Special Exception guidelines for rural vista protection in the Rural Areas of Damascus.
- Apply a zoning category that protects existing rural villages.
- Endorse emerging agricultural methods and practices, and agriculturally related businesses as the best – most efficient, effective, and economical – means to maintain a viable agricultural economy and protect the Agricultural Reserve. This Plan particularly supports environmentally responsible sustainable agricultural practices.
- Reinforce protection of environmentally sensitive areas and upland forest habitat.

Rural Density Transfer Area

This Master Plan confirms and retains the existing boundaries of the Rural Density Transfer (RDT) Zone in Damascus with minor modifications in Browningsville, Etchison and Purdum. This Plan supports agriculture and agriculturally related businesses. Agriculture is evolving in Montgomery County, and this Plan supports programs that encourage emerging and evolving types of agriculture. As stated in the 1993 Refinement to the General Plan:

Agriculture is a dynamic industry whose success depends upon the ability to adapt to market forces. In addition to continued traditional farming, some transition to non-traditional farming practices is expected. Some fields that once grew corn and wheat may well be planted with fruits, berries, and vegetables to serve the regional market place. Greenhouses, hydroponic farms, and other intensive farming techniques may be more prevalent in the future as the industry responds to changing market needs, preferences, and policies.

This Plan supports programs, practices and regulatory changes necessary to ensure the continued evolution of sustainable agriculture and agriculturally related uses. To further that goal, this Plan supports additional guidance for residential development in the RDT Zone, an issue of concern from agricultural preservation and rural character perspectives. Creative land use will foster the preservation of both farmland and rural character. These standards reflect goals for residential uses in the Agricultural Reserve that protect the potential for agriculture—the primary intent of the zone.

Putting a greater priority on the preservation of open, contiguous farmland is a primary goal of any reform of subdivision in the RDT Zone. In preserving “rural” character and open vistas of farmland and open spaces, lot size is usually less of a determinant than placement of home building sites. With appropriate tools and incentives in place, arable land and vistas may be more easily preserved by the creative use of easements or by creating non-buildable “out-lots” than through either clustering or large lot development.

This Plan recommends a land conservation approach for residential development in the RDT Zone properties in Damascus. The guidelines encourage either small lot clusters, non-buildable out-lots, or creative homesite placement with overlay easements to preserve contiguous fields, important vistas, or environmentally sensitive features. The guidelines encourage creative development patterns that preserve both open contiguous fields and forests, and the preservation of rural character. Large contiguous areas of prime and productive farm fields have the greatest potential for continuing agricultural production. The guidelines are primarily intended for subdivisions creating five or more lots and on properties of 100 or more acres.

Development Guidance - Agricultural Conservation Standards for Residential Development in the RDT Zone:

- The use of cluster, out-lot, or easement methods is encouraged to preserve contiguous fields and forest, while providing increased flexibility in lot layout and allowing the density permitted in the zone. Large lots should be avoided unless conservation or other protective easements are used to designate and protect farm fields, environmental resources, or other open space.
- If common open space is identified for conservation, the preliminary plan must include a description of the intended use and a plan for maintenance of the common open space. Areas reserved for conservation should be recorded on the plan of development as either a separate parcel, non-buildable outlot, or easement on the residential lot or lots. The designated area must be clearly delineated and the easement noted on the record plat in the land records of Montgomery County.
- The location of building sites and roads should further the preservation of prime and productive farm fields, environmentally sensitive areas, scenic vistas, and rural character to the extent allowed by the need to accommodate waste treatment.
- Residential development should be designed to reduce the potential for conflict between the residential and the agricultural uses within the development and in relation to existing uses on adjoining tracts. Substantial setbacks can provide buffers between designated agricultural areas and any existing residential buildings on adjoining property, and between designated or existing offsite agricultural areas and planned housing sites.
- Development design should first identify important resources and related buffer areas that need to be preserved, including location of prime and productive soils. When determining the location of building sites, the identified resources should be avoided to the greatest possible extent.
- The design of the road network should consider the following:
 - Limit physical impact on the natural and historic environment, and avoid extensive cutting through wooded areas.
 - Respect the contours of the land and avoid cross slope routes.
 - Protect rural vistas by preserving existing woodland buffers to the extent safety considerations allow.
- Placement of building sites should consider the preservation of rural vistas and the preservation of contiguous open fields.

Special Exception Guideline for Rural Vista Protection

To ensure careful consideration of the long rural vistas that are a unique aspect of this community, this Plan strongly encourages the protection of the rural vistas that are intrinsic to the character of the Damascus vicinity. Damascus is a town set on a hill, and the long vistas outside the Town Center provide the most distinctive visual element for the community. Land uses that impede those vistas should be discouraged. Because of the uniqueness of the rural areas surrounding Damascus, that are at the highest elevations in the County, this Plan recommends language in the Implementation Chapter to guide review of special exception uses proposed in the Rural Areas.

Rural Village Communities

Montgomery County has a number of small crossroad rural communities, each possessing unique social and physical characteristics. Residents often have historical ties to their communities. These communities feature local institutions like post offices, retail stores, or churches. Some of these villages also provide limited commercial services to area residents.

This Plan supports the continuation of limited convenience retail, agriculturally related commercial activity, and tourism related commercial activity in these rural settlements. This Plan does not support all of the inherent commercial uses that are permitted in the commercial zones that are used in these villages. The existing scale of development should be maintained and enhanced, but not expanded. And new development should be consistent with the historical character and community lifestyle of rural settlements.

This Plan recommends using a modified version of the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone to provide a mixed-use zone approach appropriate for rural communities to protect villages that may become subject to potential development pressures. The Rural Village Center Overlay Zone is designed to create attractive, cohesive, and pedestrian-friendly rural village centers and prohibits land uses otherwise allowed in the underlying zone that would be inappropriate in rural villages. Amendments to this zone are proposed to prohibit additional uses that would be inappropriate in these villages, allow certain uses only by special exception, and allow the Montgomery County Planning Board to modify setback and green area requirements if necessary to better replicate existing development patterns. The purpose of this zoning is to maintain the existing scale of development. New development should be consistent with the historical character and community lifestyles.

This Master Plan proposes the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone to fulfill this vision for the rural villages of Browningsville, Etchison, and Purdum. The village of Lewisdale is only partially in this Master Plan area and is not recommended for this zone.

- **Browningsville** – The community was named for the Browning family. The village is a crossroads of Clarksburg Road and Bethesda Church Road, an area seeing increasing traffic from emerging suburbs in Frederick County.
- **Etchison** – This crossroads community served the surrounding farming families. The village store and historic Mount Tabor United Methodist Church are centers of community life. The location at the intersection of Laytonsville Road (MD 108) and Damascus Road (MD 650) faces rapidly increasing traffic loads from commuters.
- **Purdum** – The village of Purdum on Mountain View Road is a community of a dozen houses and two farmsteads that includes two late-19th century churches. Although the village is located away from commuter roads and less subject to development pressures, protection is recommended.

Guidance for Development in the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone - To support the intent of the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone, any proposed new development must consider the following guidance.

- Village character should be maintained and enhanced through buildings of compatible scale, massing, siting, and setbacks for new or expanded uses.
- Pedestrian and bicycle circulation should be emphasized through street design, including streetscape and traffic calming, sidewalks, and access to trail networks.
- Development that provides varied uses to serve the needs of the local community should be encouraged.
- Opportunities for appropriately scaled new and existing businesses are supported in compact and pedestrian-friendly commercial areas.
- Any development should consider the rural character of surrounding areas, providing vistas beyond the village through streetscape design and building placement.
- Setbacks for new development should replicate the existing setback pattern in the village to the greatest possible extent, rather than the setbacks in the current zone.
- Green area for development may be reduced if the Planning Board determines that reduced green space would better reflect the existing character of the village.

HOUSING

GOAL: Provide a variety of housing options including affordable housing and housing opportunities for seniors suitable to the small town character of Damascus.

INTRODUCTION

The community of Damascus offers one of the most balanced housing markets in the County, offering a diversity of housing types and prices. Affordably priced housing in a small town setting, convenient access to employment centers, and the surrounding agricultural and rural open space have attracted and retained an increasing number of young families in recent years.

Cluster housing is preferred on major developable parcels over standard designs. Mixed-use buildings are preferred in the Town Center over single-use, single-story buildings. Additional residential opportunities are encouraged in the Town Center. This Plan reflects the need to balance the occasionally competing goals of housing, the environment, transportation, and town building.

The one area of significant need is senior housing. The community has many long time residents who wish to remain in the community as they age, so the demand for senior housing has become more pronounced. Currently, there are very few housing options within the Damascus plan area for the expanding senior population. This Plan identifies potential locations for senior housing.

This Plan recommends land use changes that encourage additional affordable housing while protecting environmental resources. The Town Center will provide opportunities for moderate density residential and commercial development, while adjoining areas are encouraged to cluster housing near roads, and preserve stream valleys and forest resources. The most significant additional housing is proposed in the Town Center, which will contribute to the viability of local businesses and create a livelier center for the Damascus community. Outside the Town Center, this Plan supports limited additional single-family housing. This is due to the location of Damascus in the rural north of the County, with limited access to public sewer, environmental constraints, and limited transit options. This Plan recommends:

- **Moderate-density development within the Town Center**
Multifamily, single-family attached, and live-work units within the Town Center will accommodate a significant portion of the need for moderately priced residential development in this community. Increased densities will also accommodate moderately priced dwelling units (MPDUs) and contribute to the economic base for local retail and service businesses.
- **Increased senior housing for residents of the Damascus area**
Senior housing would be most appropriately and conveniently located within the Town Center. Two potential sites are discussed.
- **Cluster development to maintain the small town character of Damascus**
Developable sites within the Transition Areas are recommended for small lot, single-family cluster development where public sewer is available. A moderate amount of development potential remains in the RE-2C and Rural Cluster Zone in the eastern portion of the Master Plan. This Plan supports the eventual development of those properties using the cluster option for development.

- **Use of TDR receiving areas where appropriate**
Where infrastructure is available and environmental regulations permit, TDR receiving sites create additional housing opportunities that also contribute to agricultural preservation goals.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Town Center

Creating senior housing opportunities and additional moderate density housing are the primary housing goals for the Town Center.

- **Moderate Density Residential Development** – As indicated in the Land Use Chapter, the Town Center will accommodate a variety of housing types. Currently, less than 8 percent of the existing housing stock within Damascus is multifamily housing and most of that is within the Town Center. This Plan encourages further moderate density residential development to enhance the vitality and character of the Town Center. The types of moderate density development that are contemplated include live-work units, townhouse and multifamily units.

Existing densities in the Town Center have the potential to allow approximately 500 dwelling units, based on the maximum development potential of the existing ten zones in the Town Center (illustrated in the Existing Zoning map in the Land Use Chapter).

The proposed land use in the Town Center will generate a maximum theoretical total of slightly more than 1,300 dwelling units within the Town Center. The proposed land use recommendations will provide more flexibility for the property owners, and more design and scale certainty for area residents.

Maximum Yield from Existing Zones in the Town Center

Zone	Land Area (sf)	Land Area (ac)	Residential Units (du)	Residential Density (du/ac)	Non-Residential GFA (sf)	Non-Residential FAR
C-2	2,803,249	64.4	0*	-	4,204,874	1.50
C-T	43,560	1.0	0*	-	21,780	.50
O-M	277,913	6.4	0*	-	416,870	1.50
PD-7	1,075,174	24.7	163	6.6	3,258	0.00
I-1	686,855	15.8	0*	-	N/A**	N/A**
RE-2C	1,665,354	38.2	15	0.4	-	-
R-200	914,364	21.0	51	2.4	-	-
R-60	207,346	4.8	29	6.1	-	-
RT-8.0	262,474	6.0	59	9.8	-	-
R-30	514,476	11.8	184	17.7	-	-
TOTAL	8,450,765	194.0	501	2.6	4,646,781	0.55

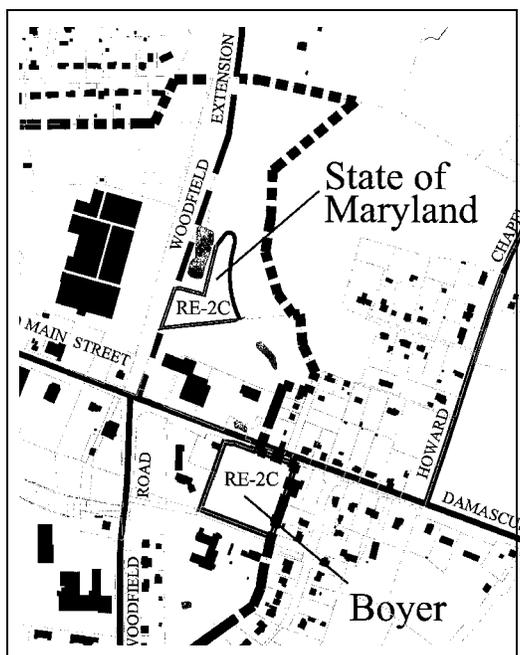
* Residential density is highly unlikely in the C-2, C-T, O-M and I-1 zones

** No maximum density limits in the I-1 zone.

- **Senior Housing** – Existing options for seniors (independent and assisted housing) are limited in the Damascus area. Specialized housing for elderly residents in Damascus currently consists of two group homes that can accommodate a total of 15 residents. There are only three additional group homes in the rural up-county area: one each in Poolesville, Clarksburg, and Barnesville. Together, these facilities can accommodate a total of 20 residents. There are no nursing homes or age restricted apartments in the area.

Based on the 2000 Census data, current population trends in the Damascus area indicate that while there are many young families, approximately 43 percent of residents have lived in Damascus for more than ten years. Damascus offers great potential for providing a stable community for residents who wish to “age in place.” This concept provides the type of housing that will allow residents to remain in their homes despite the limitations that occur with aging. Successful aging-in-place communities provide a variety of services that accommodate the physical, mental, and psychological changes that accompany aging.

This Plan supports residences for active seniors and some assisted living. The anticipated demand for senior housing in Damascus will support a moderate increase of approximately 150 units. Two sites within the Town Center are particularly appropriate for this use due to their proximity to services and retail uses. If both were developed at the maximum proposed density, they could provide the anticipated needed senior housing units. These sites are:



- **State of Maryland Property** – This site is located adjacent and north of the Damascus Library. A joint development venture with the private sector could provide some senior housing options at this optimal location. This 3.1-acre property has limited development opportunities due to environmental constraints stemming from its location within Town Spring subwatershed, a headwater tributary to the Patuxent River. The proposed density would permit approximately 75 units.
- **Boyer Property** – This 3.3 acre property is located on MD 108 across from the Senior Center and Library. It is adjacent to the Damascus United Methodist Church and also within the Town Center. Although this site is not ideal for pedestrian access, it presents potential opportunities for a joint development venture with the Church. Under the proposed density, approximately 82 dwelling units could be developed on this site.

Transition Areas

Housing in the Transition Areas of Damascus, located between the Town Center boundary and the Rural Areas is characterized by a range of residential development providing the bulk of the current housing stock in the community. The proposed land use for properties in the Transition Areas will generate over 4,900 dwelling units, including new TDR receiving sites.

- **Town Neighborhood Area** – The areas immediately north and south of the Town Center provide a mix of small-lot single-family homes, townhomes, and multifamily development. In this *Town Neighborhood Area* few developable parcels remain, and no changes are proposed to housing recommendations. These neighborhoods are the cornerstone of Damascus’ strength as a community offering a wide range of moderately priced, single-family housing with convenient access to schools, shopping, and recreation facilities. The Plan recommends improvements to non-vehicle access to these areas, and zoning to reflect existing lot sizes.

- **Neighborhood Transition Area** – A *Neighborhood Transition Area*, located further away from the Town Center, provides somewhat lower density existing housing; and contains developable sites that are addressed in this Master Plan. These sites are recommended for some clustered low-density single-family housing opportunities, including TDR receiving sites that have the potential to provide moderately priced dwelling units, contributing additional affordable housing within the Plan area.
- **Rural Transition Area** – The lowest density residential potential is in a *Rural Transition Area* that is primarily zoned for large lot (five acre cluster option) development. The pace of this very low-density development was particularly significant in the late 1990's in the eastern portion of the Master Plan area. This zoning is recommended as a means to protect stream valleys and woodlands. The consequence of the zoning has been development of a significant number of large new homes, adding a housing type generally not previously available in the Damascus area. Some developable parcels remain, and they will provide some additional luxury housing opportunities. An area north and east of the Town Center (west of Howard Chapel Drive and east of Ridge Road) is recommended for a change from two-acre to five-acre density, reflecting environmental goals. This change will have limited housing impact as the entire area is beyond the potential sewer envelope and the soil types in this area are difficult for placing septic fields, making the five-acre density closer to the realistic development potential.

Rural Areas

Little housing growth is anticipated in the rural areas of this Plan. Most of the rural areas are in the Rural Density Transfer Zone, which limits housing to one unit for every twenty-five acres. Some additional housing is anticipated in the area of existing rural communities, but wastewater treatment limitations curtail development potential. The proposed land use for Rural Area properties will yield slightly over 1,100 dwelling units.

Public Sites

There are no vacant publicly owned sites in the Plan area, other than the already discussed potential senior housing site in the Town Center, that can be considered for additional housing opportunities. Two vacant school sites are in the Plan area, and one more is just outside the Plan area. The Board of Education has no plans to surplus these sites. Even if they were to be considered for surplus, infrastructure limitations would make them of limited usefulness for additional housing. They would be better considered for park and recreation resources as discussed in the Parkland section of the Community Facilities Chapter.

HOUSING ANALYSIS

Housing Types

The 2000 Census data for the Damascus area indicates that of the 5,559 existing households within the area, more than 92 percent of the housing is single-family detached units and townhomes. Of the total households in this planning area, 7.3 percent are multifamily units, located within the Neighborhood Transition or Town Center areas.

Housing Prices

New single-family detached houses have been the most expensive category in Damascus in recent years, and the only one to exceed Countywide prices. Although resale housing accounts for almost all of housing sales, the number of new single-family detached dwellings have increased in the past couple of years. Most of these have been in low-density developments within the Rural Transition portion of the eastern side of the Plan area. Although these homes are significantly higher in price compared to Countywide averages, Damascus generally has more affordable housing options than most other areas of the County.

County housing policies reflect a commitment to increase the supply of moderate and affordable workforce housing. Housing affordability concerns arise when households earning the area median income find that they cannot afford the median priced housing (purchase or rental) available in the area. Housing in Damascus complements the County's needs by offering a variety of existing reasonably priced housing, and this Plan provides a variety of opportunities for additional multifamily, attached, and small-lot single-family housing. Most of the existing affordable housing in Damascus is market rate detached and attached single-family housing.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Population Trends

One of the trends in the 2000 Census data reveals that Damascus residents tend to be younger (a median age of 35.1) compared to the County average age (36.8). Almost 25 percent of the area's population is school age, compared to about 18 percent of the entire County. Over half (56.9 percent) moved to their current address during the 1990's, and 43.1 percent of Damascus households have been at their current address for more than 10 years, compared to 34.5 percent of all County households. These statistics reflect a large proportion of young families and the relative affordability of housing in the community and suggest that many residents value the small town character of Damascus and want to raise their families here.

The 2000 Census also indicates that the "Baby Boomer" population (35-54 years of age in 2000) makes up approximately one-third of the population in Damascus. As this population ages in coming years, the need for senior housing will become more pronounced. Active seniors will need housing facilities that can support lifestyle changes such as single floor, higher-density living in proximity to convenience retail, restaurants, cultural activities, and entertainment. This Plan supports the development of active senior housing and a limited level of assisted senior housing within the context of the town's current character. More intensive levels of assisted senior housing or nursing care are more likely to locate in areas that are closer to a hospital than in Damascus.

Development Trends

The land use recommendations proposed in this Plan will significantly increase housing potential in the Town Center areas (through moderate density mixed-use, multifamily, and attached housing), and moderately increase single-family detached housing in the Transition Areas.

The most dramatic change to the character of Damascus in recent years has been the number of new large homes on large lots on the eastern periphery of the Plan area. The prices of these estate homes have not been typical of the area, and along with the widespread price pressure in the County, they have led to generally higher housing costs.

Overall, Damascus offers a reasonable supply of new and resale affordable housing, both subsidized and market rate; and a more recent availability of luxury homes. This Plan proposes land use policies to continue to offer housing diversity and balance, adding to the supply of multifamily and small lot single-family housing.

Proposed Transferable Development Rights Receiving Sites

To meet the agricultural preservation goals of the County, this Plan uses transferable development rights (TDRs) as the primary means to create any new density potential where additional density is appropriate. The table below indicates approximate development yield of the receiving sites for TDRs proposed in this Plan through the use of a new MXTC/TDR zone in part of the Town Center and a new RNC/TDR zone on certain properties in the Transition Areas.

Summary of Optional Method TDR Potential

Property Group	Acres	Standard Method	Optional Method No TDR	Optional Method TDR	DU Yield Standard Method	Yield Optional Method No TDR	Yield Optional Method TDR	Maximum Yield with MPDU DU	TDR Potential
Transition Area - RNC/TDR									
Casey/Lewis	45	0.2	0.4	0.5	9	18	23	27	13
Warfield	78	0.2	0.4	0.75	15	31	59	71	42
Burdette	82	0.2	0.4	1.0	16	32	82	100	65
Kingstead/Leishear	138	0.2	0.2	0.5	27	27	69	84	41
Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway	50	0.2	0.4	1.0	10	20	50	61	40
Stanley/Leishear -Day	27	0.2	0.4	1.0	5	10	27	32	21
Town Center – MXTC/TDR									
Selected Properties Outer Area	50	8 per acre	NA	20 per acre	399	NA	999	999	600
TOTAL	470						1,309	1,374	822

TRANSPORTATION

GOAL: Improve the efficiency of the roadway network, provide road improvements, expand the pedestrian and bicycle path networks, and improve the potential for intercepting commuters through expanded transit options.

INTRODUCTION

The Damascus Master Plan area lies at the northern tip of Montgomery County. Due to this location, travelers from Frederick County, Howard County, and Carroll County substantially affect transportation conditions. Currently, the area features a network of two-lane roads that serve linear development patterns. The transportation recommendations for the Damascus Master Plan area include four primary components:

- **Roadway Recommendations** focus on improving the efficiency of the two-lane roadway network through operational, design, and classification recommendations.
- **Pedestrian System Recommendations** provide a dense network of sidewalks within the Town Center, with extensions to key civic destinations elsewhere in the Plan area.
- **Bikeway System** features a network of shared-use pathways oriented toward the Town Center and Magruder Branch Trail, connection to area parks and the County trail systems, and recommendations to improve on-road cyclist accommodations along the arterial roadway network.
- **Transit Recommendations** include an additional park-and-ride lot to be located north of the Town Center to intercept longer distance commuters, and support further study and implementation of transit operations.

Approximately 60 percent of the traffic entering or leaving the Damascus Policy Area is through traffic, and about 40 percent is generated by local land uses. Based on the land use recommendations of this Plan, the Damascus Master Plan area is estimated to have a realistic long-range development potential for up to approximately 7,300 total households and 3,700 jobs. The additional growth is primarily located within the central Master Plan area.

ROADWAY NETWORK AND CLASSIFICATIONS

Primary access routes to Damascus are on three state highways, MD 124, MD 108, and MD 27. The need to manage through commuter traffic is the most significant transportation issue facing area residents. The need to balance the needs of vehicular travel versus pedestrian and bicycle travel is the next most significant issue.

This Plan modifies the 1982 and 1993 Master Plan in several ways, although maintaining the basic policy direction. It removes two unbuilt primary residential roadways that would have required new stream valley crossings, and includes a classification of several previously unclassified roadways as either primary residential streets or country roads, reflecting their current function in the roadway network. Reflecting the concern of Damascus residents, specific design and operational treatments are suggested for further study and implementation including traffic signal warrant analyses, investigation of auxiliary turning lanes at intersections, and context-based design.

Context-based street design techniques will encourage slower speeds and added awareness of the presence of pedestrians in the Town Center and entry street segments of Ridge Road, Woodfield Road and Damascus Road. These emerging road design techniques promote road design that reflects intended traffic speeds, instinctively slowing vehicle speed. Drivers instinctively know from the visual cues such as narrower vehicle travel lanes, street trees, sidewalks, on-street parking, and curb extensions (or “bumpouts”) that they must be more careful and drive more slowly.

On local streets traffic-calming tools (such as speed humps and roundabouts) slow traffic at strategic locations and make the streets safer for pedestrians and bicyclists. These tools impede traffic flow only to slow its speed.

Town Center Streets

This Plan recommends two initiatives in the Town Center to improve connectivity and access:

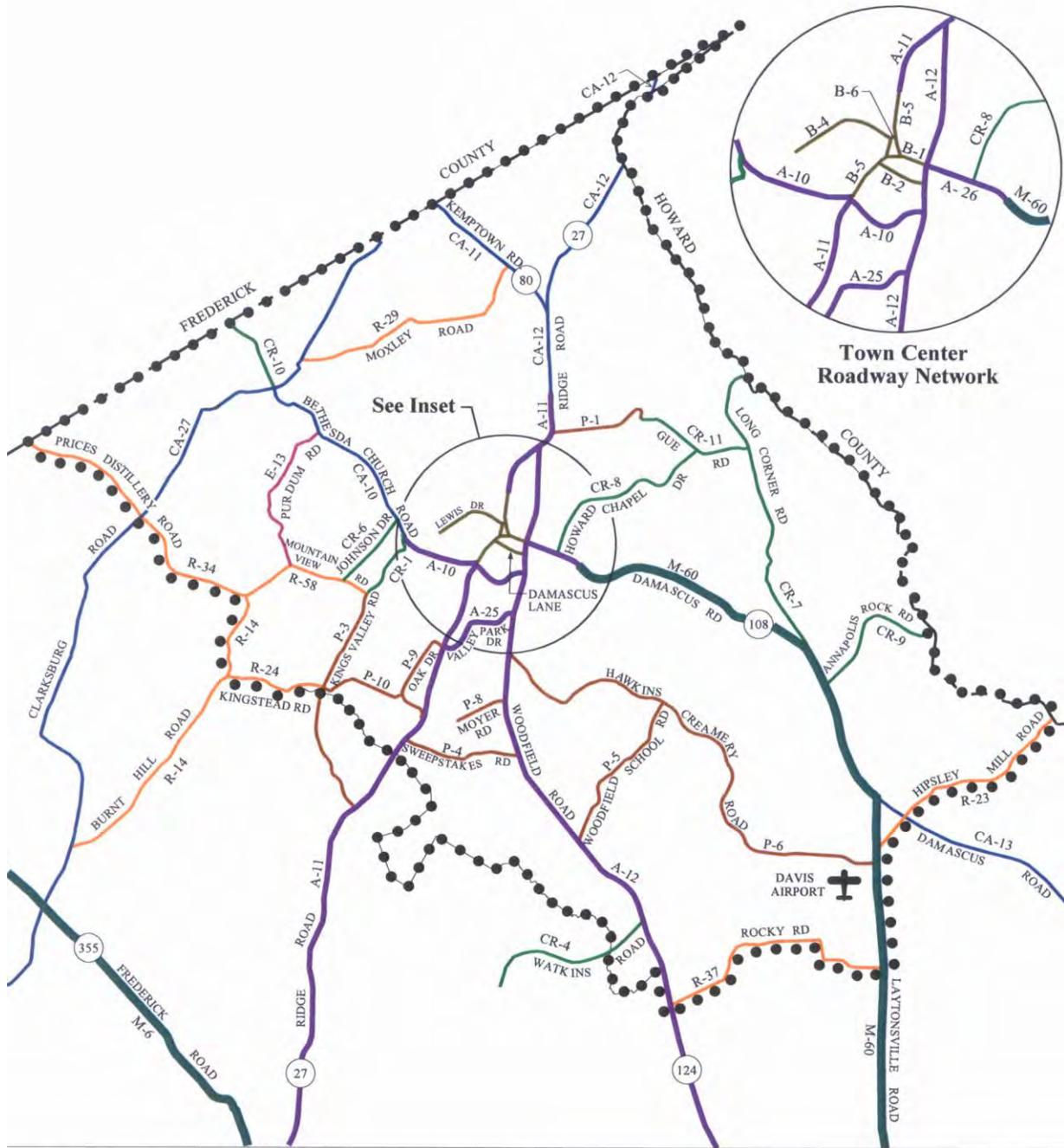
- **Damascus Lane** - This Plan recommends a business street connection (B-2) parallel to and south of Main Street connecting Ridge Road (MD 27) to Woodfield Road (MD 124). This street will provide access to the underutilized areas behind the buildings on the south side of Main Street. This street, envisioned as a small access lane, not a thoroughfare, replaces the proposed “Damascus Boulevard” discussed in prior Master Plans. It will also provide access to a planned trailhead within the Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park. This street should integrate a bikeway and sidewalks, and should be designed to be as narrow as possible due to environmental and grade constraints and be perceived as a “lane” rather than a boulevard. The recommended right-of-way for B-2 is 60 feet, but vehicle travel lanes should reflect the intended use and be narrow enough to ensure slow travel speeds.
- **Town Center Street Design** - This Plan supports development of a road design template for the following road segments in the Town Center to apply context-based design methodologies that give visual cues to entering motorists that they are entering a town area where slower traffic speeds are both posted and logical. They include:
 - Ridge Road from Oak Drive to the High School
 - Ridge Road from High Street to the A-12 Intersection
 - Woodfield Road from Valley Park/Oak Drive to Bethesda Church Road
 - Damascus Road from Howard Chapel Drive to the Woodfield Road Intersection

The figure on page 52 identifies the Damascus Master Plan roadways on the Master Plan of Highways and the table on pages 53-55 lists their classifications with minimum rights-of-way. The classification of roadways is a way of indicating the degree to which access to properties is balanced with the ability to handle through traffic. The system ranges from Freeways with an emphasis on through traffic capacity and little or no direct property access down to the Primary Residential Street which emphasizes access functions, which may affect the efficiency of through traffic movement. Secondary Residential Streets are not shown on the Master Plan of Highways.

The roadway classes are detailed in the following list:

Freeways	Provide for movement of vehicles at high speed over significant distances. Access is limited to grade-separated interchanges.
Major Highways	Provide less speed and mobility compared to freeways and access at some intersections.
Arterial Roads	Connect major highways and provide more access points while moving traffic at lower speeds. Typically, more than half of the traffic on an arterial is through "through" traffic.
Commercial Business District Streets	Are restricted to mixed-use or commercial areas, provide on-street parking, more pedestrian space, and more access points to stores and offices.
Primary Residential Streets	May carry some through traffic but their main purpose is to provide direct access for 200 or more households and to connect to arterial roads.
Secondary or Tertiary Residential Streets	Provide direct access to homes and allow for greater application of traffic management measures to discourage through traffic movements and speeding. (These streets are not listed in master plans).

Roadway Network Classifications



- ● ● ● Master Plan Area Boundary
- Major Highway (M-x)
- Arterial (A-x)
- Business Street (B-x)
- Primary Residential Road (P-x)
- Country Road (CR-x)
- Rustic Road (R-x)
- Exceptional Rustic Road (E-x)
- Country Arterial (CA-x)



Street and Highway Classifications

Roadway		Limits	Minimum ROW (ft)	Travel Lanes **
Major Highways				
M-60	Damascus Road (MD 108)	2800' east of Woodfield Road (MD 124) to Laytonsville Road (MD 108)	120	2
M-60	Laytonsville Road (MD 108)	Damascus Road (MD 108/MD 650) to Rocky Road	120	2
Arterials				
A-10	Bethesda Church Road	Kings Valley Road to Woodfield Road (MD 124)	80	2
A-11	Ridge Road (MD 27)	Southern Plan Area boundary to Bethesda Church Road	100	2
A-11	Ridge Road (MD 27)	Bellison Road to a point 450' north of High Corner Street	100	2
A-12	Woodfield Road (MD 124) plus northern extension	Southern Plan Area boundary to Ridge Road (MD 27)	80	2
A-25	Valley Park Drive	Ridge Road (MD 27) to Woodfield Road (MD 124)	80–120	2
A-26	Damascus Road (MD 108)	Woodfield Road (MD 124) to 2,800' Eastward	80	2
Primary Residential Roads				
P-1	Gue Road	Ridge Road (MD 27) to 5,000 feet east	70	2
P-3	Kings Valley Road	Southern Plan area boundary to Mountain View Road	70	2
P-4	Sweepstakes Road	Ridge Road (MD 27) to Woodfield Road (MD 124)	70	2
P-5	Woodfield School Road	Woodfield Road (MD 124) to Hawkins Creamery Road	70	2
P-6	Hawkins Creamery Road	Woodfield Road (MD 124) to Laytonsville Road (MD 108)	70	2
P-8	Moyer Road	Moyer Road Park to Woodfield Road (MD 124)	70	2
P-9	Oak Drive ¹	Ridge Road (MD 27) to Ridge Road (MD 27)	70	2
P-10	Kingstead Road	Kings Valley Road to Oak Drive	70	2

¹ The northernmost section of Oak Drive should be realigned to meet Valley Park Drive as described in the text.

Roadway		Limits	Minimum ROW (ft)	Travel Lanes **
Rustic Roads				
R-14	Burnt Hill Road	Southern Plan Area boundary to Prices Distillery Road	70	2
R-23	Hipsley Mill Road	Laytonsville Road (MD 108) to Howard County Line	70	2
R-24	Kingstead Road	Southern Plan Area boundary to Kings Valley Road	70	2
R-29	Moxley Road	Clarksburg Road to Kemptown Road (MD 80)	70	2
R-34	Prices Distillery Road	Frederick County Line to Mountain View/Purdum Road	70	2
R-37	Rocky Road	Woodfield Road (MD 124) to Laytonsville Road (MD 108)	70	2
R-58	Mountain View Road	Purdum/Prices Distillery Road to Kings Valley Road	70	2
Exceptional Rustic Road				
E-13	Purdum Road	Prices Distillery/Mt. View Road to Bethesda Church Road	80	2
Country Arterials				
CA-10	Bethesda Church Road	Clarksburg Road to Kings Valley Road	80	2
CA-11	Kemptown Road (MD 80)	Frederick County Line to Ridge Road (MD 27)	80	2
CA-12	Ridge Road (MD 27)	Bellison Road to Howard County Line	100	2
CA-12	Ridge Road (MD 27)	Howard County Line to Frederick County Line	100	2
CA-13	Damascus Road (MD 650)	Laytonsville Road (MD 108) to Eastern Plan boundary	80	2
CA-27	Clarksburg Road	Southern Plan area boundary to Frederick County Line	80	2
Country Roads				
CR-1	Kings Valley Road	Mountain View Road to Bethesda Church Road	70	2
CR-4	Watkins Road	Southern Plan area Boundary to Woodfield Road (MD 124)	70	2
CR-6	Johnson Drive	Mountain View Road to Bethesda Church Road	70	2
CR-7	Long Corner Road	Damascus Road (MD 108) to Howard County Line	70	2
CR-8	Howard Chapel Drive	Damascus Road (MD 108) to Gue Road	70	2
CR-9	Annapolis Rock Road	Damascus Road (MD 108) to Howard County Line	70	2
CR-10	Bethesda Church Road	Clarksburg Road to Frederick County Line	70	2
CR-11	Gue Road	5,000 feet east of MD 27 to Long Corner Road	80	2

Roadway		Limits	Minimum ROW (ft)	Travel Lanes **
Business District Roads				
B-1	Main Street (MD 108)	Woodfield Road (MD 124) to Ridge Road (MD 27)	80	2
B-2	Damascus Lane	Ridge Road (MD 27) to Woodfield Road (MD 124)	60	2
B-4	Lewis Drive	Ridge Road (MD 27) to 900' west of High Corner Street	80	2
B-5	Ridge Road (MD 27)	Bethesda Church Road to 450' north of High Corner Street	80	2
B-6	High Corner Street	Ridge Road (MD 27) to Lewis Drive	80	2

**The number of planned through travel lanes for each segment does not include turning lanes, parking, acceleration, deceleration, or other purposes auxiliary to through travel.

Road Classifications

Certain roads within the Master Plan are recommended for a change in their classification within the network to meet changed conditions or increased use.

- **Oak Drive** – Classify as a Primary Residential roadway (P-9) and realign to meet Valley Park Drive at Ridge Road. The road provides vehicular and pedestrian access to John T. Baker Middle School and the adjacent Recreation Center (completed 2004). A realignment of the northern intersection of Oak Drive and Ridge Road to meet Valley Park Drive would replace two offset “T” intersections with a single four-leg intersection, improving traffic operations and safety. The realignment should avoid residential property displacements by incorporating a right-angle turn in the vicinity of the Recreation Center driveway and meeting Ridge Road at a slight skew angle. A geometric or traffic control device such as an intersection or roundabout may be required to implement the recommended right-angle turn. A conversion of a quarter-acre of parkland to right-of-way is expected. This Plan recommends evaluating means for an improved pedestrian crossing of Ridge Road.
- **Kingstead Road** – Classify as a Primary Residential roadway (P-10) between Kings Valley Road and Oak Drive. Because this section does not support commercial land uses and is not needed for network connectivity between state highways, arterial classification is not warranted.
- **Woodfield School Road** – Classify as a Primary Residential roadway (P-5) between Woodfield Road (MD 124) and Hawkins Creamery Road. Previously unclassified, this roadway functions as a primary residential roadway and provides access to Woodfield Local Park.
- **P-2 Road** – The proposed Primary Residential roadway connection (P-2) between Woodfield Road Extended and Howard Chapel Drive is no longer viable due to environmental constraints associated with crossing the “Town Spring” tributary stream valley. The transportation network connectivity associated with P-2 is instead provided via Howard Chapel Drive (CR-8).
- **P-5 Road** – The proposed Primary Residential roadway connection (P-5) between Greenel Road and Johnson Farm Road is no longer viable due to topographic and development constraints in the area. This Plan removes the Primary Residential roadway classification from the built portions of these two roadways. The function of the primary roadway connection will be served by the classification of Woodfield School Road as the Primary Residential roadway (P-5) connection as previously described.

Two Lane Road Policy

This Master Plan recommends retaining the existing two-lane roadway network outside the Town Center to protect the rural and agricultural character of the Damascus area. The limitation on through travel lanes is not intended to preclude the implementation of spot safety and operational improvements such as turning lanes, acceleration/deceleration lanes or signalization. It is noted that the Maryland State Highway Administration's "2005 Montgomery County Highway Needs Inventory" shows the need for a divided highway on MD 27 from Skylark Road (south of the Plan area) to Gue Road.

Rustic Roads

Montgomery County's Rustic Roads Program preserves historic and scenic roads that reflect the County's agricultural character. The Program defines categories for rustic roads - Rustic, and Exceptional Rustic; and two Country Road classifications - Country Road, and Country Arterial. Rustic Roads generally carry local traffic and are designated based on surrounding land uses and natural features, historic value, and road characteristics. Country road and country arterial are used to classify roadways that have unique rural features but are not intended primarily for local use. The Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan included the following roads in the Damascus Master Plan area:

- **Rustic Roads:** Prices Distillery Road, Kingstead Road (segment), Moxley Road, Rocky Road, Burnt Hill Road, and Hipsley Mill Road.
- **Interim Rustic Roads:** Mountain View Road, Johnson Drive, Purdum Road, and Long Corner Road.
- **Country Roads:** Kings Valley Road and Watkins Road.
- **Country Arterial Roads:** Clarksburg Road, Kemptown Road, Ridge Road (north of Damascus), and Damascus Road (east of Damascus to Long Corner Road).

In February 2004, the County Council approved an amendment to the Rustic Roads Master Plan with the following designations for the Interim Rustic Roads in Damascus:

<i>Rustic Road:</i>	Mountain View Road
<i>Exceptional Rustic Road:</i>	Purdum Road
<i>Country Road:</i>	Johnson Drive and Long Corner Road

This Plan recommends three additional roads for classification as Country Roads reflecting their current function as traffic-carrying rural roadways connecting Damascus to Howard or Frederick Counties:

- **Howard Chapel Drive and Gue Road** – The full length of Howard Chapel Drive and the portion of Gue Road from 5,000 feet east of MD 27 to Long Corner Road are classified as Country Roads (CR-8 and CR-11 respectively).
- **Annapolis Rock Road** – Annapolis Rock Road is classified as a Country Road (CR-9) between Damascus Road (MD 108) and Howard County, at which point the roadway is designated a State Highway (MD 94).
- **Bethesda Church Road** – The segment of Bethesda Church Road between Clarksburg Road and Frederick County is classified as a Country Road (CR-10). Bethesda Church Road east of Clarksburg Road is classified as a Country Arterial.

Operational Improvements

While specific operational recommendations are not often included in master plans, the centrality of traffic management issues to the Damascus community warrant their specific notice. The recommended improvements will almost certainly be warranted within the life of this Plan.

- Support turn lanes as needed in intersections to improve traffic flow.
- Evaluate the design of subdivision entry/exit lanes to avoid unintended negative safety impacts to pedestrians or bicyclists.
- Evaluate and support traffic signals when warranted throughout the Plan area. Expedite warrant analyses at the following locations when travel demand suggests warrants are likely to be met:
 - Ridge Road (MD 27) at Kemptown Road (MD 80)
 - Woodfield Road (MD 124) at Bethesda Church Road
 - Woodfield Road (MD 124) at Valley Park Drive
 - Ridge Road (MD 27) at Valley Park Drive

Safety Modifications

Three roadway modifications are proposed to address safety concerns:

- Realign the northern end of Kings Valley Road (CR-1) (at Bethesda Church Road) to remove the existing reverse, or “dogleg” curve to improve traffic safety. Realignment design should be consistent with the Country Road classification.
- Evaluate the best design and routing for realigning the intersection of Ridge Road with Oak Drive and Valley Park Drive to eliminate the offset intersection.
- Realign the offset intersection of Kings Valley Road and Kingstead Road in conjunction with any proposed development of the Kingstead Farm. Intersection design should be consistent with the Rustic Road classification of Kingstead Road, including preservation of existing tree stands.

Through Commuter Traffic

Community disruption related to heavy commuter traffic from Frederick, Carroll, and Howard Counties continues to be a major concern. This Plan supports the following two initiatives to address this concern:

- **Regional Study** – This Master Plan recommends that within two years after the completion of Woodfield Road Extended (A-12), the M-NCPPC will begin an evaluation of current traffic conditions and work with the community to determine how transportation should be managed in the region in the long term. A study of the long-term traffic load implications of growth patterns in the adjoining regional counties that are the contributing factors in the continuing rise in through traffic in Damascus is needed.
- **Operational Improvements to Improve Through Traffic** - This Plan also recognizes that operational transportation improvements are needed, including auxiliary turning lanes and pedestrian and bicycling amenities, particularly along the portions of Ridge Road north of Woodfield Road Extended and south of Bethesda Church Road. This Plan recommends an increase in the recommended right-of-way on these portions of Ridge Road from 80 feet to 100 feet to improve flexibility in future roadway design treatments.

AIR TRANSPORTATION

The Davis Airport is located in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Laytonsville Road (MD 108) and Hawkins Creamery Road. This regional airport includes a single runway 2,000 feet in length and is one of Montgomery County's two public-use airports as established by the Maryland Aviation Administration. This Plan recognizes the airport as one element of the County's multi-modal transportation system.

BIKEWAY AND PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS

Bikeway and pedestrian routes support the goal of increasing opportunities to provide convenient connections and encouraging walking. The bikeway classification table lists the recommended bikeway and sidewalk connections needed to create an interconnected system with the Magruder Branch Trail as the backbone of the trail system. Recommendations to meet these goals include:

Bikeways

Revise the Montgomery County Road Code to include a roadway classification for Country Road and Country Arterial with and without bikeways and sidewalks.

Shared Use Facilities

Implement sidewalk or shared-use path connections to key activity centers, including:

- Throughout the Town Center.
- Along Ridge Road and Woodfield Road between the Town Center and Sweepstakes Road.
- Along Bethesda Church Road, Valley Park Drive, and Sweepstakes Road, connecting to Ridge Road, Woodfield Road, and to the Magruder Branch Trail.
- Along Oak Drive connecting Baker Middle School and the Damascus Community Recreation Center.
- Along Ridge Road between the Town Center and Gue Road.
- Along Damascus Road between the Town Center and access to the future Seneca Springs Local Park site.

Bikeway Network



- ● ● ● Master Plan Area Boundary
- - - - Dual Bikeway (Class I and II or III)
- On Road Bikeway (Class II or III)
- Shared Use Path (Class I)



Proposed Bikeway Classifications

Ref. No.	Name	Limits	Class Type	Comments
SR-61	Woodfield Road (MD 124) - Central	Southern Planning Area Boundary to Woodfield Elementary School	On-road bikeway (Class II or III)	Connection between Damascus and Gaithersburg
DB-30	Woodfield Road (MD 124) - North	Woodfield Elementary School to Gue Road	Dual bikeway – shared use path (Class I) and on-road bikeway (Class II or III)	Shared-use path connects Damascus Town Center to key activity centers and links to Magruder Branch Trail
SR-39	Ridge Road (MD 27)	Southern Planning Area Boundary to Howard County Line	On-road bikeway (Class II or III)	Connection between Damascus and Germantown
SR-43	Laytonville Road (MD 108)	Damascus Road (MD 650) to Town of Laytonville	On-road bikeway (Class II or III)	Part of connection between Damascus and Olney/Laytonville; needs shoulder improvements
SR-44	Damascus Road (MD 108)/(MD 650)	Ridge Road (MD 27) to Hipsley Mill Road	On-road bikeway (Class II or III)	Provides east-west connections in upper part of County, needs shoulder improvements
SR-48	Kempton Road (MD 80)	Ridge Road (MD 27) to Frederick County Line	On-road bikeway (Class II or III)	Connects to a bike route in Frederick County
B-1	Bethesda Church Road	Ridge Road (MD 27) to Clarksburg Road	On-road bikeway (Class II or III)	Connection to Little Bennett Regional Park
B-2	Clarksburg Road	Frederick County Line to Prices Distillery Road	On-road bikeway (Class II or III)	Connection to Little Bennett Regional Park
B-3	Damascus Lane	Ridge Road (MD 27) to Woodfield Road (MD 124)	On-road bikeway (Class II or III)	Connection between Magruder Branch Trail and Ridge and Woodfield Roads
B-4	Long Corner Road	Howard County Line to Damascus Road (MD 108)	On-road bikeway (Class II or III)	Connection to Howard County
B-5	Bethesda Church Road	Ridge Road (MD 27) to Woodfield Road (MD 124)	Shared use path (Class I)	Connection between Magruder Branch Trail and Ridge and Woodfield Roads
B-6	Valley Park Drive	Ridge Road (MD 27) to Woodfield Road (MD124)	Shared use path (Class I)	Connection between Magruder Branch Trail and Ridge and Woodfield Roads
B-7	Moyer Road	Magruder Branch Trail to Woodfield Road (MD 124)	Shared use path (Class I)	Connection between Magruder Branch Trail and Woodfield Road
B-8	Oak Drive	Ridge Road (MD 27) to Baker Middle School	Shared use path (Class I)	Connection between Magruder Branch Trail and key activity centers on Oak Drive

Note: Reference Numbers beginning with SR and DB refer to bikeways in the Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan.

Pedestrian Access

Implement the following pedestrian safety and access improvements:

- Consider context-based roadway designs to slow vehicular speeds and make streets safer for pedestrians. Such designs encourage slower speeds and added awareness of the presence of pedestrians. This Plan recommends tools such as visual cues at the gateways into the Town Center, narrower travel lanes consistent with safety requirements, and street trees to enhance the pedestrian and bicycle environment.
- Provide safe and effective pedestrian crossings at current and future traffic signals along MD 27 and MD 124.
- Consider a below-grade pedestrian tunnel under Ridge Road (MD 27) at its intersection with Valley Park Drive/Oak Drive for pedestrian safety.

TRANSIT AND TRAVEL DEMAND MANAGEMENT

Greater emphasis on public transit is necessary to increase the efficient use of roads and help reduce congestion. Since the Damascus Master Plan area is a low-density residential area, fixed-guideway transitways are not feasible. This Master Plan supports implementation of the Corridor Cities Transitway such as rail transit or dedicated busways to and through Clarksburg and the Georgia Avenue Busway to Olney. Implementation of these two transit facilities in adjacent master plan areas will increase transit options for Damascus residents who commute downcounty. This Master Plan also recommends an inter-jurisdictional study of transit and para-transit opportunities to consider regional transit needs.

The goal of Transit and Travel Demand Management is to intercept the through traffic in Damascus and to support carpool and transit access for the Damascus residents. Better transit accessibility will help achieve that goal. Recommendations to achieve this goal include:

Park and Ride Lot(s)

- Improve pedestrian access to the existing Park-and-ride lot at MD 108/MD 124.
- Create a new park-and-ride lot in the vicinity of the MD 27 intersection with Woodfield Road Extended to intercept external trips via transit service or rideshare. This lot should be about two acres in size and have no fewer than 200 spaces.

Other Recommendations

- Support transit and Travel Demand Management (TDM) services and policies:
 - Access to low-density neighborhoods
 - Kids Ride Free program
 - Commuter connections including a carpool matching service and employer policies supporting flex-time and telecommuting
- Support inter-jurisdictional study of transit and para-transit opportunities.
- Support implementation of Corridor Cities Transitway to and through Clarksburg; Georgia Avenue Busway to Olney, as these will be the closest fixed guideway facilities for Damascus area residents.
- Support evaluation and outreach efforts for current transit and Travel Demand Management (TDM) service and policies.
- Evaluate bus services and transit priority projects that enhance bus services. These planning activities should include consideration of bus priority treatments such as auxiliary lanes that may require additional right-of-way beyond that indicated in the Street and Highway Classifications table.
- Support implementation of improved transit facilities and amenities such as concrete pads, shelters, provision of real-time transit information, and transit priority treatments where appropriate.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

GOAL: Maintain the quality and integrity of the outstanding natural systems within the Damascus plan area, enhance water quality in the Patuxent River Watershed, and mitigate impacts of future development.

INTRODUCTION

Damascus is located at the source of four major watersheds. This location exerts a strong influence on planning for the protection of environmental resources. It includes a major part of the drinking water reservoir headwaters in the Patuxent River watershed. The existing forest and wetland resources in the Master Plan area are of generally high quality. While many of these resources have been protected through low-density land uses or acquisition of parkland, there are significant environmental resources that lack adequate protection from potential development - particularly in the Little Bennett and Patuxent River watersheds.

This chapter summarizes the conditions of environmental resources in Damascus and makes general recommendations regarding their protection and restoration. It fulfills the requirement of The Maryland Planning Act of 1992 that all local plans protect environmentally sensitive areas. More detailed information on the existing conditions and environmental policy current as of 2003 is available in a separate publication, *Damascus and Vicinity Environmental Resources Inventory* (July 2003). Recommendations regarding specific properties are contained in the Land Use or Implementation Chapters.

FOREST RESOURCES

Forests, fields and wetlands are the major components of green infrastructure. This green infrastructure provides wildlife habitat for nesting, feeding and migration. Animals need free movement to and from feeding and nesting areas, as well as routes for flight from threats. Plant species also require a variety of habitats and areas for seeds to seek new ground as conditions change. Isolated populations can be easily damaged or eliminated. As future development occurs, it is important to protect not only the distinct areas, but also important connections between these areas.

Maryland has delineated areas showing the "green infrastructure" of open space in Montgomery County as part of a statewide effort. These areas include "hubs" or large clusters of environmental resources as well as existing and potential "links" or corridors that provide connectivity between these hubs. Staff has used this map along with more detailed, updated local information as part of the Damascus Master Plan. In Damascus, the majority of these areas are already within existing or planned public ownership or within private open space. The remaining green corridor connections are considered greenways and are eligible for state funding for protection and public access, where appropriate. Areas proposed for parkland protection are shown within the Parks section of the Community Facilities Chapter.

Approximately one-third of the Damascus planning area is forested, with about a quarter of that protected within public ownership. Steep slopes, springs, seeps and wide floodplains have made many areas difficult to use for agriculture or development. Many former farm fields are gradually succeeding into predominantly deciduous tree woodlands. A forest resources inventory identified priority forest stands and areas for forest enhancement and reforestation. The existing forests were analyzed to determine their distribution and amount, and to classify them by forest type. More detailed forest information, and conservation and reforestation maps are included in the Damascus and Vicinity Environmental Resources Inventory (which is in a separate appendix to this Plan).

Recommendations for the protection and enhancement of forest resources include:

- Protect existing forest corridors along all stream valleys and prioritize unforested stream valleys for location of reforestation planting projects.
- Protect highest priority forest stands through acquisition, dedication or conservation easements.
- Protect forest resources in environmentally sensitive areas such as, wetlands, floodplains, stream buffers, and steep slopes.
- Encourage development patterns and techniques that minimize forest fragmentation and preserve interior forest habitat areas.
- Provide forest planting that will connect or enlarge existing forest stands, where possible.
- Promote the use of forest banking as an incentive to property owners to preserve existing forest and plant new forest.



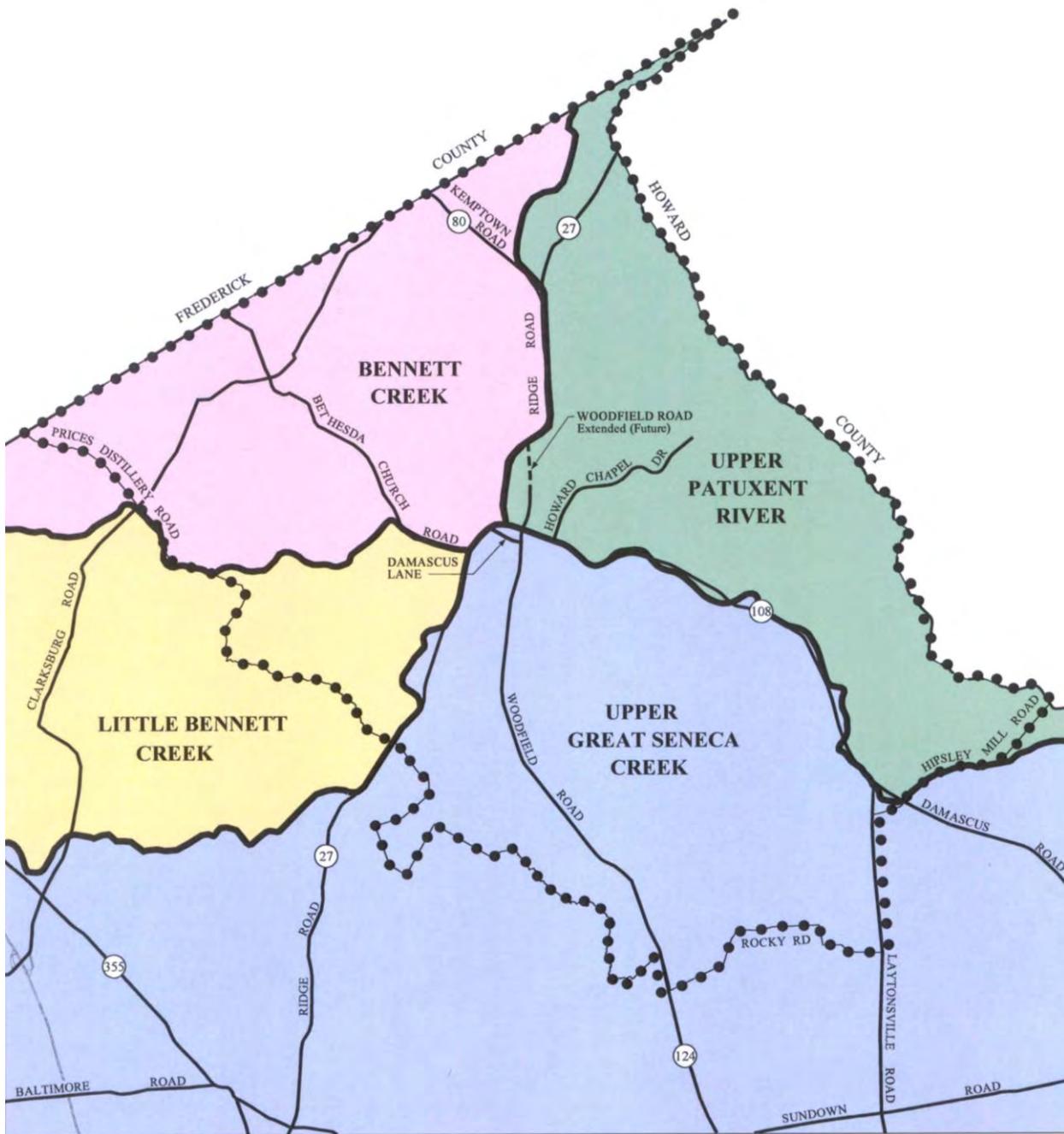
The recommendations for forest resources in this section as well as in the Land Use section will generally result in forty-five (45) percent forest in the plan area with half of that protected in public ownership or by private conservation easements.

Headwaters, Wetlands, and Vernal Pools

The majority of wetlands in Damascus are located in the headwaters and floodplains of the watersheds that converge in Damascus. The Upper Patuxent and Little Bennett are sensitive Use III waters (suitable to support self-sustaining trout populations), while Bennett Creek and Upper Great Seneca are Use I (suitable for fishing and swimming). Because of their vulnerability to land use changes and the potential for downstream degradation if damaged, headwaters near the top of the watershed should receive the highest degree of protection possible. Most of the wetlands in Damascus qualify as wetlands of significant plant and wildlife value by virtue of their position adjacent to Use III waters. These resources are discussed in more depth in the “Environmental Resources Inventory for Damascus and Vicinity” report. Recommendations for protecting headwater streams and wetland resources include:

- Maintain and protect existing hydrology by avoiding activities that will alter groundwater flow, springs and seeps, wetlands and streams thus sustaining the natural conditions to meet the State water quality standards.

Watersheds



- Master Plan Area Boundary
- Watershed Boundary



- Maintain existing stream buffers and associated habitats while increasing buffer widths for wetlands, springs and seeps.
- Avoid “channelizing” or enclosing streams and headwaters in culverts.
- Encourage clustered development and minimize impervious surfaces to protect environmentally sensitive areas. Development sites should provide forested stream buffers to protect natural resources.
- Reduce the amount of nutrients and sediments from entering the headwaters through the construction of stormwater management and sediment and erosion control measures outside the stream buffer areas. Stormwater management measures that emphasize disconnected runoff and infiltration are especially recommended.
- Support efforts to implement best management practices to reduce nutrient loads and protect sensitive areas as part of agricultural uses and activities.
- Incorporate site design features in new development to preserve the size and functions of existing priority wetlands, and avoid fragmentation of these resources.

Streams

Stream quality is very good throughout the Damascus plan area. County and statewide efforts to improve water quality in tributaries have influenced the general approach to water resource protection in the plan area. These efforts include the 1983 Chesapeake Bay Agreement and subsequent agreements, the policies of the Patuxent River Commission, the 1992 State Planning Act, and the 1997 Smart Growth Act that gives financial incentives to local governments to promote concentrated growth and avoid sprawl.

Montgomery County has undertaken a number of measures to protect water quality including the 1998 Countywide Stream Protection Strategy (CSPS), and its recent update (2003), further discussed in the “Environmental Resources Inventory for Damascus and Vicinity” report.

This plan also supports the Maryland Water Quality Management Act strategies for restoration and agricultural watershed management. Practices recommended in this plan include support for County efforts in stream restoration and retrofit projects; measures to increase forested buffers and wetland habitat and function; application of existing stormwater, sediment control, wetlands and forest conservation regulations; and targeting of priorities for Best Management Practice cost-sharing, and forested buffer establishment.

General Water Quality Recommendations

- Encourage new developments using environmentally sensitive development techniques that integrate “Best Management Practices” to maximize stormwater treatment and infiltration, such as:
 - Minimization of impervious surfaces
 - Disconnected runoff, sheet flow to buffers, grass channels
 - Bioretention.
- Encourage the expanded use of Agricultural “Best Management Practices” through County and State programs, the reduction of nutrient loads, and the protection and forestation of stream valleys.

- Encourage County pollution prevention measures in conjunction with these techniques, to further enhance their effectiveness.
- Endorse the efforts of the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Permitting Services to restore streambanks and to control storm water from existing development.
- Support efforts to identify and implement stream restoration projects to improve water quality and aquatic habitat in streams exhibiting deteriorating conditions.

Specific Stream Recommendations

- **Upper Great Seneca Creek Watershed** - The water quality in the Upper Great Seneca Creek watershed in the Damascus planning area is very good (CSPS 1998, 2003). It is designated a Watershed Protection Area with the normal levels of regulatory protection being sufficient to protect water quality. Normal levels of protection (stream buffers, forest conservation, and storm water management) in the regulatory process will maintain the good water quality and low impervious levels anticipated under the proposed zoning.
- **Magruder Branch** - The one exception to the generally high water quality in Upper Great Seneca Creek is the upper reaches of Magruder Branch that flows into Great Seneca Creek at the southern edge of the plan area. The development pattern in this valley has resulted in poor stream conditions in this headwater stream. This subwatershed is located between Woodfield and Ridge Roads south of MD 108. Impacts from the surrounding industrial and commercial facilities as well as a moderately-high density residential areas have caused the CSPS to designate this a Watershed Restoration Area. There are five “rip-rapped” outfalls, all showing signs of degradation and erosion. Magruder Branch runoff carries heavy loads of silt, gravel and trash from the industrial facilities along with sediment from eroding bank swales. Silt and sediment is deposited at the base of the slopes where it blankets the forest floor smothering the young trees and native plants.

The forest in this stream valley is young although there are a few older trees with an average age of 70-90 years. Many trees within the valley have buttressed roots either from former wetlands that have been filled or as an adaptation to siltation. A high water table, springs and seeps, and runoff from adjacent developments supply the wetlands with water. The wetlands within the Magruder Stream Valley have the lowest functional value of all wetlands assessed in the Damascus Master Plan area. Functional values are used to estimate the potential for wetlands to perform five different wetland functions that benefit society and the natural ecosystem.

The new Damascus Lane south of Main Street (discussed in the Transportation Chapter), should include a storm drain system collecting runoff from the Town Center. This will allow runoff from the road as well as north of the road to be directed to a new stormwater management facility.

- **Upper Patuxent River Watershed** - The Upper Patuxent River Watershed and the northernmost headwaters of this river make up about 35 percent of the Damascus planning area. It includes a portion of the eastern Town Center area as well as land in the Neighborhood Transition Area and more rural areas north and east of the Town Center. Much of the area near the mainstem and border with Howard County is in public ownership for the purpose of water quality protection. The Patuxent River drains to the drinking water reservoirs that are part of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission’s drinking water system.

The Patuxent River and Hawlings River watersheds are the focus of a multi-jurisdictional effort to protect the area draining to the reservoir watersheds. Montgomery County has adopted the Patuxent River Watershed Functional Master Plan that delineates a Primary Management Area (PMA) limiting use within ¼ mile from the mainstem and 1/8 mile from all tributaries. In low-density zones, this area is restricted to 10 percent imperviousness. In order to protect the resources that contribute to the health of the drinking water supply, the following actions are recommended in this watershed:

- Protect forested areas and wetlands through the development process and conservation programs.
- Encourage agricultural conservation measures and best management practices.
- Work with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to develop an agreement to assure that farming leases in the Patuxent River State Park do not contribute substantially to the sediment and nutrient loads to the reservoir.

- **“Town Spring” Tributary** - This headwater tributary to the Patuxent River with its associated wetlands is located in and adjacent to the Town Center, east of Woodfield Road Extended (A-12). As one of the sources of the County's drinking water, the goal for this watershed is low-density development to allow maximum protection of water quality. The Town Spring Tributary subwatershed has been adversely affected by development in the Town Center including the Damascus Centre shopping center, the Damascus Library and Senior Center, Phase I of Woodfield Road Extended, the new Post Office, and surrounding residential development.

Although most of the subwatershed is open land with many natural areas, the development at headwaters, although typical for the business core of a town, has raised the overall impervious level of the subwatershed to near 10 percent, although impervious rates of 30-50 percent would not be unusual in urban settings. The projected buildout under the zoning in the 1982 Master Plan would have resulted in an impervious level of approximately 14.5 percent.

The land use and zoning proposed for the Town Center in this Plan will reduce impervious levels slightly and cluster it in this central area, allowing for more efficient treatment and downstream improvement as the stream flows through less dense areas. This is partially because current development standards for landscaping and stormwater management will control imperviousness on properties in this watershed as they develop.

This Plan also proposes to reduce development potential in portions of this watershed beyond the Town Center, as discussed in the Land Use Chapter. These changes will:

- Reduce the development potential of over 100 acres in this subwatershed, from two-acre density to five-acre density.
- Allow small lot cluster development, which creates less impervious surface, on the Burdette property.

With these changes, the overall impervious level for the Town Spring Tributary subwatershed is projected to be approximately 13.5 percent. This includes development and redevelopment within the Town Center, as well as the completion of Woodfield Road Extended and residential buildout throughout the subwatershed. In addition, other Patuxent subwatersheds in the Master Plan area, including those immediately downstream of this one, are projected to stay under 10 percent, further offsetting the Town Center imperviousness. Additional recommendations to further protect this stream system include:

- Include low-impact development elements in the redevelopment of the Damascus Centre site such as parking lot infiltration islands, green roof, and upgraded stormwater management.

- Create forest banks within the Upper Patuxent River tributary watersheds, especially on streams and wetlands with unforested buffers.
- **Scott Branch Tributary** - The Maryland Department of the Environment has issued a proposed water quality regulation that would designate Scott Branch, a tributary to the Patuxent River within the Town Spring watershed as a stream of high water quality that should not be allowed to undergo significant decline (Tier II list). Designated stream segments should be protected to maintain or improve water quality. This could be accomplished through reforestation and the creation and expansion of stream buffers. As a Tier II listed stream, the following policies are recommended for this subwatershed:
 - Maintain low density/agricultural zoning
 - Preserve all existing forest if residential development takes place
 - Reforest areas identified in the Forest Technical Appendix
 - Encourage forest mitigation banking and other forest incentive programs
- **Bennett Creek Watershed** - This watershed is largely agricultural and forest, with very low-density development. It has been designated by the CSPA as an Agricultural Management Area. Recommendations include best management practices for agriculture and the restoration of currently unforested stream buffers. This watershed has received special attention in this Master Plan because of the large high quality contiguous forested area in the headwaters. Recommendations for this forest are also discussed in the Legacy Open Space Section.
- **Little Bennett Creek Watershed** - This is a sensitive Use III watershed with very high water quality. CSPA designates it as a Watershed Preservation Area to be protected with park dedication and acquisition.

This watershed has long been recognized as an important area. The Functional Master Plan for the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space identified this watershed as a State Area of Critical Concern and designated it as a conservation area. Approximately 51 percent of the watershed is either existing or proposed parkland, including most of the mainstem of Little Bennett Creek. With the exception of the edges of Damascus and Hyattstown, the entirety of the watershed is zoned RDT.

The Damascus Master Plan has also responded to the sensitivity of this watershed. This is important since the headwaters of Little Bennett Creek, with their abundant areas of seeps and springs are located in Damascus. The long-standing and far reaching policy of protecting the Little Bennett Creek watershed should be continued in the Damascus Master Plan.

The current area of acquisition should be extended to the sensitive areas of the Kingstead Farm as well as further upstream. The following policies are recommended:

- Restore stream buffers through the development process
- Maximize forest retention in and adjacent to environmental buffer areas through acquisition and conservation easements as part of the development process
- Acquire sensitive areas adjacent to current parkland and park acquisition areas
- Extend the Little Bennett Stream Valley conservation park to include its headwater spring
- Expand existing headwater wetland to its pre-farmed size and condition utilizing existing soils and hydrology
- Limit development to open areas
- Protect all natural resources through park dedication or conservation easements.

AIR QUALITY AND NOISE

Air quality is a regional issue and the limited development proposed in this Master Plan should reinforce the ability of the town to be more self sufficient, and less likely to create more commuter traffic than the previous Damascus Master Plan.

Noise is not a significant issue in this rural community. Adherence with County noise regulations and sensitive site planning in redeveloped portions of the Town Center should avoid most noise problems. Further discussion of air quality and noise can be found in the “Environmental Resources Inventory for Damascus and Vicinity” report.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

GOAL: Provide a network of local and countywide parks that offer recreational activities, support an interconnected trail system, protect important natural features and create attractive settings for cultural and historical resources. Provide sufficient public facilities to support the neighborhoods of Damascus, and linkages to access local facilities and institutions safely and efficiently.

INTRODUCTION

Community facilities meet the physical, recreational, social, cultural, and security needs of the community. They help determine the desirability of a community as a place to live and work, and create and reinforce a sense of community.

PARKLAND

The Damascus area currently includes only one developed local park and two neighborhood parks to provide for community recreation needs. The Damascus Recreational Park at the southwestern boundary of the plan area provides athletic facilities that serve both Damascus residents and the entire northern portion of the County.

The Damascus Master Plan area includes over 1,100 acres of parkland including local and neighborhood parks, the four-mile long hiker-biker path in the Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park, and the Damascus Recreational Park. The Little Bennett Regional Park, containing over 3,700 acres, is located immediately west of the Master Plan area. It will be connected to Damascus via the County's trail system. Little Bennett has a golf course with a driving range, trails, and a campground. Additionally, the Master Plan area has many acres of linear parkland along stream valleys, and over 900 acres in the Patuxent River State Park. This Plan identifies:

- Potential future local park sites and additional recreation opportunities at existing parks.
- A potential east-west trail connection to provide access to the Seneca Greenway Trail to the east and the Little Bennett Regional Park trail systems to the west.
- Important natural resource areas that should be included in the park system or the Legacy Open Space Program.

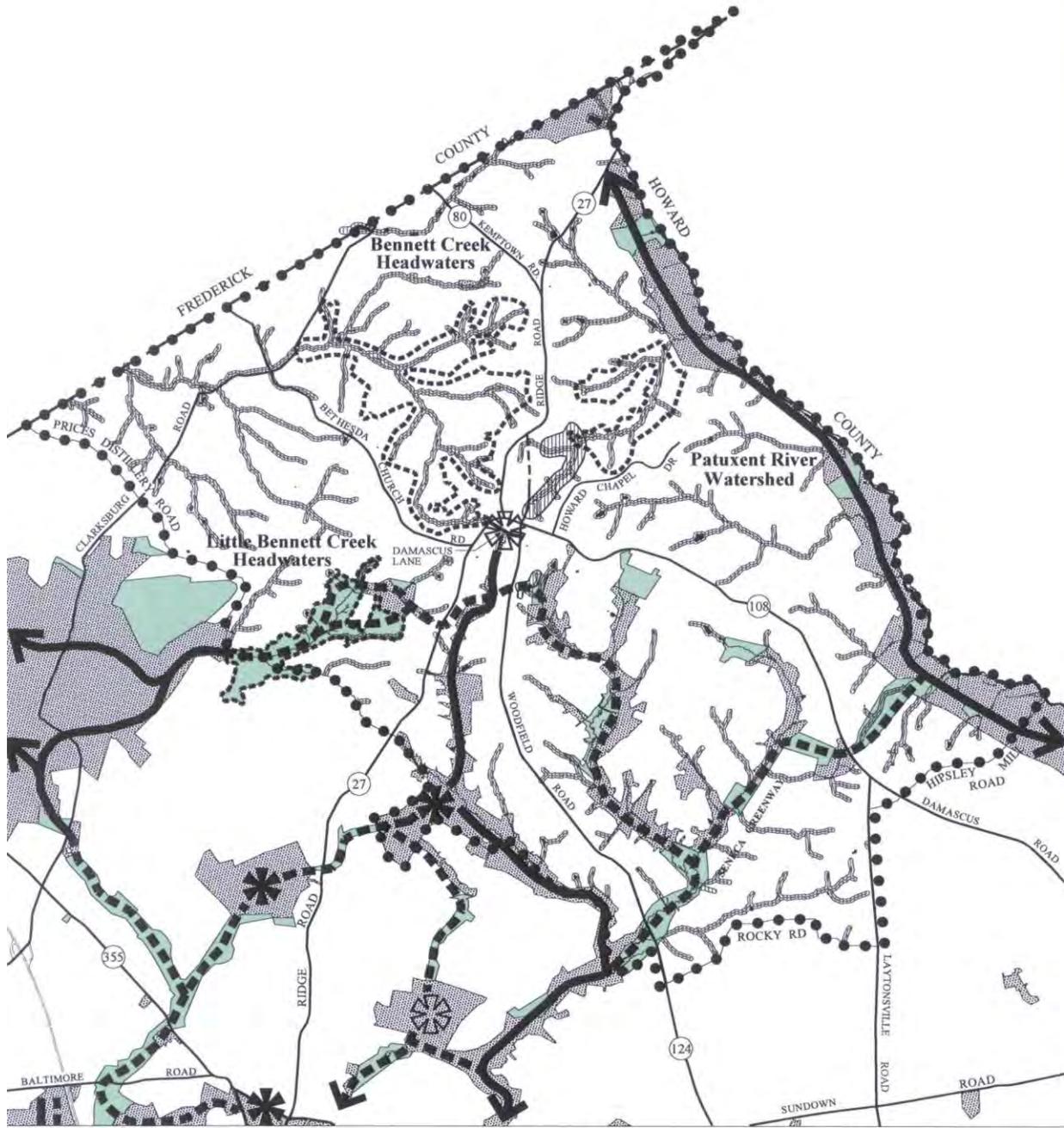
Future Parkland Needs - Recreation and Conservation

The 1998 Park Recreation and Open Space Master Plan estimated that by 2010, the Damascus area would need an additional three ballfields, two tennis courts, and six playgrounds; with more facilities needed after that date. The Montgomery County Recreation Department has identified a future need for an indoor and an outdoor swimming pool in this area of the County.

A future recreation needs survey completed by 50 Damascus residents in 2003, indicated that by far the most popular recreation activities are trail related; second was swimming; and when added together field related activities (such as soccer, softball and baseball) were third. Picnicking and playground use were also noted as frequent activities. These residents felt the greatest additional needs were for undeveloped natural parkland for conservation and nature enjoyment, trails (hard and natural surface) and trail connectivity, a swimming pool, athletic fields, nature center, playgrounds, and skateboard park. Future active recreation needs can be met on parkland, the recreation center, and school properties as recommended below:

- Augment planned recreation opportunities at the new Damascus Community Recreation Center. These should include additional fields, a skateboard park and a roller hockey court.
- Develop existing undeveloped local parks:
 - Seneca Springs Local Park (located south of MD 108 east of the Town Center) is proposed to be developed with recreation facilities such a soccer field, playfield, playground, and trails.
 - Woodfield Local Park (located southeast of the Town Center on Woodfield School Road) should be developed with recreation facilities such as athletic fields, a large playground, and multiuse court.
- Increase ballfield capacity at Damascus Recreational Park through lighting and reconfiguration.
- Acquire additional conservation or recreation parkland in designated locations through dedication from properties in cluster zones. Full analysis of these proposed properties will occur at time of subdivision, but future parks are contemplated on properties near the Oak Ridge Conservation Park, along the headwaters of Little Bennett Creek, and adjoining Patuxent River and Great Seneca Creek tributaries.
- Large, new subdivisions must provide either private or public neighborhood parks to serve their residents and the surrounding community.
- Small urban parks, whether publicly or privately owned, can enhance the Damascus Town Center area. Public parks and privately maintained open space in or near the Town Center include the existing Damascus Neighborhood Park on Locust Drive, which could be enhanced and enlarged to provide a pleasant oasis in proximity to the Town Center, and the planned Magruder Branch Trailhead Park. When the Trailhead for the Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park is planned, the planning team should include a representative from the Washington Suburban Sanitation Commission (WSSC). Coordination with WSSC is important as trail and trailhead alternatives may require use of part of the adjoining WSSC property. If WSSC decides to surplus any portion of the site, the property should be added to the park system.
- Three undeveloped school sites exist in or near the Damascus Master Plan area. As schools provide significant recreation facilities, if the sites are ever declared surplus, they should be retained in public ownership as parkland to provide the anticipated recreation and open space opportunities they would have provided as schools. They are:
 - Elementary School Site across from Baker Middle School
 - Elementary School Site on Hawkins Creamery Road
 - Middle School Site next to Damascus Recreational Park (immediately adjacent to the Master Plan area)

Existing and Proposed Parkland, Trails, and Open Space



- Master Plan Area
- ▨ Existing Parkland (Includes M-NCPPC, State and W.S.S.C.)
- ▨ Proposed for Parkland Acquisition (Includes M-NCPPC, State and W.S.S.C.)
- ✱ Existing Regional / Recreational Destinations
- ✱ Proposed Regional / Recreational Destinations
- Areas Proposed for Legacy Open Space Protection
- ▨ Private Conservation Area
- Existing Trail Corridors and Community Connections
- - - Proposed Trail Corridors and Community Connections



Existing Parks in Damascus

Plan Area	Park Status	Park Name	Acreage	Existing Facilities						
				Play Ground	Multi Use	Tennis Cts.	F_S_Field	Picnic Area	Softball Field	Baseball Field
Local Parks										
11	D	Moyer Road Local Park	25.9	1	1	2	1	1		
11	U	Seneca Springs Local Park	57.4							
11	U	Woodfield Local Park	33.3							
		Subtotal	116.6	1	1	2	1	1	0	0
Neighborhood Parks										
11	D	Damascus Neighborhood Park	2.0	1	1			1		
11	D	John Haines Neighborhood Park	13.6	1	1					
		Subtotal	15.6	2	2	0	0	1	0	0
Neighborhood Conservation Park Area										
11	U	North Point	8.9							
		Subtotal	8.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Conservation Parks										
11	U	Oak Ridge Conservation Park	64							
		Subtotal	64	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stream Valley Parks										
11	U	Great Seneca Stream Valley Unit #6	147.3							
11	U	Great Seneca Stream Valley Unit #7	144.7							
11	U	Great Seneca Stream Valley Unit #8	88.2							
11	U	Great Seneca Stream Valley Unit #9	46.6							
11	U	Little Bennett Creek Stream Valley Park	14.0							
11	U	Magruder Branch Stream Valley Unit #1	173.2							
11	U	Wildcat Branch Stream Valley Park	44.4							
		Subtotal	658.4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recreational Parks										
14	D	Damascus Recreational Park	283.9	2	2	2	4	1	3	1
		Subtotal	283.9	2	2	2	4	1	3	1
M-NCPPC Damascus Area Total			1,147.4	5	5	4	5	3	3	1
State Park										
11	U	Patuxent River	968.9							
		Subtotal	968.9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
U=Undeveloped D=Developed *Fields at Damascus Recreational Park include 4 Football/Soccer, 3 Softball, and 1 Baseball										

Natural Resource Conservation and Protection

Resource protection within existing and new parkland is a critical issue for the preservation of the important natural resources within the Damascus planning area. This Plan recommends the following guidelines for resource protection in parkland:

- Balance recreation needs with the stewardship of sensitive areas. Important sensitive areas include streams and their buffers; steep slopes; 100-year floodplains; highly erodible soils; wetlands and wetland buffers; habitats of rare, threatened, endangered or watch-list species of plants and animals; archaeological sites; and historic sites.
- Facilitate enjoyment and appreciation of nature in all parks through naturalized landscapes and sound stewardship of environmentally sensitive areas.
- When planning and locating park facilities, avoid sensitive areas whenever possible, minimize the impact when it cannot be avoided, and mitigate any impacts that occur.

Since it contains the headwaters for several major streams and the Patuxent River, a major concern in the Damascus area is the continued protection of the drinking water supply of the County. While these concerns are usually addressed without adding these areas to the public ownership, in some instances, the environmental concern is so significant that key resource areas are proposed to be included in the park network. The Existing and Proposed Parkland, Trails and Open Space map identifies areas with environmental features proposed for protection. The Environmental Resources Plan provides further detail regarding resource protection strategies outside of the park system. This Plan recommends the following resource areas to be included in the recommended park network for Damascus:

- **Little Bennett Creek Watershed Headwaters** - Adding the designated portion of the Little Bennett Creek Headwaters Area to the park system will provide critical additional protection for a sensitive watershed with very high water quality. Large sections of the lower part of the watershed area already in park ownership as Little Bennett Regional Park and the proposed acquisition area will provide environmental protection to and connectivity with the existing parkland. This area is being recommended for park acquisition within the Legacy Open Space program because it is an area of high quality forest and contributes to protection of water quality of Little Bennett Creek (see Legacy Open Space discussion below).
- **Western Tributary of Seneca Creek Stream Valley** - Adding this area to the park system will expand the existing stream valley park to include sensitive features that have been identified.

Parkland Historic and Cultural Settings

This Plan does not propose adding properties to the park system to protect historic structures, but there are three potential historic resources (also discussed in the Historic Resources Chapter) that are immediately adjacent to parkland or potential parkland. Strategies will be needed to protect their historic settings which may include incorporating part of the setting into the park system. These resources include:

- The **Elisha Warfield** house (25723 Woodfield Road), near Seneca Springs Local Park, dates from 1900 to 1902. The bank barn was built about the same time, c1901-1903. The farm remains in the Warfield family. The farmstead, now 78 acres, includes a corn crib and possibly a smokehouse.

- The **Kingstead Farm** (11415 Kingstead Road), near Little Bennett Stream Valley Park, was the early 19th century homestead of John Duckett King. The farmstead includes the house (early 1800s), a bank barn (1898), a gambrel roof dairy barn (1932), a domestic outbuilding (c1930s), a gable roof dairy barn (1952), cow barn, and hog houses (mid 20th century).
- The **Ira Jones Farm** (15601 Kings Valley Road) barn, near Little Bennett Stream Valley Park was built around 1921. This barn is known as the first wood truss gambrel roof barn in the area. This type of self-supporting truss roof did not become common in the County until about 1930. The stabling area of stone and concrete is typical of c1910s bank barns. The house is a frame, center cross-gable structure with a front porch that faces Kings Valley Road.

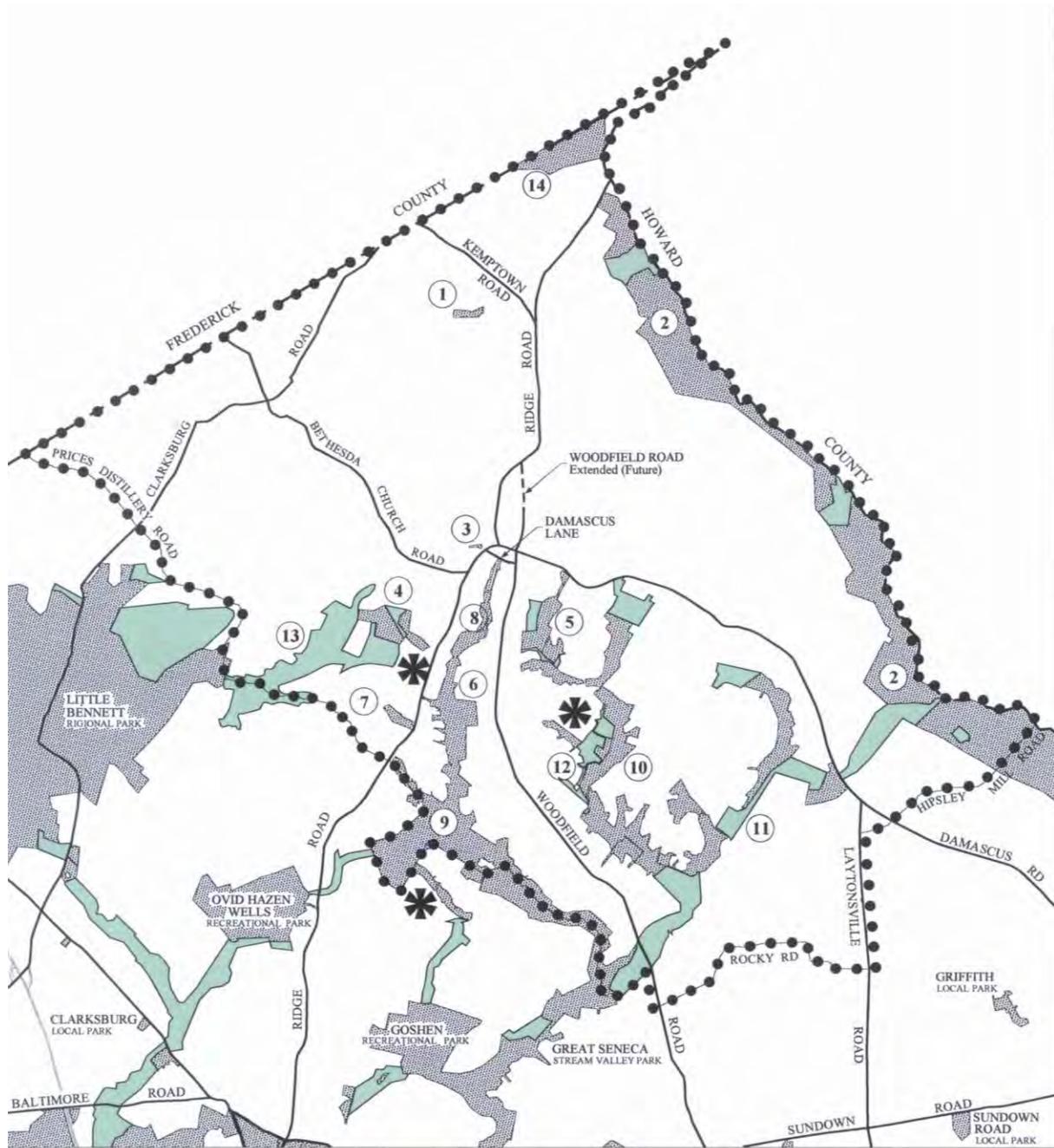
Summary of Parkland Recommendations

Map #	Name	Plan Recommendation
1	North Point NCA	Retain as neighborhood conservation park
2	Patuxent River SP	Affirm Countywide Park Trails Plan recommendation for a continuous natural surface trail along the Patuxent River
3	Damascus NP	Acquisition of adjacent property would enhance park
4	Oak Ridge CP	Explore opportunities to expand park when neighboring properties develop. Provide natural surface trails and the connecting sidewalk from Baker Middle School to the Damascus Community Recreation Center
5	Seneca Springs LP	Develop active recreational facilities such as ballfields, playfields, playground and trails. As subdivision occurs on adjoining properties, explore opportunities to provide an east-west trail connection and to include sensitive features in the park
6	Moyer Road LP	Support current activities
7	John Haines NP	Support current activities
8	Magruder Branch SVP	Extend hard surface trail north of Valley Park Drive to Damascus Town Center. Provide an attractive, urban park as trailhead for the trail in Damascus Town Center
9	Damascus RP	Consider increasing ballfield capacities through lighting and/or reconfiguration of ballfields. Acquisition of adjacent property would enhance park
10	Woodfield LP	Provide large local park with several athletic fields, a large playground and multi-use court
11	Great Seneca SVP	Continue acquisition of properties to allow completion of the Seneca Greenway Trail
12	Great Seneca Tributary SVP	As subdivision occurs, explore opportunities to provide an east-west trail connection and to include sensitive features in the park system
13	Little Bennett Creek SVP	Acquire as parkland in dedication to serve conservation and recreation purposes
*	Potential park sites	Sites owned by School Board. Add to park system for recreation if not needed as school sites

Map numbers refer to Existing and Proposed Parkland Map

NP – Neighborhood Park
 CP – Conservation Park
 NCA – Neighborhood Conservation Area
 SP – State Park
 RP – Recreational Park
 LP – Local Park
 SVP – Stream Valley Park

Existing and Proposed Parkland



PARK OWNERSHIP

- Master Plan Area
 - Existing Parkland
 - Proposed Parkland
 - Potential Park Sites (If not Required by School Board)
- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 North Point Neighborhood Conservation Area 2 Patuxent River State Park 3 Damascus Recreational Park 4 Oak Ridge Conservation Park 5 Seneca Springs Local Park To be Developed 6 Moyer Road Local Park 7 John Haines Neighborhood Park 8 Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park 9 Damascus Recreational Park | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 Woodfield Local Park To be Developed 11 Great Seneca Stream Valley Park 12 Great Seneca Tributary Stream Valley Park 13 Little Bennett Creek Stream Valley Park | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 Rattlewood Golf Course Montgomery County Revenue Authority |
|---|---|---|



TRAILS PLAN

The 1998 Countywide Park Trails Plan guides trail planning in Montgomery County. Damascus is included in the Upcounty Trail Corridor where the Plan objective is to “provide a hard surface recreational trail to serve the existing and future residents of Germantown, Clarksburg, and Damascus.” The Countywide Park Trails Plan distinguishes between hard surface trails (such as the Magruder Branch asphalt and boardwalk trail) and natural surface trails (typically narrow tread and dirt surfaces). The Damascus area provides both types of trail experiences.

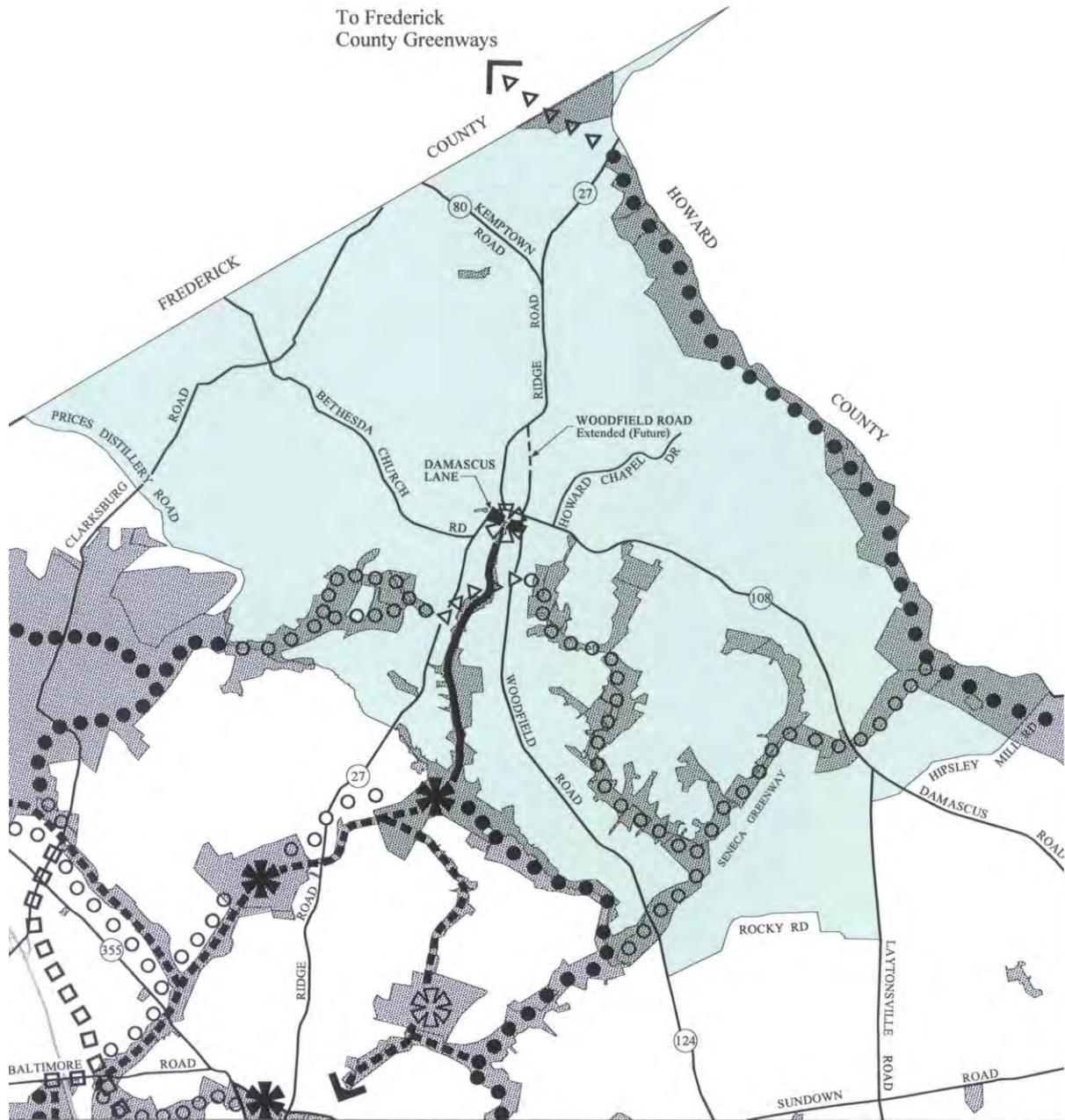
The Magruder Branch Hiker-Biker Trail is located in the Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park. This critical element is the only paved trail in the Damascus plan area. This Plan strongly supports the continuation of the trail northward to a northern terminus in the Town Center. Attention must continue to be given to providing safe road crossings for those using the trail at all crossing locations. This Plan particularly notes the need for providing a safer trail crossing at Sweepstakes Road, and ensuring a safe crossing of Bethesda Church Road and Damascus Lane when that segment is developed.

Potential solutions for the very busy Bethesda Church Road crossing could include consideration of improvements including median refuges, pedestrian activated signal control, or grade separated crossings, in addition to more conventional operation approaches involving signing and marking.

In terms of the natural surface trail pattern in Damascus, this Plan recommends that the *Countywide Park Trail Plan* be amended to reflect a new concept for east-west connectivity and other modifications as noted below:

- Reflects the east-west natural surface trail corridor being added to link the Seneca Greenway Trail to the east to the Little Bennett Trail system to the west.
- Identifies the importance of a sidewalk or bike path along Valley Park Drive to access this trail connection, and including special treatment for the Ridge Road crossing to ensure safety for those using the connection.
- Supports providing indicated trail connections in the Countywide Park Trail Plan and this Master Plan during the subdivision review process at time of development.

Damascus Area Proposed Amendments to the Countywide Park and Trails Plan



Park Trails

- | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|--|--------------|--|----------|--|-----------------|
| | Master Plan Area | | Existing | | Proposed | | Natural Surface |
| | Existing and Proposed Parkland | | Hard Surface | | | | |

Non-Park Connector Between Park Trails

- | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|----------|--|---------|--|-------|
| | Existing | | Proposed | | Bikeway | | Other |
| | Regional / Recreational Destinations | | | | | | |



OPEN SPACE

Legacy Open Space Program

Montgomery County's Legacy Open Space Program is a key component to achieving the environmental and open space conservation goals expressed in the Damascus Master Plan including preservation of open space for agriculture and natural resources protection, protection of drinking water quality in the Patuxent reservoirs, and protection of rural vistas. The Legacy Open Space Program is charged with identifying the "best of the best" natural and cultural resources within the County for protection.

The Legacy Open Space Program is designed to protect a broad range of valuable open space resources with a variety of tools ranging from easements to parkland acquisition and/or dedication. These tools include purchase of conservation easements by the County, either through the M-NCPPC or the County's Agricultural Services Division, by the State of Maryland, or through federal programs; as well as the acquisition of conservation parkland by the M-NCPPC. Conservation through privately held easements such as private national or local land trusts is also encouraged. Forest conservation easements required for all subdivisions through the development review process and forest banking programs can play important roles in conserving identified Legacy Open Space resources as well.

Two Legacy Open Space sites evaluated in the Damascus Master Plan process were originally listed in the Legacy Open Space Master Plan as Class III (Technical Appendix D) sites. These Appendix sites were nominated for inclusion in the Legacy Master Plan as important natural resource areas and were judged to have met the criteria for full inclusion in the Legacy Open Space Program (Class I or II sites). Further study was needed to determine specific sites to protect. During the Master Plan process the two sites were studied in depth. Those sites are now recommended for protection. A third site already within both the Water Supply and Farmland Protection categories of the Legacy Open Space Master Plan was further evaluated and found to include enough significant forest that it should be added to the Natural Resources category of the Legacy Plan.

Of the three sites evaluated only the Little Bennett Creek watershed headwaters is recommended for addition to the park system. The Bennett Creek and the Upper Patuxent River Watershed Area are not proposed to be part of the park system.

Recommendations

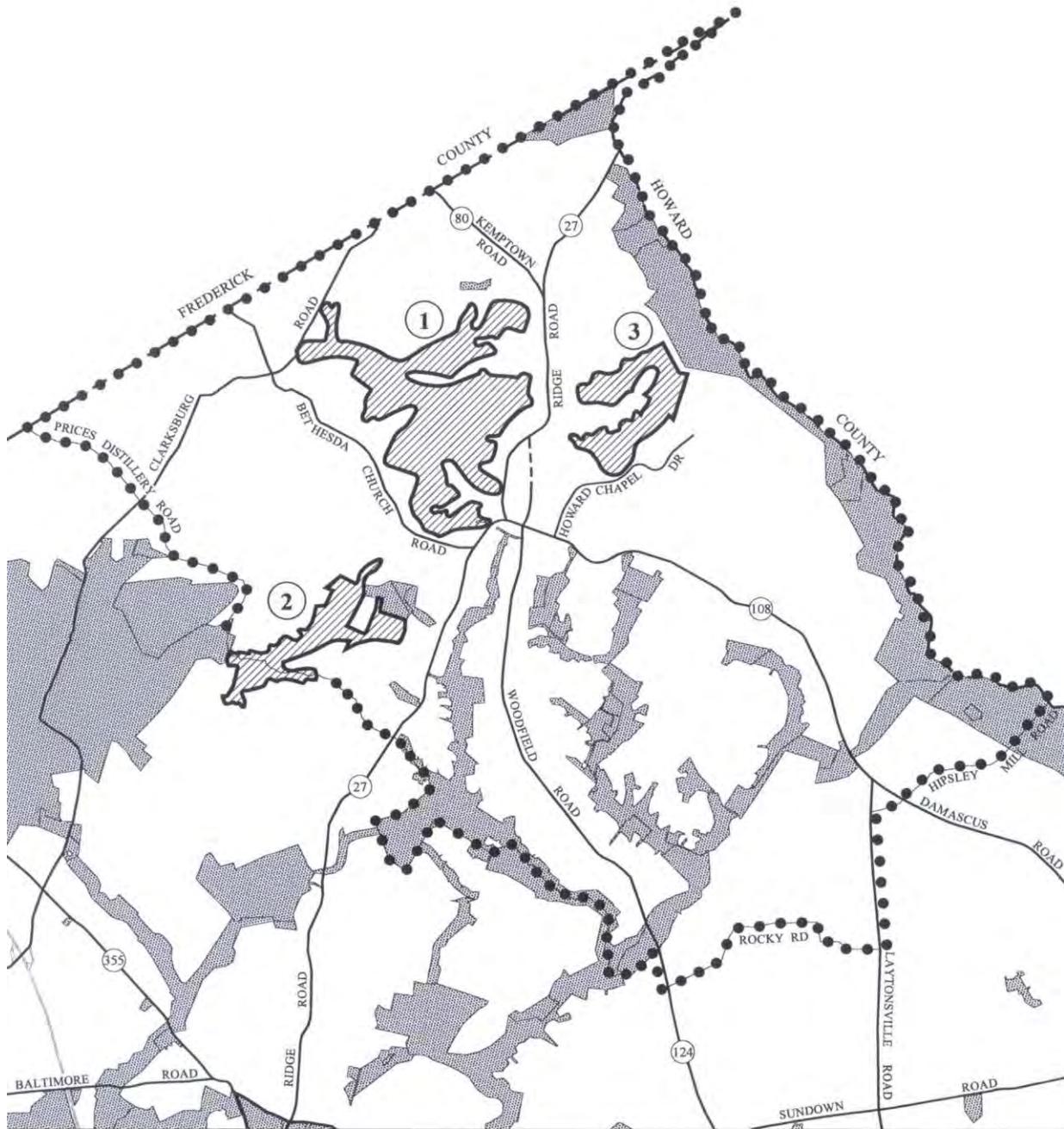
The following areas are recommended to be included as Natural Resource sites within the Legacy Open Space program.

- The Little Bennett Creek Headwaters Area is recommended for protection - primarily through parkland dedication and acquisition.
- The Bennett Creek Headwaters Area and the Upper Patuxent River Watershed Area are recommended for protection - primarily through easements.

Legacy Open Space Recommendations

Site Name and Description	Comments	Legacy Category Recommendation	Primary Protection Techniques
Class III (Appendix D) Sites Recommendations			
<p>Little Bennett Creek Headwaters Area Forested sites located adjacent to Oak Ridge Conservation Park. Includes additional areas of forest along main stem of Little Bennett Creek not previously proposed for parkland acquisition.</p>	<p>Areas of high quality upland and riparian forest.</p> <p>Contributes to protection of water quality of Little Bennett Creek, which supports a population of naturally reproducing brown trout.</p>	<p>Add to Natural Resources Category (Class I).</p>	<p>Protect through acquisition of conservation parkland.</p>
<p>Bennett Creek Headwaters Area Site consists of multiple parcels located roughly between Moxley Road to the north, Ridge Road to the east, Bethesda Church Road to the south, and Clarksburg Road to the west.</p>	<p>Large area of contiguous forest with several mature stands of high quality upland and riparian forest.</p> <p>Principal headwaters tributaries of Bennett Creek with numerous wetlands and springs.</p> <p>Contributes to protection of water quality of Bennett Creek.</p>	<p>Add to Natural Resources Category (Class I).</p>	<p>Protect through development review process or conservation easement.</p>
Other Sites – not Class III			
<p>Upper Patuxent River Watershed Area Site consists of multiple parcels north and south of Gue Road adjacent to Patuxent River State Park. Already protected in Water Supply and Rural Open Space Protection categories.</p>	<p>Large area of contiguous forest with high quality upland and riparian forest stands that buffer tributaries of Patuxent River.</p> <p>Many stream valley wetlands.</p> <p>Contributes to protecting water quality of Patuxent River.</p>	<p>Add to Natural Resources Category (Class I).</p> <p>Retain within Water Supply and Rural Open Space Protection categories.</p>	<p>Protect through development review process and conservation easements as appropriate.</p>

Legacy Open Space Recommendations



- Master Plan Area Boundary
- Existing / Proposed Parkland
- Potential Legacy Open Space Sites
- ① Bennett Creek Headwaters Area (Natural Resource Site)
- ② Little Bennett Creek Headwaters Area (Natural Resource Site, Proposed Parkland Acquisition)
- ③ Upper Patuxent River Watershed Area (Natural Resource Site, Water Supply Target Area)

COMMUNITY RECREATION FACILITIES

Damascus Community Recreation Center

The Department of Recreation opened the Damascus Community Recreation Center at 25520 Oak Drive in 2004. The facility serves the Upcounty region, which includes Damascus and Clarksburg. This area is geographically isolated with a rapidly expanding population, expected to reach more than 47,000 people by 2010.

The Recreation Center provides a range of activities. Indoor facilities include a gymnasium, exercise room, social hall, kitchen, senior community lounge, music/classroom, hobby craft and kiln room, game room, vending space, conference room, offices, lobby, rest rooms, and storage space. The outdoor activity elements include an athletic field, a multipurpose court for volleyball and basketball, and a playground. Because there are limited recreational opportunities within the Damascus Master Plan area, the County plans to add an outdoor amphitheatre, skateboard park and in-line skate rink at the Center in the future. Other facilities that should be provided include additional athletic fields and a roller hockey court. The skateboard park should be a priority in future programming on this 40-acre site. The Department of Recreation is also seeking a location to meet the aquatic recreational needs of this area.

Recommendations for this facility include:

- Locate aquatic recreational opportunities in the Upcounty region.
- Provide additional athletic fields, a roller hockey court, and a skateboard park.

Damascus Senior Center

The Department of Recreation also operates a senior center located at 9701 Main Street, which is attached to the Damascus Library. The center is approximately 10,000 gross square feet and has a mission to provide seniors with meaningful social and educational activities in the areas of health, nutrition, arts and entertainment.

SCHOOLS

The Damascus Master Plan area contains eight school sites that total approximately 120 acres (see Community Facilities map). The Damascus Cluster includes the high school, a middle school, four elementary schools and two future elementary school sites within the plan area. There are no private schools in the Master Plan area. Based on the land use recommendations of this Plan no additional school sites are warranted.

There are two vacant school sites in the plan area – an elementary school site on Oak Drive across from the Baker Middle School, and an elementary school site along Hawkins Creamery Road. There is also one vacant property in the cluster area that is just outside the Master Plan area, for a future Kingsbridge Middle School, located on Founders Way. The Board of Education plans to retain these vacant sites. They will be developed when a need for additional schools is determined based on their ongoing evaluations of the capacity of existing schools and the projected increase in student enrollment from new development.

This Plan supports the retention of these school sites and the modernization and utilization of the existing schools as needed. If, in the future, MCPS decides to surplus any vacant school sites, the sites should be considered for additional parkland that will provide the anticipated recreation and open space opportunities they would have provided as schools. As discussed in the Housing Chapter, due to their size and location, they would not be appropriate for consideration for housing.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Library

The Damascus Library is located at 9701 Main Street. The building is approximately 16,400 square feet and is categorized as a community Library. It serves the northwestern tip of Montgomery County and also serves customers from nearby communities in Frederick, Carroll and Howard Counties.

Post Office

A new main post office was opened in 2003 on Woodfield Road Extended, replacing an older facility located on Main Street, which did not provide sufficient and secure parking or storage space for mail trucks to handle the increased population of this postal service area. The new site allows the postal system to improve customer service.

Upcounty Regional Services Center

The Damascus Master Plan area is presently part of the Upcounty Regional Services Center service area, located at 12900 Middlebrook Road in Germantown, approximately eight miles from central Damascus. The governmental centers provide a decentralized location for area residents to receive government services, information and assistance. Staff of the Upcounty Regional Services Center (regional services representative) come to the lobby of the combined Library/Senior Center once a week to provide assistance to Damascus residents.

PUBLIC SAFETY

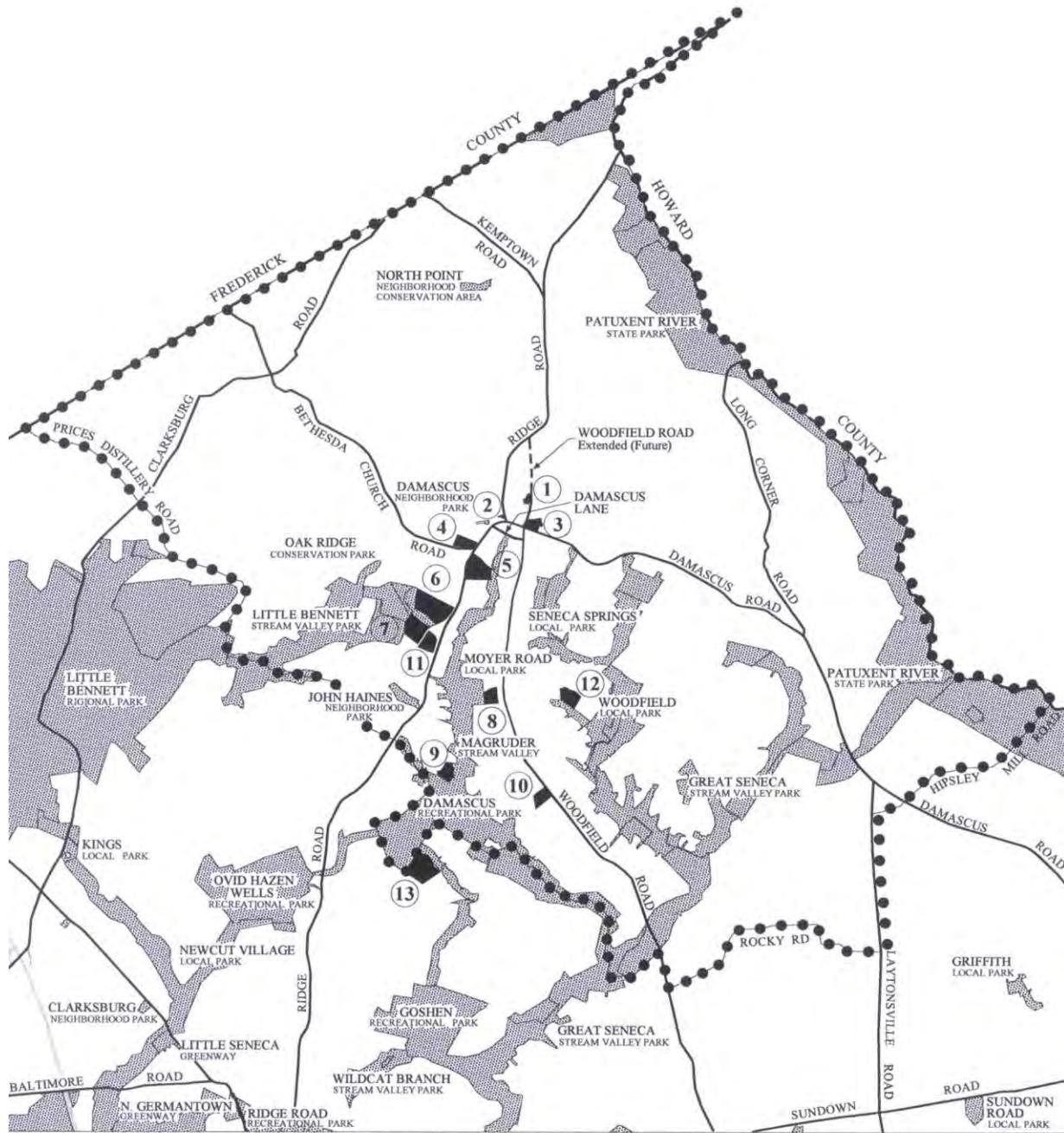
Fire and Rescue

Within the Damascus Master Plan area, fire, rescue and emergency medical services are provided by career and volunteer fire fighter-rescuers assigned to five fire stations: Station 13 located at 26334 Ridge Road in Damascus, Station 9 on Frederick Road in Hyattstown, Interim Station 35 in Clarksburg on Gateway Center Drive, Station 17 on Route 108 in Laytonsville, and Station 29 on Crystal Rock Drive in Germantown. Fire and rescue units from other nearby stations, including those in Frederick, Carroll and Howard Counties, also respond into this area when needed. The Damascus area will also be served in the future by units from new stations to be built in nearby Clarksburg and the east side of Germantown.

Damascus Station 13 received an extensive renovation in 1993-94, and no further major renovations are anticipated over the next 10-20 years. Due to its small size and condition, Laytonsville Station 17 may be renovated on its present site or relocated to a nearby site within the next 10 years. Hyattstown Station 9 and Germantown Station 29 are expected to remain at their present sites. Anticipated dates for the opening of the new Germantown-East and permanent Clarksburg fire-rescue stations are 2008 and 2010, respectively.

The Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services (MCFRS) recognizes that a significant portion of the Damascus area lacks municipal water supply and fire hydrants. To enhance the fire suppression capabilities within areas lacking fire hydrants, the MCFRS urges builders and property owners to voluntarily install underground water tanks directly on their property, or at the entrance to housing developments, for use by the MCFRS. These underground water tanks should hold 20,000 gallons or more based upon fire fighting water flow requirements of the property to be protected. Tanks should meet the requirements of National Fire Protection Association Standard 1142 (“Standard on Water Supplies for Suburban and Rural Fire Fighting”), including appropriate connections for hook-up to pumpers and a roadside sign and/or pavement marker identifying the tank’s location to fire fighters. The property owner would be responsible for maintenance of the tank and fire department connections.

Community Facilities



Community Facilities

- Master Plan Area Boundary
 - ▨ Existing / Proposed Parkland (M-NCPPC, State and WSSC)
 - Community Facilities
 - * Future school sites to be converted to park if not needed for school purposes
- | | |
|--|---|
| ① Damascus U.S. Post Office | ⑧ Clearspring Elementary School |
| ② Fire Station - Damascus Co.13 | ⑨ Rockwell Elementary School |
| ③ Damascus Library / Senior Center | ⑩ Woodfield Elementary School |
| ④ Damascus Elementary School | ⑪ Future Oak Drive Elementary School* |
| ⑤ Damascus High School | ⑫ Future Hawkins Creamery Road Elementary School* |
| ⑥ Damascus Community Recreation Center | ⑬ Future Kingsbridge Middle School* |
| ⑦ Baker Middle School | |



0 7000'

Persons having ponds on their property are encouraged to make water readily accessible to fire fighters by installing “dry hydrants” and providing improved access to them (e.g., paved or gravel roadway and turnaround area) for fire suppression vehicles. A dry hydrant consists of a pipe extending into a body of water or waterway, and an above ground connection that allows fire fighters to quickly hook-up pumpers to the water source. The property owner would be responsible for maintenance of the dry hydrant.

This Plan and MCFRS recommend support for the January 1, 2004 County law requiring fire sprinkler systems in single-family homes as the front line measure in fire protection. Sprinkler systems within structures located in areas lacking municipal water require a dedicated indoor tank, supplied by an on-site well, to store water to directly supply the sprinkler system. Underground tanks, and ponds with dry hydrants, are supplemental to fire sprinklers and may be used by fire fighters to suppress fires in buildings without sprinklers, vehicles (e.g., trucks, farm machinery), and outdoor areas (e.g., woods, brush, cropland).

Police

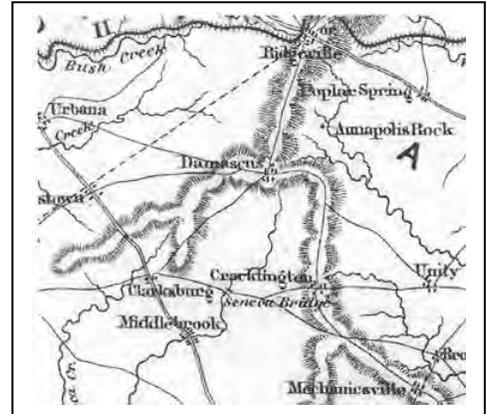
Police service in the Damascus Master Plan area is provided by the 5th District Police Station, located at 20000 Aircraft Drive in Germantown. The Police Department does not have any plans to establish a station in this area, although they may decide to establish a satellite station within the area to provide decentralized service in the future.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

GOAL: Protect the important historic and archeological resources in the area.

INTRODUCTION

The crossroads community of Damascus is located at the intersection of two major early ridgeline roads: Ridge Road (MD 27) and Damascus Road (MD 108). Ridge Road was the Susquehanna native trail from the river at Harrisburg to Seneca Creek leading to the Potomac River. Early roads were established along the ridgelines and farms were oriented near waterways, most notably along Seneca Creek.



The Ridge Road-Damascus Road corridor was one of several principal market roads established in 1774. This was part of a regional route established by the General Assembly for a market road from Frederick to Annapolis.¹ It sits atop a formation called “Parr’s Ridge” that stretches from Mt. Airy and Ridgeville to Damascus, Laytonsville and Sandy Spring.²

Tobacco Farming

Tobacco was the main cash crop of the 18th century. Maryland produced one quarter of all tobacco in the country, and Montgomery County planters contributed about a fifth of its total. Prices for land and goods were quoted in pounds of tobacco. By 1879, Damascus had one of 10 agricultural granges in the County. By that time, most farmers in other parts of the County had begun diversifying their farms and were raising other crops.

Damascus was still, in 1879, in “the heart of an extensive tobacco region.” Some farmers, including the Hiltons and Browns, still farmed tobacco into the 20th century.³ Tobacco houses were once the most common outbuilding in the county. Today there are a handful of tobacco houses remaining, at most. Brown’s Log Tobacco House was photographed near Damascus in 1973. The Warfield Tobacco House was still standing in 1983. It was located on Clearwater Drive, near Damascus.

Early Log Houses

In the late 1700s and early 1800s, most dwellings were simple one or two room structures often built of log. The Warfield Log House on Damascus Road (MD 108) near Etchison is still standing. The one-room structure has a box staircase leading to a loft bedroom.



¹ Janie Payne, *Montgomery County Story* IX:4, p6. E. Guy Jewell, “History of Damascus”, Courier, 1977, B14.

² Martha C. Nesbitt and Mary Reading Miller, *Chronicles of Sandy Spring Friends Meeting and Environs*, 1987.

³ Dawson Lawrence, “History of Montgomery County, Maryland” in Hopkins Atlas, 1879.

Mills

Grist mills were established along major waterways in the late 1700s. During this period, before towns and villages were laid out, the mills formed a kind of community center. The communities of Goshen and Browningsville, for example, grew around mill complexes. Goshen Mills, established by 1792, included a massive three-story brick merchant mill and a frame gristmill. The complex was built on the Goshen Branch of Great Seneca Creek. A mill on a nearby Goshen tributary was built by 1789 and was operated by Harry Dorsey. About 1804, James Day built a mill on Bennett Creek, in the area later known as Browningsville.

Communities

The earliest communities in northern Montgomery County, including Hyattstown, Clarksburg and Damascus were established to serve the needs of travelers. Before the community known as Damascus was subdivided, there was a settlement. By 1814, James Whiffing had a dwelling, store, blacksmith shop and stables. In 1816, Edward Hughes bought 40 acres from Whiffing and platted Damascus in 14 lots. Street improvements were one of the main reasons for the 1890 incorporation of Damascus.

Later communities served farmers and families who lived in the immediate vicinity. Typically, these small villages had a general store, church, and school. The buildings were simple, vernacular architecture. Through the mid-1800s, the most common building type for community structures was a one-story, gable front form. This type was found on the original Wesley Grove church, and it still is found in the original section of the Woodfield store, and the Woodfield Odd Fellow Hall (now an education building for the Wesley Grove church).



Dairy Farming, 1920s-1930s

Road improvements were a major benefit to farmers. In the late-19th century, farms with direct access to the railroad had a market for shipping farm goods. With improved roads, a larger group of farms had access to markets. Paved roads and motor trucks brought dairying to the Damascus area in the mid-1920s. By the mid-1930s, it was a major source of income for local farmers. After 1910, County roads began to be improved with new road surfaces. Route 27 was first paved in 1914, and in the mid-1920s, Route 108 was paved. Farmers continued to use horse-drawn wagons until

about 1920 when motor trucks were generally available. Other new technologies representative of early twentieth century farms include concrete block construction and self-supporting gambrel roof trusses.

Twentieth-Century Expansion

Damascus thrived in the 1920s, due to improved roads. In 1914, the State had a program to connect counties with the port city of Baltimore. The program could not pave roads in incorporated towns. At this time the incorporation of Damascus was dissolved to make way for the paving of Route 27. This road provided access to the National Road leading to Baltimore, and was the first paved road connecting Washington and Frederick. In the mid-1920s, the road from Damascus to Laytonsville (Route 108), Damascus Road, was paved as a two-lane concrete road. Local landowners planted sycamore trees along a four-mile stretch of the road between Jarl Drive and Griffith Road as part of a statewide beautification project. Woodfield Road (MD 124) was paved about 1932.⁴

⁴ Jill Teunis, "Reminders of History along the Roadsides in Damascus," in *The Damascus Gazette*, 1-10-2001, and "Woodfield Community Remembers its Close-Knit Roots," 4-4-2001.

Following road improvements, the community of Damascus thrived. The post office, which had been closed since 1908, re-opened in 1923. The Damascus Community Fair was organized in 1927, in order to educate farmers and their families and to promote community spirit. Other examples of the vitality of Damascus during this era include the opening of the Bank of Damascus (1921) and the accreditation of Damascus High School (1924).⁵



The period after World War II was marked by growth and expansion. To service the growing population, the Damascus Volunteer Fire Department was established in 1944.⁶ The Damascus Recreation Center, established in the 1940s, provided bowling alleys, pool tables and a restaurant. Boyer and Cramer opened their hardware store in 1947, reviving a general store that first opened in the c1890s and closed during the Depression.⁷ The Damascus High School opened at its current location in 1950.

The Druid Theatre, a 400-seat theatre that opened in 1947, was the first fully air-conditioned theater in the Damascus area. The theatre, designed after Washington's Apex Theatre operated until the 1970s. The theatre is named for its original owner Druid Clodfelter.

PROTECTION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

The *Master Plan for Historic Preservation* and the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Chapter 24A of the Montgomery County Code, are designed to protect and preserve Montgomery County's historic and architectural heritage. When an historic resource is placed on the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*, the adoption action officially designates the property as an historic site or historic district, and subjects it to the further procedural requirements of the Historic Preservation Ordinance.

Designation of historic sites and districts highlights the values important in maintaining the individual character of the County and its various communities. The County's preservation program provides a rational system for evaluating, protecting, and enhancing the County's historic and architectural heritage that benefits present and future generations of County residents. The challenge is weaving protection of this heritage into the County's planning program in order to maximize community support for preservation while limiting infringement on private property rights.

Once designated on the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*, historic resources are subject to the protection of the ordinance. Any substantial changes to the exterior of a resource or its environmental setting must be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission and a historic area work permit issued under the provisions of the County's Preservation Ordinance. The environmental setting for each site is the entire parcel on which the resource is located. The environmental setting of a historic resource can be modified at a later stage, generally when the property is subdivided. In addition to protecting designated resources from unsympathetic alteration and insensitive redevelopment, the County's Preservation Ordinance also empowers the County's Department of Permitting Services and the Historic Preservation Commission to prevent the demolition of historic buildings through neglect.

⁵ Jill Teunis, "Fair is Part of Damascus History," in *The Damascus Gazette*, 9-9-1998.

⁶ Sign on present Fire Department building.

⁷ Jill Teunis, "Local Damascus Hardware Store is Family Business," in *The Damascus Gazette*, 10-2-1996.

MASTER PLAN SITES

Within the Damascus Master Plan area, there are three designated historic sites:

10/12	Mendelssohn Terrace, 11801 Bethesda Church Road
11/6-2	Druid Theater, 9840 Main Street
15/23	Perry G. Etchison Farm, 6935 Annapolis Rock Road

These sites have been designated on the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation* and this Plan confirms that designation, with the environmental settings and descriptive language included in the original designation.

LOCATIONAL ATLAS RESOURCES

The Historic Preservation Commission is in the process of reviewing the potential historic resources within the Damascus Master Plan area to determine if they are eligible for designation on the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*. The resources in Planning Area 11 and Planning Area 14 are currently under review, and the resources in Planning Area 10 and Planning Area 15 will be completed as time and staff resources allow. The Damascus area resources listed below are currently included on the *Locational Atlas*. Those marked with an asterisk (*) are nominated for addition to the *Locational Atlas*.

Planning Area 10: Bennett and Little Bennett Watershed

10/1	Friendship	10/20	James W. Burdette Tenant Farm
10/3	John Moxley House	10/21	Damascus Camp Meeting
10/5	John D. Purdum House	10/23	C.E. Purdum Farm
10/7	G. Boyer House	10/27	Samuel B. Watkins House
10/10	John L. Purdum House	10/28	Basil Beall Farm
10/14	Ingalls Farm	10/29	Ed Beale Farm
10/15	Harold Watkins House	10/37	Glaze Farm
10/17	Joseph Burdette House	10/38	Kings Distillery Site
10/18	Burdette/Riddle House and Barn		

Planning Area 11: Damascus and Vicinity

11/1	Perry Watkins House	11/17	Ezekial Moxley House
11/2	Boyer House	11/19	Elisha Warfield Farm
11/3	William Bowman Farm	11/20	Widow Hammond Farm
11/4	Nathan Burdette House	11/21	Rezin Bowman Farm
11/5	Sheckles House	11/22	George Gue Farm
11/6-4	Druid Clodfelter House*	11/23	Rezin Duvall Log House
11/10	Kingstead Farm	11/24	Frank Duvall Farm
11/11	Luther K. Miller House and Mill Site	11/25	Howard Day House
11/13	Young Cemetery	11/29	Ira Jones Farm*
11/15	Kemp-Biggs Farm		

Planning Area 14: Goshen, Woodfield, Cedar Grove and Vicinity

14/2	Rezin Duvall Farm	14/13	Mobley-Howard House
14/3	Etchison-Warfield House	14/14	James & Eliza Bowen House
14/4	Jefferson and Florence Duvall	14/33	Franklin King (Coleman) Farm
14/6	Jerry Williams Farm	14/34	Darby-Green Farm; Sunrise Farm
14/11	Scott-Etchison House		
14/12	Hawkins Farm and Creamery Site		

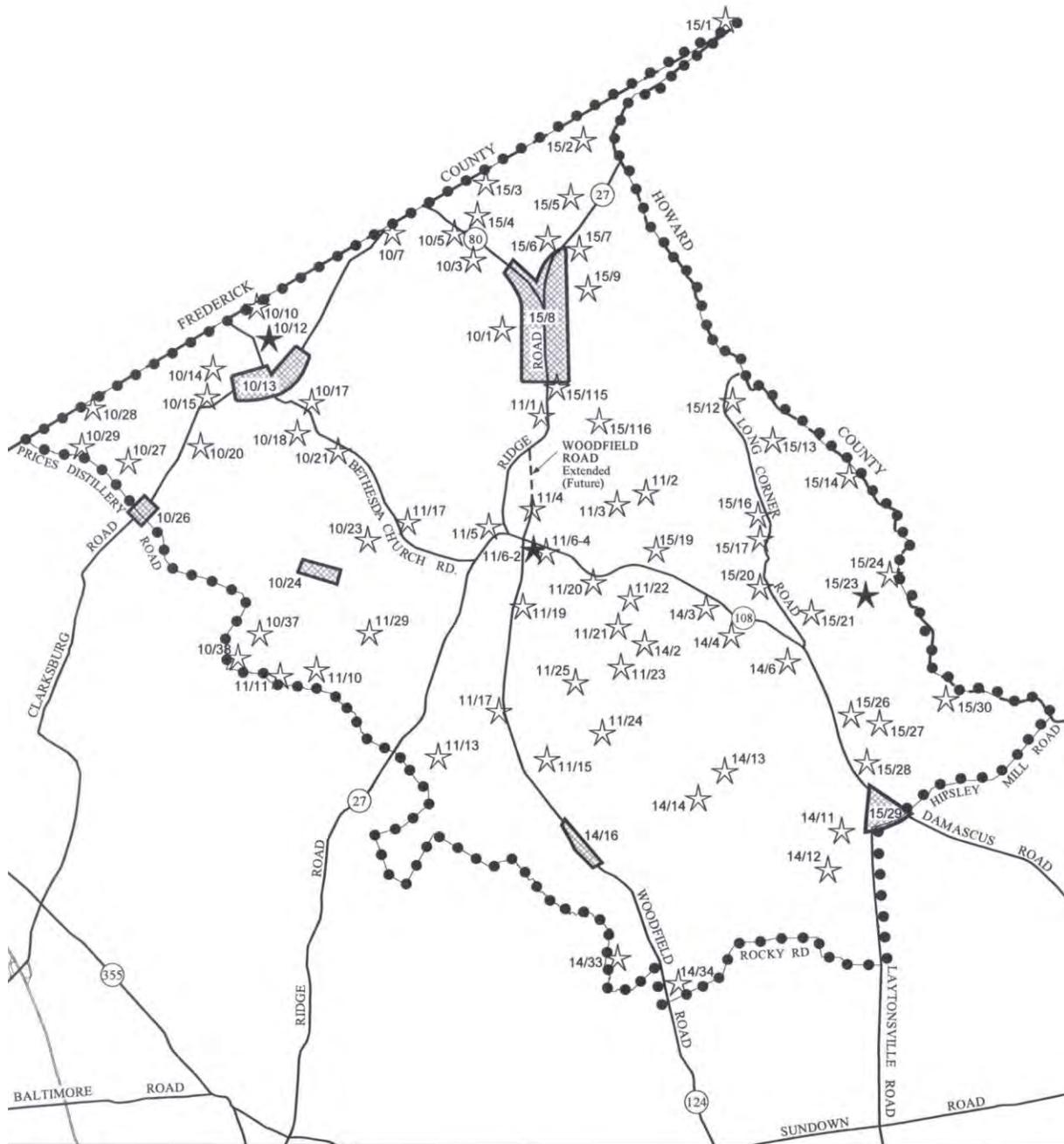
Planning Area 15: Patuxent Watershed Conservation Area

- | | | | |
|-------|-------------------------------|--------|----------------------------------|
| 15/1 | Parr's Spring | 15/17 | William Brandenburg House |
| 15/2 | Matthew Molesworth House | 15/19 | Warthan/Day Farm |
| 15/3 | Renzin Moxley Farm | 15/20 | Mt. Lebanon Church and Cemetery |
| 15/4 | Al Baker House | 15/21 | Madison Etchison House |
| 15/5 | Joshua Molesworth | 15/24 | Wilson Warfield |
| 15/6 | Becraft House | 15/26 | Fred Wathens |
| 15/7 | Brown Log Tobacco House | 15/27 | Lyde Griffith House and Cemetery |
| 15/9 | Captain Claggett/Hilton Farm | 15/28 | Moore House |
| 15/12 | Thompson-Woodfield Farm | 15/30 | Log Barn |
| 15/13 | Harold Mullinix House | 15/115 | Friendship Church* |
| 15/14 | Mullinix Store | 15/116 | Inez Zieglar McAbee House* |
| 15/16 | Brandenburg Log Tobacco House | | |

Historic Communities

- | | | | |
|-------|----------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|
| 10/13 | Browningsville Historic District | 14/16 | Woodfield Historic District |
| 10/24 | Purdum Community | 15/8 | Claggettville Community |
| 10/26 | Lewisdale Community | 15/29 | Etchison Community |

Historic Sites



- Master Plan Area Boundary
- ★ Historic Site Designated on Master Plan for Historic Preservation
- ☆ Resources Identified in County of Historic Sites
- 10/17 Historic Site Number
- ▨ Historic Districts



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This section of the Master Plan contains the proposed actions to implement the land use recommendations of the Plan. The Mixed-Use Town Center (MXTC) Zone and the MXTC/TDR Zone are proposed for the Town Center. In the Transition Areas, zoning changes are proposed in the Town Neighborhood Area, Neighborhood Transition Area, and the Rural Transition Area. In the Rural Area, the Rural Density Transfer (RDT) Zone is retained with minor adjustments. Also in the Rural Area, the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone is proposed to protect existing rural villages.

Summary of Zoning Change Recommendations

Location	Existing Zone	Proposed Zone
Town Center		
	Mixed Commercial, Industrial, Residential Zones	MXTC and MXTC/TDR
Transition Areas		
Town Neighborhood Area	RE-2C	R-200 RE-1
Neighborhood Transition Area	RE-2C	R-200 RE-1 RNC/TDR RC R-90
Rural Transition Area	RE-2C and RC	RC RNC/TDR
Rural Areas		
Etchison, Browningsville, Purdum	R-200, C-1, RDT	R-200, C-1, RDT with Rural Village Center Overlay

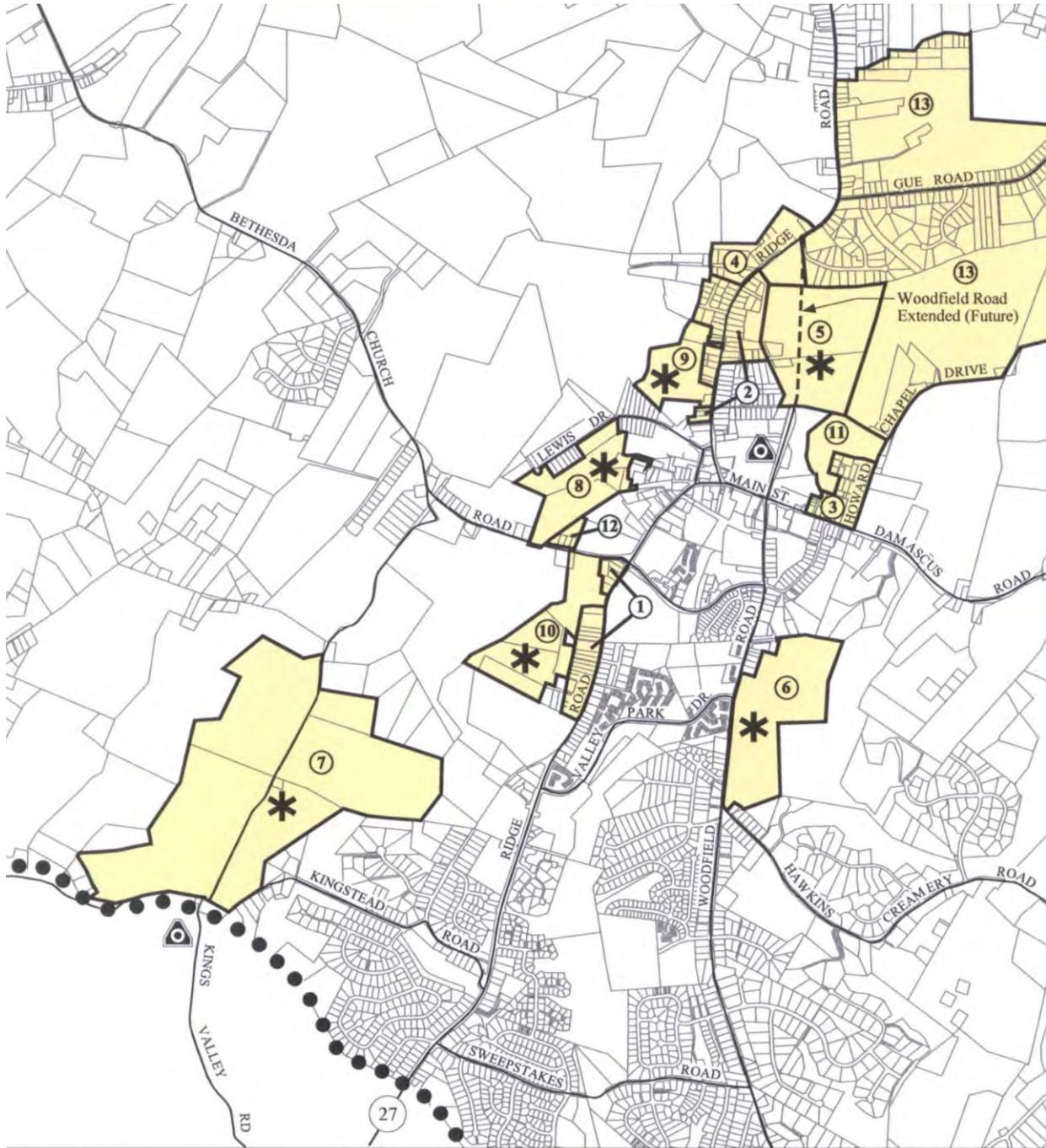
TOWN CENTER ZONING

Damascus is envisioned to remain the local market center for northern Montgomery County. Commercial activity that includes a mix of retail, service and office uses is an important component of a successful Town Center. A mixture of mutually beneficial uses within a Town Center allows residents and patrons to reach destinations and consolidate errands without driving long distances. The moderate density, multifamily residential development proposed in this Plan will reduce the burden on the roadway network, make access easier for residents of outlying neighborhoods, and bolster the market base to support a healthy retail center catering primarily to local residents.

Zoning Recommendation

The existing commercial zoning for the Town Center area encompasses approximately 112 acres and includes C-2 (General Commercial), C-T (Commercial Transitional), O-M (Office-Moderate Intensity), PD-7 (Planned Development-Medium Low Density) and I-1 (Light Industrial). The existing residential zones encompass approximately 82 acres and include RE-2C (Residential Estate, Cluster), R-200 (Residential, One-Family), R-60 (Residential, One-Family), RT-8.0 (Residential, Townhouse) and R-30 (Multiple-Family, Low Density). This Plan recommends changing all the existing zones to the MXTC or MXTC/TDR Zones with different levels of emphasis, and slightly different intensities.

Transfer Development Rights Receiving Areas



- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| ● ● ● Master Plan Area Boundary | ⑦ Kingstead/ Leishear | △ Existing Sewage Pump Stations |
| * TDR Receiving | ⑧ Casey/ Lewis | □ Pump station may be needed to serve cluster development |
| ① Ridge Road South Neighborhood | ⑨ Stanley/ Leishear - Day □ | |
| ② Ridge Road North Town Neighborhood | ⑩ Smart/ Miner/ Rice/ Conway □ | |
| ③ Town Spring Neighborhood | ⑪ Miller | |
| ④ Ridge Road North Neighborhood Transition | ⑫ Souder and Vicinity | |
| ⑤ Burdette □ (Relocate/ reduce existing pump station on Damascus Center) | ⑬ Patuxent River Watershed Properties | |
| ⑥ Warfield | | |



The MXTC Zone or MXTC/TDR Zone will be used for all properties in the Town Center. This mixed-use zone will establish town-scale development that emphasizes the scale, proportion, design, and architectural context of structures, rather than separation of uses. The zoning allows a broad range of uses, but with density and review standards appropriate for this small town setting. The MXTC Zone will allow appropriately scaled development that emphasizes how structures fit into the town center context rather than focusing on the uses within the structures. It will allow a very broad range of residential, commercial, light industrial, service, and institutional uses, but it will require site plan review for most new structures and major structural modifications. The range of uses allowed will limit certain uses previously allowed that are not appropriate for a small town context, and will encourage mixed-use structures that can more easily evolve over time as market demand changes. The MXTC/TDR is recommended for properties where the existing zoning is a lower density residential zone and for split-zoned properties or jointly-owned properties where a portion of the property is a lower-density residential zone.

The areas included in the Town Center Zone will have two levels of emphasis with slightly different intensities. The outer area will encourage, but not be limited to, residential uses and have slightly higher residential density allowed. The inner core will encourage, but not be limited to, commercial uses and have slightly higher commercial intensities allowed. The zoning densities will not exceed the potential intensity within the cumulative range of the existing zones in the Town Center. Allowing a wide variety of uses within the Town Center is critical for residential development and supporting community-oriented businesses.

The Plan recommendations will encourage the use of residential potential in the Town Center and are intended to reduce allowable commercial densities. Although analysis of development potential considered theoretical maximums to ensure traffic and school balance, realistic development potential is considerably less, as discussed below.

Commercial Potential – The proposed zoning would allow a theoretical maximum of 1.6 million square feet of additional commercial uses. Again, a calculation reflecting the historic development yield in Damascus reveals significantly lower probable development will occur, adding approximately 1.2 million additional square feet of commercial property.

Residential Potential – On properties that are anticipated to develop during the life of the Plan, the proposed zoning would allow a theoretical maximum of approximately 1,700 new dwelling units, including MPDUs (see Theoretical Maximum Potential table below). However, historic development yields in Damascus indicate less development will occur, adding approximately 997 additional dwelling units to the existing residential units (see Realistic Potential table below).

In addition to the historic patterns of development, there are other reasons to support the Plan assumption that the theoretical maximum build out estimates do not reflect realistic building potential. First, Town Center development will include a mix of these alternatives. This Plan encourages mixed-use buildings that include commercial uses on the ground floor, and office or residential uses on the upper floors. Second, development guidelines for building height, environmental constraints on individual sites, and protecting the character of nearby existing development will reduce the maximum yield in the zone. Finally, some owners may decide to develop or redevelop at lower intensities for market or other business reasons.

Summary of Zoning Changes and TDR use in Town Center¹

An MXTC/TDR Zone is recommended in the Plan for certain properties in the outer area of the Town Center to encourage the use of transferable development rights (TDRs). The Zone requires the use of TDRs to achieve additional residential density above 8 du/acre in these properties. The TDR potential for all properties designated for the MXTC/TDR Zone that are realistically anticipated to develop could provide up to 600 TDRs if all properties anticipated to develop achieve full density. The calculation based on historic yields for this type of mixed-use zone reflect less development potential, and substantially lower TDR usage (potentially no more than 150 TDRs – see tables below).

Development Potential in the Town Center – The following tables provide a summary of calculation of development potential in the Town Center for the most realistically developable properties. The first table identifies the maximum development potential for these properties.

Theoretical Maximum Development Potential in the Town Center¹

	Acres	Standard Method Development		Optional Method Development		TDR Potential
		Dwelling Units per Acre	Dwelling Units	Dwelling Units per Acre	Dwelling Units	
Inner Core (MXTC)	21.40	8	171	15	321	NA
Outer Area MXTC	19.42	8	155	20	388	NA
Outer Area MXTC/TDR	49.98	8	399	20	999	600
TOTALS	90.8	~	725	~	1,708	600²

1. MPDU potential is included in the these calculations
2. Potential TDRs depend on single family or multifamily dwelling use

The following table summarizes the realistic potential yields that are expected with the recommended zoning over the life of the Plan, based on historic yields in Damascus and for zones similar to the MXTC zone:

Realistic Development Potential in the Town Center^{1,3}

	Acres	Standard Method Development		Optional Method Development		TDR Potential
		Dwelling Units per Acre	Dwelling Units	Dwelling Units per Acre	Dwelling Units	
Inner Core (MXTC)	21.40	8	171	11	235	NA
Outer Area MXTC	19.42	8	155	11	213	NA
Outer Area MXTC/TDR	49.98	8	399	11	549	150
TOTALS	90.8	~	725	~	997	150²

1. MPDU potential is included in the these calculations
2. Potential TDRs depend on single family or multifamily dwelling use
3. Calculation based on historic density yield for mixed-use zoning countywide

Town Center Development Guidelines

Guidelines for density and bulk regulation are as follows:

	MXTC and MXTC/TDR Outer Area	MXTC Inner Core
Density:		
Commercial, Industrial or Mixed-Use	0.5 FAR	1.0 FAR
100% Residential	20 du/ac	15 du/ac
Height:		
Commercial, Industrial or Mixed-Use	55'	55'
100% Residential	55'*	45'

* At the time of development, the Planning Board must evaluate compatibility with adjacent residential neighborhoods and limit height on the outer edge of the Town Center to reflect the heights of adjacent residential neighborhoods.

At the time of site plan review of specific development proposals, the Planning Board may consider waiver of height, setback, or public use space requirements due to restrictions caused by extenuating existing circumstances. In particular, consideration can be given to meeting public use space requirements along Main Street in the Town Center through provision of street amenities, and to adjustments to development plans in response to adjacent properties that are not developed in accordance with the Plan recommendations.

TRANSITION AREAS

This area serves as the bridge between the higher densities in the Town Center and the open spaces of the Rural Areas. The three development tiers in the Transition Area reflect gradually declining development intensity, and increased open space. Because little developable property remains in the Town Neighborhood Area, the zoning modifications only allow development that conforms to existing lot sizes in some neighborhoods.

In the Neighborhood Transition Area, development density is moderately increased through the use of TDR receiving sites, and development is clustered in small lot single-family neighborhoods that primarily ring the Town Center, offering easy pedestrian access to retail and recreational outlets. These neighborhoods will have vistas of the surrounding fields and forests in the Rural Transition Area and the Rural Area.

One neighborhood area in the Rural Transition Area is recommended for a modification to a lower density zone in order to reflect the guidelines for development in the Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed. Through these recommendations, Damascus will reflect the community vision of a compact and accessible town surrounded by, and providing visual access to, the countryside.

Zoning Recommendations

A moderate increase in density is proposed for the Transition Areas, primarily in the Neighborhood Transition Area. The Plan recommendations include: modifications of zoning for conformity to existing lot sizes in four older neighborhoods, creating a new Rural Neighborhood Cluster/Transferable Development Rights (RNC/TDR) Zone, modifications to increase environmental protection, and modifications to increase potential density.

Town Neighborhood Area

Four areas, just north of the Town Center between Ridge Road and Woodfield Road, and just south of the Town Center on the west side of Ridge Road, are recommended for a change from the RE-2C Zone.

- **R-200 Zone** – For the *Ridge Road South Neighborhood*, located south of the Town Center and west of Ridge Road; and the *Ridge Road North Town Neighborhood*, located north of the Town Center along Ridge Road.
- **RE-1 Zone** – For the *Town Spring Neighborhood*, located west of Howard Chapel Drive and north of MD 108; and the *Ridge Road North Transitional Neighborhood*, located north of Ridge Road North Town Neighborhood along Ridge Road.

Neighborhood Transition Area

The Master Plan proposes the following zoning modifications in this area including:

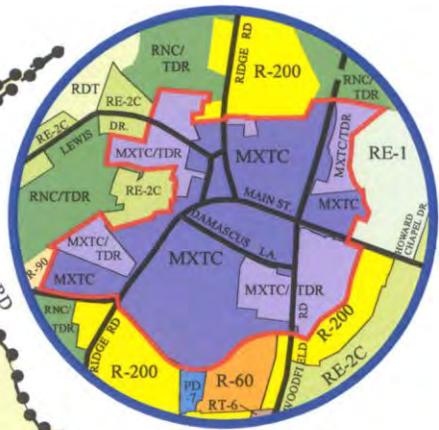
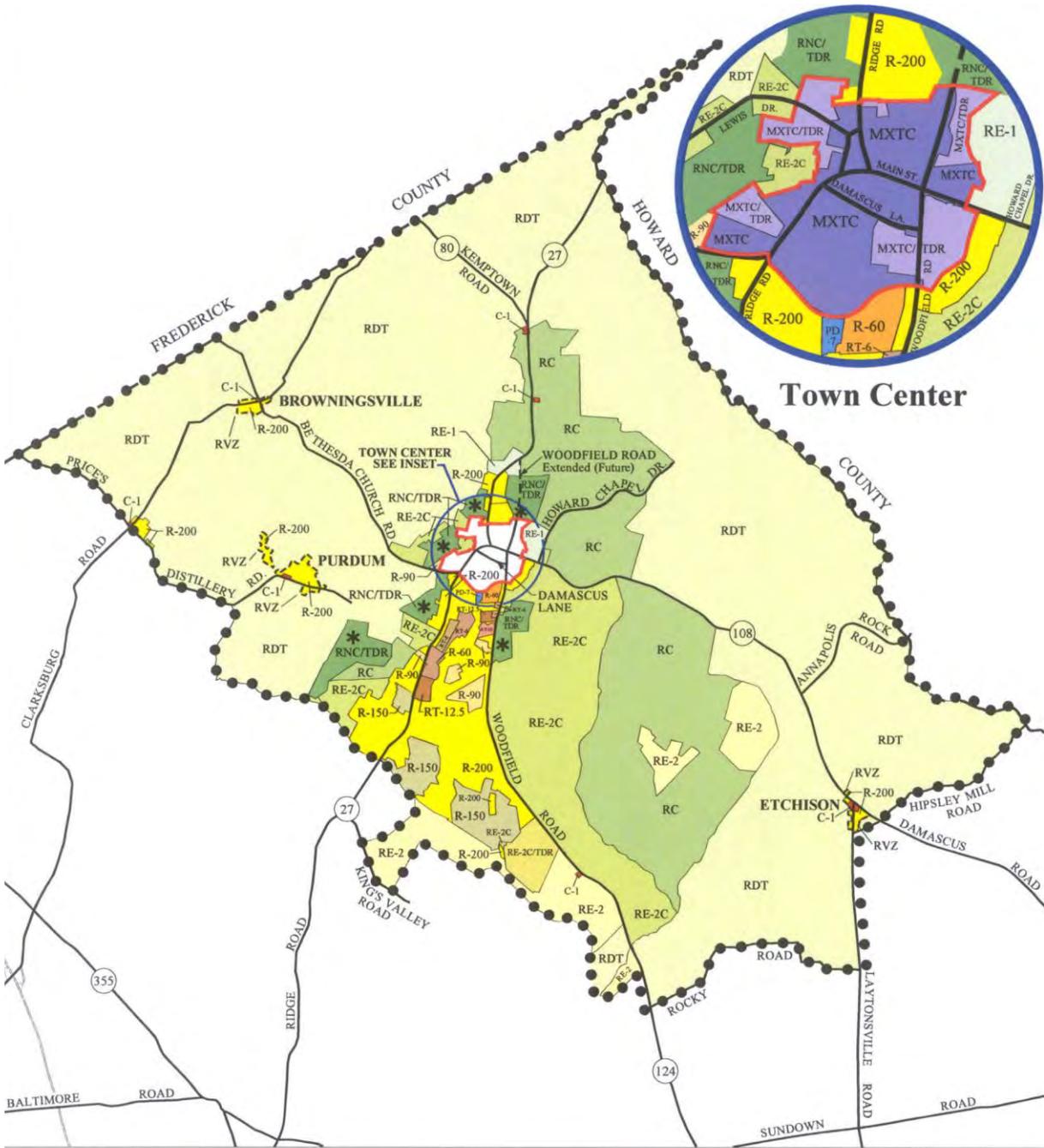
- **Create the Rural Neighborhood Cluster/Transferable Development Rights (TDR) Zone**
The Plan recommends creating TDR receiving ability for the RNC Zone for six properties. All are proposed for an RNC .4/TDR 1.0 Zone at locations that have, or can be easily served by sewer. While there is conformity of zoning, actual development potential may be curtailed by other elements of this Plan, especially environmental criteria. This zone permits small lot, cluster development that will address environmental and vista protection goals, neighborhood design goals, and enhanced connectivity goals. The base yield generally reflects the existing two-acre density, and in order to address agricultural protection goals, additional density yields reflect the use of TDRs.

Densities recommended for this zone may exceed one dwelling unit per acre with MPDUs. This zone allows small lot, cluster neighborhoods that will be compatible with existing development patterns in Damascus.

Creating these new TDR receiving sites furthers the Agricultural Goals of the Plan and the County. All are subject to guidelines for cluster use and individual development guidelines in the Land Use Chapter that reflect the unique characteristics of the site. The proposed sites include:

- **Burdette Property Recommendation**
RNC 0.4/TDR 1.0 Zone allowing from 16 to 100 dwelling units with up to 65 TDRs
- **Warfield Property Recommendation**
RNC 0.4/TDR 0.75 Zone allowing from 15 to 71 dwelling units with up to 42 TDRs
- **Kingstead/Leishear Properties Recommendation**
RNC 0.2 /TDR 0.5 Zone allowing from 27 to 84 dwelling units with up to 41 TDRs
- **Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway Properties Recommendation**
RNC 0.4/TDR 1.0 Zone allowing for 10 to 61 dwelling units with up to 40 TDRs
- **Casey/Lewis Properties Recommendation**
RNC 0.4/TDR 0.5 Zone allowing from 9 to 27 dwelling units with up to 13 TDRs
- **Stanley/Leishear-Day Properties Recommendation**
RNC 0.4/TDR 1.0 Zone allowing from 5 to 32 dwelling units with up to 21 TDRs

Proposed Zoning



Town Center

- Master Plan Area Boundary
 - * TDR Receiving
 - Town Center Boundary
- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RDT RC RE-1 RE-2 RE-2C R-200 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> R-150 R-90 R-60 R-30 RT-6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT-8 RT-10 RT-12.5 RE-2C/TDR C-1 PD-7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ----- RVZ - Rural Village Zone MXTC/TDR MXTC RNC/TDR - Rural Neighborhood Cluster/Transfer Development Rights |
|---|--|--|---|



The Plan recommends two other zoning changes in the *Neighborhood Transition Area*.

- **Miller Property**
RE-1 Zone yielding 21–25 lots
- **Souder and Adjoining Properties**
R-90 Zone yielding up to 14 dwelling units with assembly of properties

Rural Transition Area

The Plan proposes one zoning modification in this area:

- **Patuxent River Watershed Properties Recommendation**
Rural Cluster Zone for 260 properties totaling approximately 580 acres

Summary of Zoning Changes in the Transition Areas

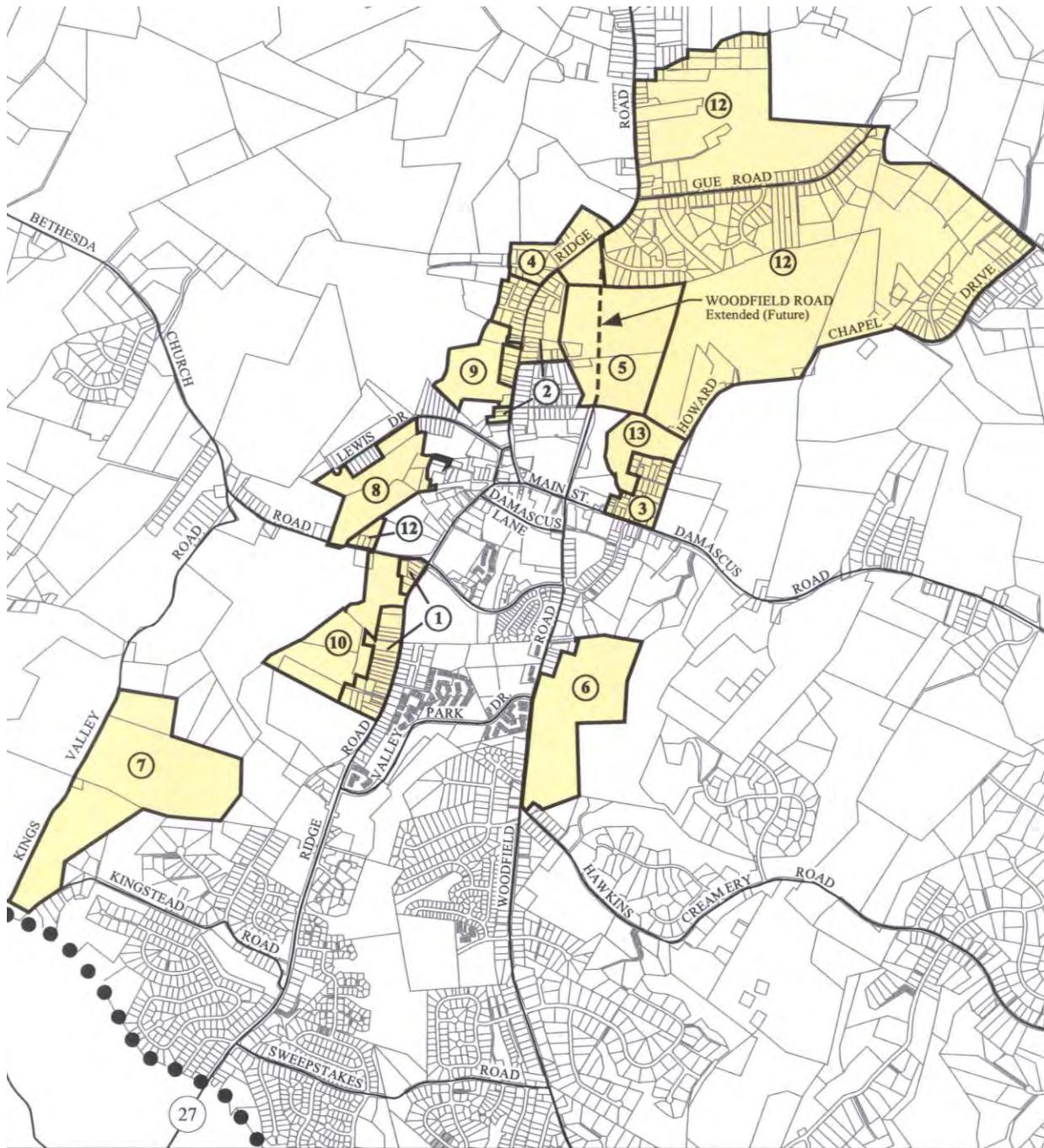
These recommendations provide from 143 to 385 additional dwelling units, with 222 of those only allowed through the use of TDRs. As noted earlier, the Town Center is to be the primary area of additional growth for this Master Plan, with a moderate increase in density in the Transition Areas near the Town Center, but not the outlying Transition or Rural areas where there is limited or no access to community sewer.

Summary of Proposed Zoning Changes in the Transition Areas

Name	Zoning Modification	Potential Maximum Yield	Potential MPDU DU	Potential TDRs
Town Neighborhood Area – Conformance to Existing Lot Size				
Ridge Road South Neighborhood	RE-2C to R-200	33	NA	NA
Ridge Road North Town Neighborhood		49	NA	NA
Town Spring Neighborhood	RE-2C to RE-1	33	NA	NA
Ridge Road North Transitional Neighborhood		23	NA	NA
Neighborhood Transition Area – Increased Development Potential				
Burdette*	RE-2C to RNC/TDR	100	15	65
Warfield*		71	10	42
Casey/Lewis*		27	4	13
Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway*		61	9	40
Stanley/Leishear-Day*		32	5	21
Kingstead/Leishear*	RC and RE-2C to RNC/TDR	84	12	41
Souder*	RE-2C to R-90	14	NA	NA
Miller	RE-2C to RE-1	25	NA	NA
Rural Transition Area – Patuxent Watershed Protection				
Patuxent Area Properties	RE-2C to RC	316	NA	NA
TOTAL		868	55	222

* Potential Yield includes TDR and MPDU potential

Transition Properties Proposed for Zoning Change



- ● ● Master Plan Area Boundary
- ① Ridge Road South Neighborhood - RE-2C to R-200
- ② Ridge Road North Town Neighborhood - RE-2C to R-200
- ③ Town Spring Neighborhood - RE-2C to RE-1
- ④ Ridge Road North Transition Neighborhood - RE-2C to RE-1
- ⑤ Burdette - RE-2C to RNC 0.4/TDR 1.0
- ⑥ Warfield - RE-2C to RNC 0.4/TDR 0.75
- ⑦ Kingstead / Leishear - RE-2C to RNC 0.2/TDR 0.5
- ⑧ Casey / Lewis - RE-2C to RNC 0.4/TDR 0.5
- ⑨ Stanley / Leishear - Day - RE-2C to RNC 0.4/TDR 1.0
- ⑩ Smart / Rice / Miner / Conway - RE-2C to RNC 0.4/TDR 1.0
- ⑪ Souder and Vicinity - RE-2C to R-90
- ⑫ Patuxent River Watershed Properties - RE-2C to RC
- ⑬ Miller - RE-2C/ PD-5 to RE-1



0 2500'

RURAL AREAS

Zoning Recommendations

With the exception of the areas proposed within the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone discussed below, the Plan recommends maintaining the existing zoning in the Rural Areas of Damascus.

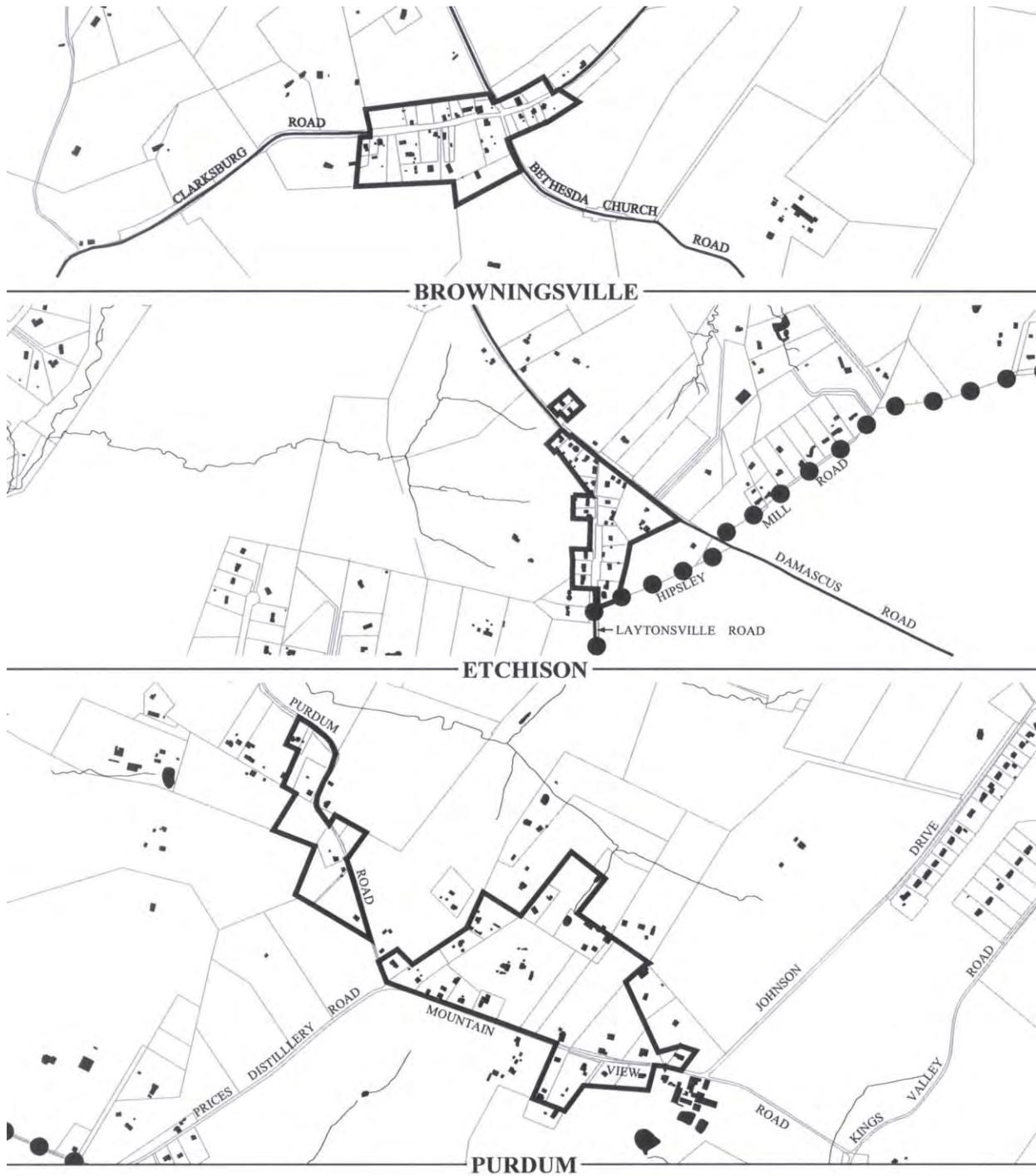
Implement the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone – The Rural Village Center Overlay Zone, with appropriate types of uses and levels of intensity, is recommended for Etchison, Browningsville, and Purdum. A zone of this type was initially recommended in the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space Master Plan (1980). This zone will protect these village areas from inappropriate uses that are allowed in the commercial, residential, and industrial zones found in some of these villages in the County. The zone will limit development potential, yet allow a wide variety of uses at a scale appropriate in a rural setting. This zone should be amended to prohibit larger auto-oriented commercial uses. The rehabilitation or replacement of dilapidated structures in these communities should be encouraged, and they should be allowed to evolve with some additional residential, institutional, and commercial uses.

Public sewer and water is not recommended for these communities except as needed by public health concerns. Since many of these villages face problems with aging septic systems or water quality, the use of innovative individual or community sewage disposal systems should be encouraged. This concern was also the subject of one of the goals of the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space Master Plan (1980). This Plan supports the use of such systems to address community health problems in rural villages.

SPECIAL EXCEPTION GUIDELINES

Guideline for Rural Vista Protection – The visual character of the Rural Areas surrounding Damascus are unique as they are the highest elevations in the County. When special exceptions are proposed in Transition and Rural Areas within the Damascus Master Plan area, their review should take into special consideration the preservation of these long vistas that are a part of the unique character of this community. Any proposed land use that would impede those vistas should be discouraged unless it serves an important public purpose.

Rural Villages – Browningsville, Etchison, and Purdum



● ● ● Master Plan Area Boundary

▭ Rural Village Boundary



Not to Scale

COMMUNITY WATER AND SEWER SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS

Community Sewer Service

The provision of community sewer service in the Damascus plan area is guided by the County's Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan, the General Plan, and prior Master Plans; as well as regional environmental policies, such as the Chesapeake Bay Initiatives and the Maryland Smart Growth policies.

Community sewer service in the Damascus planning area is provided by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) through trunk lines that run the length of the Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park to the Damascus Wastewater Treatment Plant located near Log House Road. The sewerage system serving the Damascus Master Plan area is completely independent of WSSC's other sewerage systems in the County. The severe topography in Damascus has historically worked against the ability to make sewer extensions beyond the Magruder Valley. Two wastewater pumping stations, Spring Garden and Damascus Center, deliver sewage flows from areas within the Little Bennett Creek and Upper Patuxent watersheds back into the Magruder Valley. Additional extensions of community sewer service into other watersheds, or expansion of service in these watersheds, will require significant capital improvements.

The Little Bennett Creek Watershed is a unique situation in the sewer service system. The Spring Garden pumping station was built to provide sewer service for development to a limited area in the Little Bennett Stream Valley east of Kings Valley Road. This pump station is small, and it is now near capacity. Installing infrastructure within the environmental buffers of this sensitive Use III stream can permanently damage critical resources and invite further development. For Little Bennett Creek, this Plan recommends that sewer extensions be limited to areas that can be served either by existing or new infrastructure that does not require forest disturbance or stream crossings.

This Plan recommends:

- Maintain the existing sewer envelope with a few limited changes discussed in the Land Use Chapter.
- Provide community sewer service in the planning area in conformance with Water and Sewer Plan service policies. This excludes areas zoned for low-density development (RE-1, RE-2, and RC) that are not already approved for service from further extension of community service.
- Extend sewer service to designated areas of properties proposed for the RNC Zone and included in the sewer envelope, provided that these properties develop using the cluster method under the direction of the Master Plan guidelines.

If cluster development is used, sewer service is recommended for the Burdette, Warfield, Kingstead/Leishear, Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway, Casey/Lewis, and Stanley/Leishear-Day properties. Sewer for the Burdette and Kingstead/Leishear properties is recommended only for those areas that can be served by gravity sewer or grinder systems that minimize stream or stream buffer impacts. The proposed relocation of the pump station that would serve the Burdette property may modify or expand the areas that can be accessed, but must not be used as a rationale for zoning changes beyond those recommended in this Plan.

Sewer service for the Warfield and Casey/Lewis properties should utilize existing gravity sewer where available but may use grinder systems and small pressure systems where necessary, subject to WSSC feasibility analysis.

Given the topography of the Damascus area, the provision of community sewer service to many of the sites recommended for such service will require means besides standard gravity sewer extensions for conveying flows into the Damascus sewerage system: extra-depth or contour sewers, individual grinder pump/pressure sewer systems, and central wastewater pumping stations. The implementation of new sewer service should minimize—as much as is feasible—the need for additional pumping stations, which add to WSSC’s operations and maintenance costs. However, this Master Plan does anticipate the need for additional WSSC-owned and operated pumping stations; the Stanley/Leishear and Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway sites are likely but not necessarily the only locations for these facilities. The County will address the need for new pumping facilities through the development review process, which will include coordination with Comprehensive Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan policies and with WSSC operations and capital improvement program requirements. In any case where a new pumping station is required, the siting of the station and its force main will need to accommodate a balance between maximizing the feasibility of gravity sewer main extensions to new development and minimizing impacts such as sewer main stream crossings and disruption to sensitive environmental buffer areas.

- Use existing sewer lines to provide service to cluster development in areas already cleared of forest and relatively accessible to existing sewer mains in order to avoid disturbance to large areas of existing forest along streams and in the headwaters.
- Avoid the extension of new sewer lines along, across, or parallel to stream tributaries.
- All development seeking community sewer service outside the proposed sewer envelope, under the provision of Private Institutional Facility policy, should minimize their level of imperviousness so that it does not exceed the level anticipated under the base zone, or as required within the Patuxent River Watershed.
- Provide community sewer service to neighborhoods, in close proximity to the existing community sewerage system, that are likely to have difficulty in continuing to function on existing, on-site septic systems (see the following discussion). Where community sewer service is not currently accessible, comprehensively analyze designated neighborhoods for alternative ways to address failing septic systems including, but not limited to, the provision of community sewer service.

Aging Septic Systems

Most of the plan area is served by individual septic systems with the exception of the sewer envelope in the Magruder Valley. Older areas of Damascus were built under now outdated septic system regulations. If these systems fail, unfavorable soil conditions and relatively small lot sizes could make it impossible for the Department of Permitting Services to grant new permits for replacing them with traditional septic systems that satisfy current regulations. This Plan recommends a comprehensive analysis for an alternative mode of service to address this situation. This analysis should consider how service could be provided in a way that will benefit the entire neighborhood that is subject to the same conditions without expanding community services to areas not recommended for sewer in this Plan.

This Plan recommends:

- Extend the recommended sewer service envelope to nearby properties where, because of relatively small property sizes and the age of existing septic systems, owners will likely have severe limitations on the ability to replace those septic systems when they fail. The recommended zoning for these properties – RE-1, RE-2, and RE-2C – would generally otherwise exclude them from community sewer service. These neighborhoods have reasonable access to the existing Damascus community sewerage system, and in a few cases are already adjacent to existing sewer mains. The extension of community service in these neighborhoods is intended to address existing or anticipated public health concerns. Water and Sewer plan policies that limit each existing property to a single service connection within an area so designated do so to maintain the existing housing stock and development patterns in these areas, not to promote new subdivision or resubdivision activities. Future Water and Sewer Plan amendments must follow this intent. As a result of this recommendation, community sewer service will become available for a few vacant properties included in these neighborhoods. However, community sewer service is not intended to promote substantial new development in these areas, especially the wholesale redevelopment of existing neighborhoods.
- Where the recommendations of the Plan do not support the provision of community sewer service, development should occur, as feasible, using private, on-site sewerage systems.
- Where new individual systems are planned for residential zones due to public health concerns, this Plan encourages the use of innovative systems to reduce nutrient loads.
- The Department of Permitting Services modify existing regulations to allow innovative septic systems in residential areas with the intent to reduce nutrient loads to the Chesapeake Bay.

Community Water Service

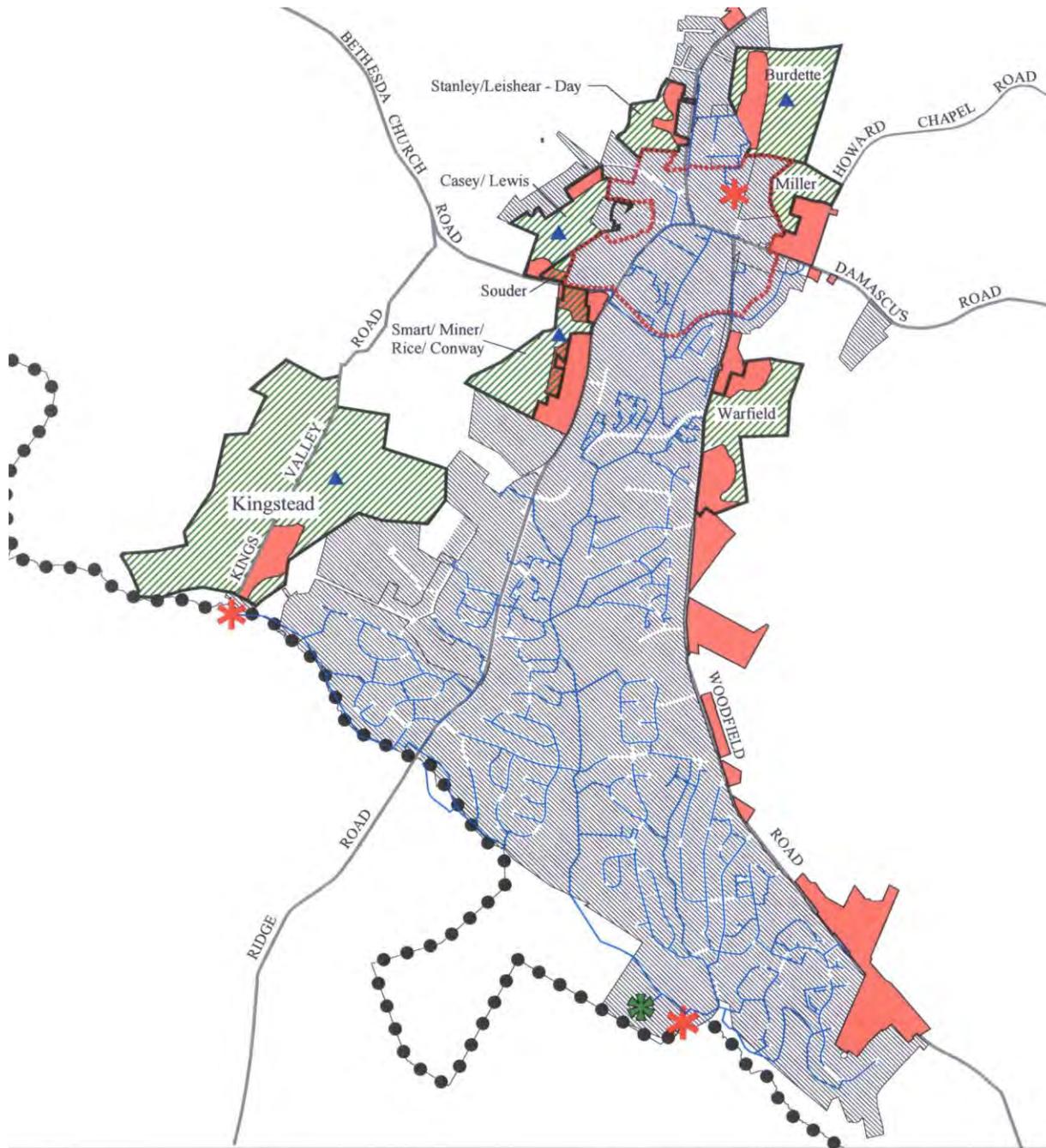
The provision of community water service in the Damascus plan area is guided by the County's Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan, the General Plan, and Smart Growth policies. The County's water and sewer policy allows for the provision of community water service throughout the majority of the Master Plan area except for the area zoned RDT. Community water service, where available in the Master Plan area, is provided by the WSSC. Previous policies allowed community water service to be extended to several neighborhoods now zoned RDT that pre-date the RDT Zone. The County's water and sewer policy generally advocates community water service for areas zoned for moderate to high-density development only. In addition, areas zoned for one- and two-acre development and five-acre cluster development can be considered for community water service on a case-by-case basis if factors such as maintenance of drinking water quality, the need to reduce fire hazard, and economic feasibility are present. One property is recommended for community water service as discussed in the Land Use Chapter.

**Summary of Public Water and Sewer Category Change Recommendations
(at time of development)**

Property	Water	Sewer
Water and Sewer Access		
Burdette Property	W3	S3
Warfield Property	W3	S3
Kingstead/Leishear Properties	W3	S3 gravity
Casey/Lewis Properties	W3	S3
Stanley/Leishear-Day Properties	W3	S3
Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway Properties	W3	S3
Souder Property	W3	S3
Water Access Only		
Miller Property - Howard Chapel Drive	W3	S6

- Well Contamination Concerns** – Some older subdivisions in the Plan area are reported to have well contamination. If confirmed by the Department of Permitting Services, this Plan recommends providing community service according to the County’s water and sewer policy. They are unlikely to receive community water service for the foreseeable future unless the Master Plan recommends water service. Because of the concentration of homes in older subdivisions along Howard Chapel Drive near its intersection with Gue Road, this Plan recommends that community water be extended along Gue Road or Howard Chapel Drive if WSSC determines that this is technically feasible.

Public Sewer Envelope



- ● ● ● Master Plan Area
- ▨ Existing Sewer Service
- Proposed Sewer Service
- ▨ Developable Sites
- Sewer Line
- * Pumping Station
- ★ Waste Water Treatment
- ▲ Proposed New Water Service
- ⬢ Town Center



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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*Former Staff Member

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Introduced: May 25, 2006
Adopted: May 25, 2006

COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
SITTING AS THE DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR THAT PORTION
OF THE MARYLAND-WASHINGTON REGIONAL DISTRICT
WITHIN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

By: District Council

Subject: Approval of Planning Board Draft Damascus Master Plan

1. On November 4, 2005, the Montgomery County Planning Board transmitted to the County Executive and the County Council the Planning Board Draft Damascus Master Plan.
2. The Planning Board Draft Damascus Master Plan amends the approved and adopted 2005 Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan; The General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties; The Countywide Park Trails Plan; The Master Plan of Highways within Montgomery County; and the 1993 Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed.
3. On December 13, 2005, the County Executive transmitted to the County Council his fiscal analysis of the Damascus Master Plan.
4. On January 24 and February 28, 2006, the County Council held a public hearing regarding the Planning Board Draft Damascus Master Plan. The Master Plan was referred to the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee for review and recommendation.
5. On February 17, March 3, March 10, March 17, March 20, and May 5, 2006 the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee held worksessions to review the issues raised in connection with the Planning Board Draft Damascus Master Plan.
6. On April 4 and May 18, 2006, the County Council reviewed the Planning Board Draft Damascus Master Plan and the recommendations of the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland sitting as the District Council for that portion of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery County, Maryland, approves the following resolution:

The Planning Board Draft Damascus Master Plan, dated August 2005, is approved with revisions. Council revisions to the Planning Board Draft Damascus Master Plan are identified below. Deletions to the text of the Plan are indicated by [brackets], additions by underscoring.

Table of Contents: Delete "Vision" under Land Use Plan. Add "Special Exception Guidelines" after "Rural Areas" under Implementation Plan.

Page 1: Under Introduction, revise third and fifth bullets as follows:

- Build a strong transportation network by layering pedestrian access, bicycle connections, and regional trails.
- Reflect environmental protections in the Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed and protect other environmentally sensitive areas.

Page 1: Revise Community Vision, section as follows:

- Establish a Town Center identifiable as the community's heart[: create] by creating a moderate intensity mix of uses in the Town Center, [increase pedestrian connections to the surrounding neighborhoods, emphasize] emphasizing design and scale over separation of uses, and [increase] increasing housing opportunities.
- Fulfill the vision of Damascus as a community with a mixed-use center, connected with its residential neighborhoods, and surrounded by rural open space.
- Create livable neighborhoods clustered near the Town Center[:], cluster development to provide a stronger community edge, use transferable development rights (TDRs) to provide [more] additional growth potential, [increase pedestrian and bicycle connections to the Town Center,] and provide a range of housing types and lot sizes within neighborhoods.
- Provide a variety of housing options including affordable housing and housing opportunities for seniors suitable to the small town character of Damascus.
- Provide greater connectivity within, to, and around the town[:] by increasing pedestrian and bicycling connections to Town Center [increase] and pedestrian and bicycling opportunities along all major roadways and at other appropriate locations, [emphasize] emphasizing multi-use aspects of all roadways in planning for safety and access, and [evaluate] evaluating the necessity for alternate routing for through commuter traffic.

- Improve the efficiency of the roadway network, provide road improvements, expand the pedestrian and bicycle path networks, and improve the potential for intercepting commuters through expanded transit options.
- [Create a “green” environment] Protect and enhance the local and surrounding environment[: cluster] by clustering new development to achieve greater overall environmental protection, protecting stream valleys, steep slopes and forest resources, [encourage the use of green technologies,] and [reduce] reducing land use density in the Patuxent Watershed beyond immediate proximity to the Town Center to meet the goals of the Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed.
- Support agriculture and rural open space[:], continue the use of the Rural Density Transfer Zone, create zoning appropriate for rural crossroad communities, and support agricultural uses on rural land.
- Maintain the quality and integrity of the outstanding natural systems within the Damascus plan area, enhance water quality in the Patuxent River Watershed, and mitigate the impacts of future development.
- Provide a network of local and countywide parks that offer recreational activities, support an interconnected trail system, protect important natural features, and create attractive settings for cultural and historic resources. Provide sufficient public facilities to support the neighborhoods of Damascus, and linkages to access local facilities and institutions safely and efficiently.
- Protect the important historic and archeological resources in the area.

Page 2: Under Plan Highlights, revise first sentence of the first paragraph as follows:

[The recommendations in] A primary goal of this Master Plan is to [implement a primary goal of] enhance[ing] the identity of central Damascus as the heart of the community.

Page 2: Revise the Land Use and Zoning Section as follows:

This Plan supports a moderate level of residential growth, strengthening the potential for multi-family residential and mixed-use development in the Town Center. Mixed-use and residential development is encouraged in the Town Center, and cluster development is preferred in the Transition Areas immediately beyond the Town Center. In addition, this Plan supports the continuing viability of major institutional uses, such as churches and schools that are an intrinsic part of the character of Damascus.

- **Town Center** – Mixed-use zoning is recommended. The zoning will emphasize proportion, design, and an architectural context of structures rather than separation of uses. [Compressed c] Commercial uses concentrated along Main Street and at major downtown intersections will create opportunities for residential development that will support retail and service businesses in the core. Added residential densities are achieved mainly

through the use of transferable development rights. Guidelines for future development and redevelopment [were established] are designed to create an identity for Main Street that will improve mobility and connectivity, and will enhance Community Open Space.

- **Transition Areas** – Cluster designs are encouraged on properties immediately accessible to the Town Center. These properties are suitable for additional growth and will establish a strong edge between the town and rural areas beyond. Most growth potential is tied to receiving areas for transferable [of] development[s] rights. The Plan recommends including the potential to transfer development from the rural area to the Rural Neighborhood Cluster (RNC) Zone.
- **Rural Area** – The Plan supports the existing extent of the Rural Density Transfer (RDT) Zone [is supported] with adjustments for rural village centers. Emerging agricultural methods and practices, and agriculturally related businesses are endorsed as the most efficient, effective, and economical means to maintain a viable agricultural economy and protect the Agricultural Reserve. [A new mixed-use zone () The Plan recommends the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone()] for three rural villages [will be created]. [It] This zone is designed to protect and maintain their existing scale of development through appropriate types of uses and limited levels of intensity. Guidelines are provided for development in the RDT Zone for protection of rural vistas and to guide subdivision design.

Page 4: Add a new section before Regional, County, and Planning Area Context and add a new map that reflects the old and new planning boundaries as follows:

Changes to the Planning Area Boundaries

The boundaries of the Damascus Master Plan differ from the Plan boundaries of the 1982 Master Plan and the 1993 Amendment. Certain areas west of Woodfield Road have been deleted from the Master Plan area, and certain areas east of Woodfield Road have been added to the Master Plan area. The Master Plan boundaries now duplicate the boundaries of traffic zones. Portions of Planning Areas #10 and #14 were removed from the Master Plan area. These locations are primarily in the Rural Density Transfer Zone, and will remain subject to the recommendations of the 1982 Damascus Master Plan.

Page 5: Revise map to properly reflect parkland boundaries so they do not conflict with the future Damascus Lane right-of-way and add a symbol in the legend for an airport and label the location of the Davis Airport on the figure.

Page 7: Under Existing Land Use, revise the last sentence of the second bullet as follows:

Beyond the core, [areas becomes more open] development becomes less intense and older residential areas at one and two-acre densities are interspersed with open land and some agricultural uses.

Page 7: Under Demographic Characteristics Summary, revise the last sentence of the first paragraph as follows:

Population growth was [slow] modest between 1990-2000, increasing approximately 4 percent compared to the County growth of 15.4 percent.

Page 7: Under Demographic Characteristics Summary, revise the last sentence of the second paragraph as follows:

This reflects the larger number of children in Damascus households.

Page 7: Under Demographic Characteristics Summary, revise the fourth sentence of the third paragraph as follows:

Few residents are foreign born; [, and] most residents (90.7 percent) identify themselves as European-American, compared to 64.8 percent Countywide.

Page 9: Under Introduction, revise paragraph as follows:

Land use in Damascus is characterized by a core of greatest density in the commercial center surrounded by progressively lower density residential areas and rural land beyond. The physical focus of Damascus is its elevated location at the [center] headwaters of four major watersheds [emanating from the center of the town]. This geographic reality has strongly influenced the development patterns for this community.

Page 9: Insert the following section at the bottom of the page:

Special Exception Guideline for Rural Vista Protection

To ensure careful consideration of the long rural vistas that are a unique aspect of this community, this Plan strongly encourages the protection of the rural vistas that are intrinsic to the character of the Damascus vicinity. This is a town set on a hill, and the long vistas outside the Town Center provide the most distinctive visual element for the community. Land uses that impede those vistas should be discouraged. Because of the uniqueness of the rural areas surrounding Damascus that are at the highest elevations in the County, this Plan recommends language in the Implementation Chapter to guide review of special exception uses proposed in the Transition and Rural Areas.

Page 10: Revise map per Council decisions and to reflect that there are 6 TDR receiving areas instead of 7.

Page 11: Revise the Community Vision for the Town Center as follows:

The community vision for the Damascus Town Center is a viable, walkable, human-scaled town easily identifiable as the heart of the surrounding community. The Town Center should reflect the compact urban forms of traditional Maryland rural towns and provide a vibrant quality of life for its residents. The Town

Center should respect the legacy of the past and its agrarian context, while maintaining a framework for the market needs of future generations and anchoring the northern borders of Montgomery County.

Page 11: Under Framework, revise first sentence of first paragraph as follows:

This Plan [supports recommendations that will concentrate] recommends concentrated densities within the Town Center, [improve] improved mobility, [encourage] mixed-use development, and [promote] additional green [spaces] space.

Page 11: Under Framework, replace fourth paragraph as follows:

The land use recommendations for the Town Center create a mixed-use core supporting residential densities of 15[-] to 20 dwelling units per acre[,] and commercial densities with a floor area ratio of 0.5 to 1.0.

Page 12: Revise maps as follows:

Delete Center of Town symbol from map; show Woodfield Road Extended with a dashed line to represent that it is a planned road; change title of “M-NCPPC Property” to “Damascus Neighborhood Park”; change the southernmost “New Street” to “Damascus Lane”; and revise color scheme to reflect parkland, proposed legacy open space, mixed-use with a non-residential emphasis and mixed-use with a residential emphasis.

Page 13: Use the same indentation for Town Center Identity and Main Street Identity bullets.

Page 14: Revise map to show Woodfield Road Extended with a dashed line and the Damascus historic district boundary.

Page 16: Revise the last sentence of the first bullet as follows:

The best combination of features should be determined through a [facility] project planning study or in a redevelopment review process.

Page 18: Revise the figure to show a sidewalk on the north side of Damascus Lane both in the ‘Traverse Property’ and ‘M-NCPPC Property’ cross-sections.

Page 19: Revise the first bullet as follows:

- **Traffic Management** – Implement appropriate traffic calming and context-based design measures, particularly at the gateway points. Context-based street design and traffic-calming tools [instinctively] encourage slower speeds and [added] add awareness of the presence of pedestrians. This Plan recommends tools that provide visual cues at the gateways into the Town Center such as narrower vehicle travel lanes, reconfigured travel lanes, and street trees.

Page 19: Under Expand and Enhance Community Open Space, revise the second and fourth bullets as follows:

- **Trailhead for the Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park** – Provide an appropriate location along the proposed new street [behind] south of Main Street (Damascus Lane) for the trailhead for the Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park[, will] to encourage more pedestrian activity in the Town Center [activity by pedestrians].
- **Open Spaces** – Create additional formal open spaces in the Town Center, such as small urban public parks or privately maintained open spaces. Even small seating areas and pedestrian walkways add character and places for human interaction. The spaces should be safe, comfortable, accessible, and highly visible.

Page 19: Under revise last sentence of the last bullet as follows:

Joint development of the Boyer property and the church may be mutually beneficial [to both].

Page 20: Revise the third bullet and add a new bullet after third bullet as follows:

- **Commercial Uses** – This Plan recommends [compressing commercial uses and focusing them] zoning that will concentrate and focus commercial uses along Main Street and at major arterial intersections. This will allow a greater chance of success for these businesses. The commercial property owners between these optimal locations can redevelop as mixed-use, residential, and commercial uses.
- **Residential Uses** – This Plan recommends that careful attention be given at the time of subdivision or site plan to proposed new residential development that directly adjoins existing single-family residential development, ensuring compatibility of scale, height, and proportion. Such review may limit development potential below that allowed in the zone.

Page 20: Under Parking Concepts, revise the first sub-bullet as follows:

- **[Parking District or] Shared Parking Within the Town Center** – [A well conceived parking district or s] Shared parking [that provides and manages public parking] would help achieve the vision for the Town Center. Businesses with different peak demands for parking can mutually benefit by shared parking agreements.

Page 20: Delete the last bullet

Page 21: Revise the title, "VISION," to reflect its status as a subtitle.

[VISION] Vision

Page 21: Revise the last sentence of the paragraph under Vision as follows:

Agricultural preservation goals are also enhanced through the creation of new TDR receiving sites where appropriate increases in density permit.

Page 21: Under Town Neighborhood Area, revise paragraph as follows:

This area includes neighborhoods within the upper watershed of *Magruder Branch* (see [Damascus Watersheds] Proposed Land Use and Density map), and for many years was the primary growth area in Damascus. Growth between Ridge Road and Woodfield Road south of town reflects historic settlement patterns, Master Plan guidance, and the availability of public sewer. Few developable properties of significant size remain, and [no modifications to land use are recommended in] this Plan recommends modifying the zoning on these properties to conform to existing lot sizes.

Page 21: Under Neighborhood Transition Area, revise paragraph as follows:

This area includes the upper watersheds of the *Town Spring Tributary, Upper Great Seneca Creek, Bennett Creek, [and] and Little Bennett Creek* (see [Damascus Watersheds] Proposed Land Use and Density map). It reflects a mixture of residential development near the Town Center and along Ridge Road and Woodfield Road, and open rural areas beyond. Topography and other sensitive environmental features in this area results in [limited] restricted access to existing public sewer and affords limited opportunity to significantly increase development potential without negative environmental consequences to the forested stream valleys in [this] these headwater areas. Under the RNC zone, the provision of sewer service and increased development potential, which confers the private benefit of community sewer service on the property owner, requires provision of increased open space in return.

Page 22: Revise map to reflect that there are 6 TDR receiving areas instead of 7; modify legend to replace #9 with Stanley/Leishear-Day; identify the existing and proposed pump stations; and properly label the future Woodfield Road Extended right-of-way.

Page 23: Revise the first sentence as follows:

The bulk of the southeast portion of the Master Plan is in the upper watershed of *Great Seneca Creek* (see [Damascus Watersheds] Proposed Land Use and Density map), an area of two or five acre development.

Page 23: Under Development Guidance for Transition Area Cluster Development, add two new bullets at the beginning and revise the first and last bullets as follows:

- Minimize impervious surfaces through environmentally sensitive site design techniques (for example, the use of shared driveways, pervious pavement, and narrow roads that still meet safety requirements).

- Provide stormwater management controls utilizing environmentally sensitive design techniques that avoid concentrating stormwater runoff into high quantity flows, with a preference for on-lot quantity and quality treatment options (or alternatives that provide similar environmental benefits) and disconnected imperviousness design techniques, infiltration of runoff, and open section roadways.
- Design [that will] to allow views [to] of protected open space [areas] and vistas of surrounding rural areas.
- Locate [A] a minimum of three-fourths of the lots [must be located] in the clustered small lot portion of the development unless the Planning Board finds that fewer clustered lots would better implement the goals of the Master Plan

Page 23: Under Town Neighborhood Area, revise the first sentence as follows:

The Plan recommends [modification for conformity to existing lot sizes in] rezoning four older neighborhoods from RE-2C to R-200 or RE-1 to better reflect the existing lot sizes in these neighborhoods.

Page 24: Under Neighborhood Transition Area, revise the first sentence of the first paragraph as follows:

The Plan recommends a moderate increase in density – primarily adjoining the Town Center and primarily through the creation of six transferable development rights (TDR) receiving areas.

Page 24: Under Neighborhood Transition Area, revise the first sentence of the second paragraph as follows:

The Master Plan proposes creating TDR receiving ability for the RNC Zone for [five] six property groups at locations that have, or can be easily served by, sewer.

Page 24: Revise the Burdette Property title as follows:

- **Burdette Property [Recommendation]**

Page 24: Under Burdette Property, revise the description of zoning and potential yield as follows:

[(RNC .4/TDR 1.0 - Potential for 32 to 100 dwelling units, up to 50 TDRs)]

Allow the following range of densities if the specified conditions are met:

Standard Method
Optional Method

RNC 0.2
RNC 0.4 (community sewer service) if TDRs are not used
RNC 1.0 (community sewer service) with TDRs used to secure the additional density

Potential for 16 to 100 dwelling units (including MPDU bonus and 65 TDRs).

Page 24: Under Burdette Property, revise the second sentence of the first paragraph as follows:

Because the property is located immediately adjacent to the Town Center within walking distance of shopping, services, and institutional uses, an increased density is appropriate.

Page 24: Under Burdette Property, insert the following bullet after the second bullet:

- Building lots for two new homes may be allowed within the rural open space area of this property for members of the Burdette/Walker families.

Page 24: Under Burdette Property, revise the original third bullet as follows:

- [Limit community sewer service to gravity flow and grinder pumps served at a pump station in or near the Town Center.] Limit cluster development to areas that can be served by grinder systems and gravity sewer lines that minimize stream or stream buffer impacts. Any new pump station intended to replace the existing pump station on the Damascus Centre property should be located to avoid stream crossings, and minimize impacts to environmental buffers. A relocated pump station may modify or expand the areas on the Burdette property that can be served by public sewer, and may also provide service to nearby areas with failing septic systems.

Page 25: Revise the Warfield Property title as follows:

▪ **Warfield Property [Recommendation]**

Page 25: Under Warfield Property, revise the description of zoning and potential yield as follows:

[(RNC .4/TDR 1.0 – Potential for 31 to 95 dwelling units, up to 47 TDRs)]
Allow the following range of densities if the specified conditions are met:

<u>Standard Method</u>	<u>RNC 0.2</u>
<u>Optional Method</u>	<u>RNC 0.4 (community sewer service) if TDRs are not used</u> <u>RNC 0.75 (community sewer service) with TDRs used to secure the additional density</u>

Potential for 15 to 71 dwelling units (including MPDU bonus and 42 TDRs).

Page 25: Under Warfield Property, insert at the beginning of the first paragraph:

The modification in density is appropriate because the property is in immediate proximity to the Town Center and within walking distance of shopping, services, and institutional uses.

Page 25: Under Warfield Property, revise the third bullet as follows:

- Dedicate seven acres of very high quality forest area located along the northeastern edge of the property, connected to a much larger forest stand on adjacent parkland. [This area of the property is designated for park acquisition at time of subdivision.]

Page 25: Revise the Kingstead/Leishear Properties title as follows:

- **Kingstead/Leishear Properties [Recommendation]**

Page 25: Under Kingstead/Leishear Properties, revise the description of zoning and potential yield as follows:

[(RNC .4/TDR 1.0 with potential for 55 to 168 dwelling units, up to 83 TDRs)]

Allow the following range of densities if the specified conditions are met:

Standard Method

RNC 0.2

Optional Method

RNC 0.2 (community sewer service), if TDRs are not used

RNC 0.5 (community sewer service) with TDRs used to secure the additional density

Potential for 27 to 84 dwelling units (including MPDUs and 41 TDRs).

Page 25: Under Kingstead/Leishear Properties, delete and replace second paragraph:

[Additional density potential is recommended because there is existing sewer access, TDR receiving area potential, strong environmental benefits, strong park and trails benefits, strong historic preservation benefits, housing benefits, and few transportation constraints.]

The Kingstead/Leishear properties occupy a uniquely sensitive headwater area of the Little Bennett watershed, containing numerous springs, seeps, and wetlands that are critical to maintaining downstream water quality. The quality of these resources can be quickly and permanently degraded by the addition of impervious surfaces that alter surface and subsurface flows, and the construction of sewer lines that disturb stream valleys. Therefore impervious surfaces should be minimized and mitigated where possible. The small headwater streams in the area are very susceptible to damage from even small changes in runoff volume and can be degraded by the location and concentrated flows from storm drain outfalls.

Development must be carefully managed to minimize disturbances to the high quality wetlands. Additional density is recommended to take advantage of existing gravity sewer potential, to provide for a modest number of TDRs, and to obtain historic preservation benefits, park and trail connections, and affordable housing benefits. Due to the environmental sensitivity of this site, higher densities are recommended for only the southern section of the property, in order to limit impervious surfaces and stormwater impacts, and avoid the need for sanitary sewer access to the entire property.

Page 26: Revise the fifth bullet as follows:

- **Agricultural Preservation** – [Provide the opportunity to transfer TDRs on the RDT Zone portion of the Kingstead Farm, plus use additional TDRs] Provide the opportunity for the property owner to either transfer TDRs on the RDT Zone portion of the Kingstead Farm or purchase TDRs from other properties.

Page 26: Revise last bullet, Water Resources, as follows:

- **Water Resources** — Little Bennett Creek, as a Use III stream, already has strong protective measures including stream buffers and wetland buffers that must be applied during the development process. Extension of sewer within the environmental buffers of Little Bennett Creek and its tributaries to achieve full density potential would conflict with longstanding policies that protect the stream headwaters. [Development must not cause disturbance of the Little Bennett Stream Valley for sewer or stormwater conveyance. Full density potential is not likely due to this environmental constraint.] There is an outstanding 45-acre forested wetland with 14 springs on the property designated for parkland acquisition. In addition, an important tributary with forested wetlands crosses the property from the east to join the main stem of Little Bennett Creek. [It] This system is a critical element in maintaining the high water quality in the downstream portions of Little Bennett Creek. Full density potential may not be achieved due to these environmental constraints.

Page 27: Under Development Guidance, insert two paragraphs after the first paragraph of the second bullet as follows:

Homes should be clustered on lots that are small enough to achieve the goals of neighborhood cluster design, yet with sufficient frontage and setbacks so that as much area as possible can be accessed by open section roadways to minimize the concentration of stormwater runoff. Development areas must be located in the least sensitive areas to reduce negative environmental impacts, preserve existing forest, and the environmental buffers.

Maintain and protect existing hydrology by limiting activities that will alter groundwater flow, springs and seeps, wetlands, and streams.

Page 27: Under Development Guidelines, revise third bullet and the fourth bullets as follows:

- **Parkland** – Dedicate and/or acquire, as appropriate, the designated portions of land along [a tributary] the headwaters of Little Bennett Creek (discussed in the Parkland and Open Space portions of the Community Facilities Chapter) traversing the property to the M-NCPPC as parkland. Determine the extent and importance of the archeological features on the site. If appropriate, the [archeological] site containing archeological features should be added to the adjacent area to be dedicated/acquired as parkland.

- **Transportation** – Provide a comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle circulation system linking internal areas and linking to the Countywide Trails system; and [realign the offset] reconfigure the intersection of Kings Valley Road and Kingstead Road to eliminate the offset alignment.

Page 28: Revise the Smart/Miner/Rice Conway Properties title as follows:

- **Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway Properties [Recommendation]**

Page 28: Under Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway Properties, revise the description of zoning and potential yield as follows:

[(RNC.4/TDR 1.0 – Potential for 24 to 69 dwelling units, up to 36 TDRs)]

Allow the following range of densities if the specified conditions are met:

<u>Standard Method</u>	<u>RNC 0.2</u>
<u>Optional Method</u>	<u>RNC 0.4 (community sewer service), if TDRs are not used</u> <u>RNC 1.0 (community sewer service) with TDRs used to secure the additional density</u>

Potential for 10 to 61 dwelling units (including MPDU bonus and 40 TDRs).

Page 28: Under Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway Properties, revise the first paragraph as follows:

The modification in density is appropriate because the properties are in close proximity to the Town Center, schools, shopping, and institutional uses. Residents will be able to walk to these community uses. The modification would allow smaller lot clustering (with community water and sewer) on this approximately [60] 50-acre site. [It is located just outside the Town Center, with] The site has frontage west of Ridge Road on Bethesda Church Road, directly across from the Damascus Elementary School and along Ridge Road to the south. The property contains a headwater tributary of Little Bennett Creek. Its proximity to the Town Center, and the ability to access sewer in Ridge Road [and the Town Center, with headwaters (of Little Bennett Creek) at the rear, make it a preferred location for clustering] make this area a suitable location for clustered development, with measures to protect environmental features and the headwaters of Little Bennett Creek.

Page 28: Under Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway Properties, revise the last sentence of the second paragraph and add additional sentence as follows:

A new sewer pump station [proposed in conjunction with this proposal would also be able to serve existing and new development in the southwest quadrant of the Damascus Master Plan area] may be needed to serve optional method development especially in the range of higher densities with TDRs. The pump station should be located to avoid stream crossings and minimize impacts to environmental buffers.

Page 28: Under Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway Properties, insert at the end of the fourth paragraph as follows:

Optional method development should not be approved on this property unless all the environmental recommendations are addressed by the proposed development. Meeting all the recommendations may result in less than the full density on any or all of these properties.

Page 28: Under Development Guidance, replace the third bullet as follows:

- [Replace the existing easternmost headwater wetland to its pre-farmed size and condition utilizing existing soils and hydrology.]
- Efforts should be made to restore the existing easternmost headwater wetland to the size and condition that existed prior to disturbance and clearing for farming activities. This will not decrease the developable area of this site shown elsewhere in this Plan.

Page 28: Under Development Guidance, revise the seventh, eighth, and ninth bullets and add two new bullets as follows:

- [Work with the electric power utility to relocate an existing powerline to a location outside the stream valley buffer and restore these areas to their natural condition.] Minimize and mitigate the effects of the existing powerline located in the stream valley buffer by examining alternatives at the time of development, including the following:
 - Work with the electric power utility to relocate the existing powerline outside of the stream valley buffer where there is significantly less encroachment into the stream buffer, and to replant/reforest the area. The landowner is only expected to provide easements for the new alignment.
 - If relocation is not deemed feasible or cost-effective, develop a more environmentally sensitive landscaping plan for the utility area, including selective clearing to control invasive plants and large trees, while retaining low growing shrubs and ground cover consistent with the goals of a stream valley buffer.
- [Development will be subject to] Comply with the guidance for cluster development in this chapter.
- [Development must be planned] Design development to avoid disturbance to the Little Bennett Creek headwaters area on the property, which contains multiple springs and seasonal wetlands. [Protecting these wetlands will provide protection from sediments entering the stream valley.] Maintain and protect existing hydrology by limiting activities that will alter groundwater flow, springs, and seeps.

- Configure lots of sufficient size and appropriate shape to apply the use of open-section road standards, on-lot infiltration of storm water on the majority of the developed area, and narrow roads that still meet safety requirements.
- Maintain stream buffers and existing forest areas and allow sufficient area outside stream buffers for stormwater management.

Page 29: Revise the Casey/Lewis Properties title as follows:

▪ **Casey/Lewis Properties [Recommendation]**

Page 29: Under Casey/Lewis Properties, revise the description of zoning and potential yield as follows:

[(RNC .4/TDR 1.0 with potential for 20 to 61 dwelling units, up to 30 TDRs)]
Allow the following range of densities if the specified conditions are met:

<u>Standard Method</u>	<u>RNC 0.2</u>
<u>Optional Method</u>	<u>RNC 0.4 (community sewer service) if TDRs are not used</u> <u>RNC 0.5 (community sewer service) with TDRs used to secure the additional density</u>

Potential for 9 to 27 dwelling units (including MPDU bonus and 13 TDRs).

Page 29: Under Casey/Lewis Properties, revise the first paragraph as follows:

This approximately [50] 45-acre site is comprised of six properties and contains two relatively flat areas, one fronting on Lewis Drive and one on Bethesda Church Road. Beyond these [buildable areas the properties drop steeply into a stream valley that is a headwater tributary of Bennett Creek] more easily developed areas, the properties drop steeply into a stream valley that is a headwater tributary of Bennett Creek, a Use I stream with good water quality and stream habitat conditions. Preserving the large forested areas that buffer the streams in the upper part of this watershed is essential to protecting existing stream quality. This site is appropriate for limited additional density because of its location in immediate proximity to the Town Center, offering easy access to shopping, services, and institutional uses. Density must remain limited due to the extensive environmental restrictions on the site that leave only small developable areas that meet the county's environmental regulations.

Page 29: Under Casey/Lewis Properties, revise the second paragraph as follows:

Most of this site is not appropriate for development due to the slopes that are associated with the wide stream valley. While these properties are close to the Town Center, steep topography historically limits development potential. Development should not [be allowed to] disturb the stream valley[,], or [allow any disturbance of] disturb slopes that exceed 15 percent. [With development area limited to the level areas, the steep slopes behind Bethesda Church Road and Lewis Drive could to meet environmental guidelines.] The development area should be clustered

within the level areas along Bethesda Church Road and Lewis Drive. The forested stream valley and associated springs, wetlands, and steep slopes 15% and greater should be protected within a contiguous open space area. This would require that no more than [35-40] 60 percent of the dwelling units be located [on] either along Bethesda Church Road[, and the remaining units would be located] or on the larger Lewis Drive site. Development potential will be limited due to other Master Plan elements, especially environmental consideration.

Page 29: Under Development Guidance, modify the first bullet as follows:

- Comply with the guidance for cluster development in this chapter. Design of development on these properties should reflect the surrounding development pattern, and be compatible with these residential neighborhoods.

Page 29: Under Development Guidance, add a new bullet after the second bullet and revise the fourth bullet as follows:

- Limit community sewer service to only those areas that can be served by grinder systems, pressure sewers, or gravity connections to the existing public sewer.
- Locate no more than [40] 60 percent of [any] allowable development along Bethesda Church Road[, and no more than 60 percent] or at the Lewis Drive site.

Page 29: Revise the Stanley/Leishear Properties title as follows:

- **Stanley/Leishear-Day Properties [Recommendation]**

Page 29: Under Stanley/Leishear Properties, revise the description of zoning and potential yield as follows:

[(RNC .4/TDR 1.0 with potential for 10 to 32 dwelling units, up to 17 TDRs)]
Allow the following range of densities if the specified conditions are met:

<u>Standard Method</u>	<u>RNC 0.2</u>
<u>Optional Method</u>	<u>RNC 0.4 (community sewer service) if TDRs are not used</u> <u>RNC 1.0 (community sewer service) with TDRs used to secure the additional density</u>

Potential for 5 to 32 dwelling units (including MPDU bonus and 21 TDRs).

Page 30: Insert two sentences at the beginning of the second paragraph as follows:

The modification in density is appropriate because of the location of the properties in immediate proximity to the Town Center. Residents will have walkable access to shopping, services, and institutional uses.

Page 30: Under Development Guidance for the Stanley/Leishear properties, revise bullets as follows:

- ◻ Comply with the guidance for cluster development in this chapter and the recommendations for community water and sewer service in the Implementation chapter.
- ◻ Address environmental constraints and topographic limitations. [Development cannot be constructed using standard suburban design and unit types.] Environmental constraints and other Master Plan elements, including land use recommendations for avoiding stream valley disturbance to provide sewer, may limit the actual development potential of this area.
- ◻ Single-family housing should be the primary development type used, with some use of attached housing that is built to resemble large single-family housing. Development types, such as rows of townhouses, should be avoided.
- ◻ Avoid disturbance to slopes that exceed 15 percent[, and development]. Development must be planned to maximize the open space and preserve sensitive natural areas.
- ◻ [Evaluate for Legacy Open Space preservation.] Establish and designate open space area to include in the Legacy Open Space program, either through conservation easements or dedication, as part of the subdivision of these properties.
- ◻ Locate a pump station to provide sewer service for cluster development on this property and to potentially serve an area of failing septic systems to the north. The location of a potential pump station should minimize impacts to environmental buffers. The pump station should be located to avoid stream crossings.

Page 30: Revise the Miller Property title as follows:

- **Miller Property [Recommendation]**

Page 30: Under Miller Property Recommendation, revise the description of zoning and potential yield as follows:

(RE-1 Zone with Potential for [10-15] 21 to 25 dwelling units)

Page 30: Under Miller Property Development Guidance, revise the second bullet as follows:

- Protect extensive forested wetlands on this property. Development potential will be limited by septic system requirements [and the]. The development guidelines in the Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed are essential for water quality and wildlife habitat, [and they] which must be protected. These constraints will also limit development potential.

Page 31: Revise Souder/Adjoining Properties title as follows:

Souder/Adjoining Properties [Recommendation]

Page 31: Under Souder/Adjoining Properties Recommendation, new sentences to the first paragraph as follows:

If all or a portion of this property is jointly subdivided and site planned comprehensively with the adjacent King/Souder property, every effort should be made to facilitate joint development.

Page 31: Under Souder/Adjoining Properties, add a new sub-bullet after the first sub-bullet as follows:

- Ensure at time of subdivision that the design of development on these properties is compatible with the existing development pattern.

Page 31: Following the Souder/Adjoining Properties Recommendation, insert the following section as follows:

▪ **Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer**

The Church is located north of the Damascus Town Center, immediately southwest of the intersection of Ridge Road and Faith Lane, and immediately southwest of the future intersection of Woodfield Road Extended (A-12). An unnamed tributary to the Patuxent River runs through the southern portion of the Church's property. Woodfield Road Extended will cross this tributary on land that currently belongs to the Church and will run directly adjacent to the Church's existing stormwater management pond before intersecting with Faith Lane and Ridge Road.

Because the Church faces particularly difficult expansion problems due to its location within the Primary Management Area for the Patuxent River watershed, and along the path of the extension of Woodfield Road; this Plan provides the following guidance regarding their proposed building and parking lot expansion plans:

- Initially, this Plan recommends that the Church be permitted to utilize a proposed Park and Ride lot that:
 - Would be located on the west side of Ridge Road, directly across from the Church;

- Would be designated and constructed to accommodate at least 200 vehicles; and;
- The Church and the County enter into a long-term shared parking agreement that addresses their mutual needs for parking at this location and provides the Church with the use of the Park and Ride Lot for as long as this Church is located on this site.

- To facilitate this arrangement, this Plan recommends:
 - A feasibility study begin immediately following the Plan adoption; and
 - Significant progress be made so that within Fiscal Year 2009 the necessary construction funding for the Park and Ride Lot be included in the County's Capital Improvements Program budget and that the construction of the Park and Ride Lot be completed by the summer of 2011 or soon after.
 - To foster a close working relationship and better understanding between the parties, that the County and the Church maintain a regular dialogue on the progress of construction of Woodfield Road Extended (A-12) and the Park and Ride Lot.

- This Plan further recommends that if the dates and requirements noted above are not met:
 - The Plan supports the Church's proposal to construct a 145-space parking facility in the area currently occupied by its stormwater management pond and a portion of the stream valley buffer immediately south and to pursue either an off-site or on-site stormwater management plan.
 - If final engineering determines there is adequate storage capacity and the necessary approvals can be obtained, stormwater management could be provided in a surface pond to be located on property south, and by expanding that pond to the north, and jointly used to provide stormwater management for Woodfield Road Extended, proposed development on the Burdette/Walker property, and the Church. The cost of expanding the pond beyond the capacity needed for the Woodfield Road Extended project would be shared proportionately (as measured by a percentage of the contributing runoff volume) by the Church and the developer of the Burdette/Walker property if they need the capacity. If this solution is determined to be infeasible, stormwater management could be located on-site in an underground facility.
 - Within this option, the Church would provide mitigation for any resulting clearing in the Patuxent watershed as mitigation is similarly provided by the County for any clearing resulting from the construction of Woodfield Road Extended.

Page 32: Under Land Use and Zoning Recommendations, revise the sixth bullet as follows:

- [Establish] Apply a zoning category [to] that protects existing [historic] rural villages.

Page 32: Under Rural Density Transfer Area, replace quotation with the following:

Agriculture is a dynamic industry whose success depends upon the ability to adapt to market forces. In addition to continued traditional farming, some transition to non-traditional farming practices is expected. Some fields that once grew corn and wheat may well be planted with fruits, berries, and vegetables to serve the regional market place. Greenhouses, hydroponic farms, and other intensive farming techniques may be more prevalent in the future as the industry responds to changing market needs, preferences, and policies.

Page 33: Revise the third paragraph as follows:

This Plan recommends a land conservation approach for residential development in the RDT Zone properties in Damascus. The guidelines encourage either small lot clusters, non-buildable out-lots, [and] or creative homesite placement with overlay easements to preserve contiguous fields, important vistas, or environmentally sensitive features. The guidelines encourage creative development patterns that preserve both open contiguous fields and forests, and the preservation of rural character. Large contiguous areas of prime and productive farm fields have the greatest potential for continuing agricultural production. [They] The guidelines are primarily intended for subdivisions creating five or more lots and on properties of 100 or more acres.

Page 33: Under Development Guidance – Agricultural Conservation Standards for Residential Development in the RDT Zone, revise the first three bullets as follows:

- The use of cluster, out-lot, or easement methods [are] is encouraged to preserve contiguous fields and forest, while providing increased flexibility in lot layout and allowing the density permitted in the zone. Large lots should be avoided unless conservation or other protective easements are used to designate and protect farm fields, environmental resources, or other open space.
- If common open space is identified for conservation, the preliminary plan must include a description of the intended use and a plan for maintenance of the common open space. Areas reserved for conservation should be recorded on the plan of development as either a separate parcel, non-buildable outlot, or easement on the residential lot or lots. The designated area [is] must be clearly delineated and the easement noted on the record plat in the land records of Montgomery County.
- The location of building sites and roads should [consider] further the preservation of prime and productive farm fields, environmentally sensitive areas, and scenic vistas and rural character to the extent allowed by the need to accommodate waste treatment.

Page 34: Under Rural Village Communities, revise the third and fourth paragraphs as follows:

[The Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space Master Plan (1980) identified a need to establish an additional layer of regulatory protection for these communities, including a recommendation to *“investigate the use of a Rural Village Zone to provide for a mix of residential lot sizes and limited commercial uses”* that was never enacted for these rural

villages.] This Plan recommends [a new zone, the Rural Village Zone, or a modification of an existing zone,] using a modified version of the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone to provide a mixed-use zone approach appropriate for rural communities [in order] to protect villages that may become subject to potential development pressures. The Rural Village Center Overlay Zone is designed to create attractive, cohesive, and pedestrian-friendly rural village centers and prohibits land uses otherwise allowed in the underlying zone that would be inappropriate in rural villages. Amendments to this zone are proposed to prohibit addition uses that would be inappropriate in these villages, allow certain uses only by special exception, and allow the Montgomery County Planning Board to modify setback and green area requirements if necessary to better replicate existing development patterns. The purpose of this zoning [would be] is to maintain the existing scale of development. New development [is to] should be consistent with the historical character and community lifestyles.

This Master Plan proposes [such a zone] the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone to fulfill this vision for the rural villages of Browningsville, Etchison, and Purdum. The village of Lewisdale is only partially in this Master Plan area and is not recommended for [the new] this zone.

Page 35: Revise the heading, Guidance for Development in the Rural Village Zone as follows:

Guidance for Development in the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone - To support the intent of the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone, any proposed new development must consider the following guidance.

Page 35: Under Guidance for Development in the Rural Village Zone, revise the third, fourth, and seventh bullets as follows:

- Development that provides varied uses to serve the needs of the local community should be encouraged[, including low-rise mixed-use buildings that can provide opportunities for home occupations, housing, and commercial uses].
- Opportunities for appropriately scaled new and existing businesses [expansion] are supported in compact and pedestrian-friendly commercial areas.
- [The density for commercial uses is set by the zone for the commercial zoned portion of a property but may be averaged over the site if the Planning Board determines that such action would better reflect the existing pattern and character of the village]

Page 37: Revise Goal as follows:

GOAL: Provide a variety of housing options including [affordably priced] affordable housing and housing opportunities for seniors suitable to the small town character of Damascus.

Page 37: Under Introduction, revise the second, third, and fourth paragraphs as follows:

Cluster housing is preferred on major developable parcels over standard designs. Mixed-use buildings are preferred in the Town Center over single use, single story buildings. Additional residential opportunities are encouraged in the Town Center [to increase the customer base for locally oriented retail]. This Plan reflects the need to balance the occasionally competing goals of housing, the environment, transportation, and town building.

The one area of significant need is senior housing. The community has many long time residents who wish to remain in the community as they age, so the demand for senior housing has become more pronounced. Currently, there are very few housing options within the Damascus [planning] plan area for the expanding senior population. This Plan [also] identifies [alternative] potential locations for senior housing [options]. [This Plan recommends land use changes that encourage additional affordable housing while protecting environmental resources. The Town Center will provide opportunities for moderate density development, while adjoining areas are encouraged to cluster housing near primary roads, and preserve stream valleys and forest resources.]

This Plan recommends land use changes that encourage additional affordable housing while protecting environmental resources. The Town Center will provide opportunities for moderate density residential and commercial development, while adjoining areas are encouraged to cluster housing near roads, and preserve stream valleys and forest resources. The most significant additional housing is proposed in the Town Center, which will contribute to the viability of local businesses and create a livelier center for the Damascus community. Outside the Town Center, this Plan supports limited additional single-family housing. This is due to the location of Damascus in the rural north of the County, with limited access to public sewer, environmental constraints, and limited transit options. This Plan recommends:

Page 37: Under Introduction, revise the first and second bullets as follows:

- **[Support m] Moderate-density development within the Town Center**
Multi-family, single-family attached, and live-work units within the Town Center will accommodate a significant portion of the need for moderately priced residential development in this community. Increased densities will also accommodate moderately priced dwelling units (MPDUs) and contribute to the economic base for local retail and service businesses.
- **[Support i] Increased senior housing for residents of the Damascus area**
Senior housing would be most appropriately and conveniently located within the Town Center. Two potential sites are discussed.

Page 38: Revise the first two bullets as follows:

- **[Encourage c] Cluster development to maintain the small town character of Damascus**
Developable sites within the Transition Areas are recommended for small lot, single-family cluster development where public sewer is available. A moderate amount of

development potential remains in the RE-2C and Rural Cluster Zone in the eastern portion of the Master Plan. This Plan supports the eventual development of those properties using the cluster option for development.

- **[Support u] Use of TDR receiving areas where appropriate**
Where infrastructure is available and environmental regulations permit, TDR receiving sites create additional housing opportunities that also contribute to agricultural preservation goals.

Page 39: Under State of Maryland Property, revise the third sentence as follows:

[As noted in the Land Use Chapter, t] This 3.1-acre property has [environmental limitations that would limit its development potential] limited development opportunities due to environmental constraints stemming from its location within Town Spring subwatershed, a headwater tributary to the Patuxent River.

Page 41: Under Population Trends, revise the last sentence of the first paragraph as follows:

These statistics reflect a large proportion of young families and the relative affordability of housing in the community and suggest[s] that many residents value the small town character of Damascus and want to raise their families here.

Page 41: Under Population Trends, revise the last sentence of the second paragraph as follows:

[Higher] More intensive levels of assisted senior housing or nursing [level of] care [would be more appropriate] are more likely to locate in areas that are [nearer] closer to a hospital than in Damascus.

Page 41: Under Proposed Transferable Development Rights Receiving Sites revise paragraph as follows:

To meet the agricultural preservation goals of the County, this Plan uses transferable development rights (TDRs) as the primary means to create any new density potential where additional density is appropriate. The [Table] table below indicates approximate development yield of the receiving sites for [Transferable Development Rights (TDRs)] proposed in this Plan through the use of a new MXTC/TDR zone in part of the Town Center and a new RNC/TDR zone on certain properties in the Transition Areas. [They will yield up to 263 TDRs through the use of a new RNC/TDR Zone to be used on all the sites.]

Page 42: Replace the Planning Board Draft table with the following expanded table as follows:

Summary of Optional Method TDR Potential

<u>Property Group</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Standard Method</u>	<u>Optional Method No TDR</u>	<u>Optional Method TDR</u>	<u>DU Yield Standard Method</u>	<u>Yield Optional Method No TDR</u>	<u>Yield Optional Method TDR</u>	<u>Maximum Yield with MPDU DU</u>	<u>TDR Potential</u>
<u>Transition Area - RNC/TDR</u>									
<u>Casey/Lewis</u>	45	0.2	0.4	0.5	9	18	23	27	13
<u>Warfield</u>	78	0.2	0.4	0.75	15	31	59	71	42
<u>Burdette</u>	82	0.2	0.4	1.0	16	32	82	100	65
<u>Kingstead/Leishear</u>	138	0.2	0.2	0.5	27	27	69	84	41
<u>Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway</u>	50	0.2	0.4	1.0	10	20	50	61	40
<u>Stanley/Leishear-Day</u>	27	0.2	0.4	1.0	5	10	27	32	21
<u>Town Center – MXTC/TDR</u>									
<u>Selected Properties Outer Area</u>	50	8 per acre	NA	20 per acre	399	NA	999	999	600
TOTAL	470						1,309	1,374	822

Page 43: Revise Goal as follows:

GOAL: [To improve] Improve the efficiency of the roadway network, provide road improvements, expand the pedestrian and bicycle path networks, and improve the potential for intercepting commuters through expanded transit options.

Page 44: Revise first bullet as follows:

- **[New Business Street] Damascus Lane** – This Plan recommends a business street connection (B-2) parallel to and south of Main Street connecting Ridge Road (MD 27) to Woodfield Road (MD 124). This street will provide access to the underutilized areas behind the buildings on the south side of Main Street. This street, envisioned as a small access lane, not a thoroughfare, replaces the proposed trailhead within the Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park. This street should integrate a bikeway and sidewalks, and should be designed to be as narrow as possible due to environmental and grade constraints and be perceived as a “lane” rather than a boulevard. The recommended right-of-way for B-2 is 60 feet, but vehicle travel lanes should reflect the intended use and be narrow enough to ensure slow travel speeds.

Page 44: Insert at the end of this page a new section, as follows:

The figure on page 45 identifies the Damascus Master Plan roadways on the Master Plan of Highways and the table on pages 46-48 lists their classifications with minimum rights-of-way. The classification of roadways is a way of indicating the degree to which access to properties is balanced with the ability to handle through traffic. The system ranges from Freeways with an

emphasis on through traffic capacity and little or no direct property access down to the Primary Residential Street which emphasizes access functions, which may affect the efficiency of through traffic movement. Secondary Residential Streets are not shown on the Master Plan of Highways. The roadway classes are detailed in the following list:

Freeways Provide for movement of vehicles at high speed over significant distances. Access is limited to grade-separated interchanges.

Major Highways Provide less speed and mobility compared to freeways and access at some intersections.

Arterial Roads Connect major highways and provide more access points while moving traffic at lower speeds. Typically, more than half of the traffic on an arterial is “through” traffic.

Commercial Business District Streets Are restricted to mixed use or commercial areas, provide on-street parking, more pedestrian space, and more access points to stores and offices.

Primary Residential Streets May carry some through traffic but their main purpose is to provide direct access for 200 or more households and to connect to arterial roads.

Secondary or Tertiary Residential Streets Provide direct access to homes and allow for greater application of traffic management measures to discourage through traffic movements and speeding. (These streets are not listed in master plans).

Page 45: Revise map to add a symbol in the legend for an airport and label the Davis Airport on the figure.

Page 46: Revise Street and Highway Classifications table and add a footnote as follows:

P-1	Gue Road	Ridge Road (MD 27) to 5,000 feet east [of Howard Chapel Drive]	70	2
P-9	Oak Drive ¹	Ridge Road (MD 27) to Ridge Road (MD 27)	70	2

¹ The northernmost section of Oak Drive should be realigned to meet Valley Park Drive as described in the text.

Page 47: Revise table as follows:

CA-11	Kempton Road (MD 80)[/MD 27]	Frederick County Line to Ridge Road (MD 27)	80	2
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Page 48: Revise table as follows:

CR-[8] <u>11</u>	Gue Road	[Howard Chapel Drive] <u>5,000 feet east of MD27 to Long Corner Road</u>	80	2
B-1	Main Street (MD 108)	Woodfield Road (MD 124) to Ridge Road (MD 27)[/Lewis Drive]	80	[3] <u>2</u>
B-2	Damascus Lane	Ridge Road (MD 27) to Woodfield Road (MD 124)	[66] <u>60</u>	2

Page 48: Revise first bullet as follows:

- Oak Drive** – Classify as a Primary Residential roadway (P-9) and realign to meet Valley Park Drive at Ridge Road. The road provides vehicular and pedestrian access to John T. Baker Middle School and the adjacent Recreation Center (completed 2004). A realignment of the northern intersection of Oak Drive and Ridge Road to meet Valley Park Drive would replace two offset “T” intersections with a single four-leg intersection, improving traffic operations and safety. The realignment should avoid residential property displacements by incorporating a right-angle turn in the vicinity of the Recreation Center driveway and meeting Ridge Road at a slight skew angle. A geometric or traffic control device such as an intersection or roundabout may be required to implement the recommended right-angle turn. A conversion of a quarter-acre of parkland to right-of-way is expected. This Plan recommends [a study of this realignment, including evaluation of a pedestrian underpass] evaluating means for an improved pedestrian crossing of Ridge Road.

Page 49: Under Two Lane Road Policy, revise paragraph as follows:

This Master Plan recommends retaining the existing two-lane roadway network outside the Town Center to protect the rural and agricultural character of the Damascus area. The limitation on through travel lanes is not intended to preclude the implementation of spot safety and operational improvements such as turning lanes, acceleration/deceleration lanes or signalization. It is noted that the Maryland State Highway Administration’s “2005 Montgomery County Highway Needs Inventory” shows the need for a divided highway on MD 27 from Skylark Road (south of the Plan area) to Gue Road.

Page 49: Under Rustic Roads, revise the first, second, and third bullets as follows:

- Rustic Roads:** Prices Distillery Road, Kingstead Road (segment), Moxley Road, Rocky Road, Burnt Hill Road, and Hipsley Mill Road.
- Interim Rustic Roads:** Mountain View Road, Johnson Drive, Purdum Road, and Long Corner Road.
- County Roads:** Kings Valley Road and Watkins Road.

Page 49: Revise last bullet on page as follows:

- **Howard Chapel Drive and Gue Road** – The full length of Howard Chapel Drive and the portion of Gue Road [between Howard Chapel Drive and] from 5,000 feet east of MD 27 to Long Corner Road are classified as [a] Country Roads (CR-8 and CR-11 respectively).

Pages 50-51: Revise the first bullet in the Through Commuter Traffic section as follows:

- [Alternate Route] Regional Study – This Master Plan recommends that within two years after the completion of the Woodfield Road Extended (A-12), the M-NCPPC will begin an evaluation of current traffic conditions and work with the community to determine [whether a Master Plan Amendment process is warranted to evaluate the need for a bypass type road] how transportation should be managed in the region in the long term.

A study of the long-term traffic load implications of growth patterns in the adjoining regional counties that are the contributing factors in the continuing rise in through traffic is needed [as a prelude to a future bypass study. To ensure a timely process for the bypass evaluation, this Master Plan recommends that the County Council authorize and direct the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation to conduct a regional study within two years in conjunction with the M-NCPPC, State of Maryland, Howard County, Frederick County, and Carroll County].

Page 51: Under Shared Use Facilities, revise bullets as follows:

- Throughout the Town Center,
- Along Ridge Road and Woodfield Road between the Town Center and Sweepstakes Road,
- Along Bethesda Church Road, Valley Park Drive, and Sweepstakes Road, connecting to Ridge Road, Woodfield Road, and to the Magruder Branch Trail,
- Along Oak Drive connecting Baker Middle School and the Damascus Community Recreation Center,
- Along Ridge Road between the Town Center and Gue Road,
- Along Damascus Road between the Town Center and access to the future Seneca Springs Local Park site.

Page 52: Revise legend as follows:

Shared Use Path (Class I)

Page 53: Revise table as follows:

DB-30	Woodfield Road (MD 124) – North	Woodfield Elementary School to [Ridge Road (MD 27)] <u>Gue Road</u>	Dual bikeway – shared use path (Class I) and on-road bikeway (Class II or III)	Shared-use path connects Damascus Town Center to key activity centers and links to Magruder Branch Trail
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Path 54: Revise first bullet as follows:

- Consider context-based roadway designs to slow vehicular speeds and make streets safer for pedestrians. Such designs encourage slower speeds and added awareness of the presence of pedestrians. This Plan recommends tools such as visual cues at the gateways into the Town Center, narrower travel lanes consistent with safety requirements, and street trees to enhance the pedestrian and bicycle environment.

Page 55: Revise the second bullet under Park and Ride Lot(s) as follows:

- Create a new [P]park-and-ride lot in the vicinity of the MD 27 intersection with [MD 80] Woodfield Road Extended to intercept external trips via transit service or rideshare. This lot should be about two acres in size and have no fewer than 200 spaces.

Page 55: Delete the last bullet under Other Recommendations to study the creation of a Parking District.

Page 57: Revise Goal as follows:

GOAL: [To maintain] Maintain the quality and integrity of the outstanding natural systems within the Damascus [planning] plan area, [to] enhance [that] water quality in [areas such as] the Patuxent River Watershed, and [to] mitigate impacts of future development.

Page 58: Revise last sentence of first paragraph as follows:

More detailed forest information, and conservation and reforestation maps are included in the [Forest Appendix] Damascus and Vicinity Environmental Resources Inventory (which is in a separate appendix to this Plan).

Page 58: Revise paragraph immediately before Headwaters, Wetlands, and Vernal Pools as follows:

The recommendations for forest resources in this section as well as in the Land Use section will generally result in forty-five (45) percent [(45 percent)] forest in the [planning] plan area with half of that protected in public ownership or by private conservation easements.

Page 59: Revise map and properly label the future Damascus Lane right-of-way.

Page 60: Make the first sentence part of the bulleted list.

Page 60: Under streams, revise the first two sentences of the first paragraph as follows:

Stream quality is very good throughout the Damascus [planning] plan area. County and statewide efforts to improve water quality in tributaries have influenced the general approach to water resource protection in the [planning] plan area.

Page 61: Under Specific Stream Recommendations, revise the first sentence of the first paragraph in the second bullet as follows:

- **Magruder Branch** – The one exception to the generally high water quality in Upper Great Seneca Creek is the upper reaches of Magruder Branch that flows into Great Seneca Creek at the southern edge of the [planning] plan area.

Page 61: Revise the first sentence of the third paragraph in the second bullet as follows:

The new Damascus Lane [behind] south of Main Street (discussed in the Transportation Chapter), should include a storm drain system collecting runoff from the Town Center.

Page 63: Revise first bullet heading as follows:

- **[Scott's] Scott Branch Tributary -**

Page 65: Under Parkland, revise last sentence of first paragraph as follows:

The Damascus Recreational Park at the southwestern boundary of the [planning] plan area provides athletic facilities that serve both Damascus residents and the entire northern portion of the County.

Page 65: Under Parkland, revise second paragraph as follows:

The Damascus Master Plan area includes over [2000] 1,100 acres of parkland including local and neighborhood parks, the four-mile long hiker-biker path in the Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park, and the Damascus Recreational Park. The Little Bennett Regional park, containing over [3700] 3,700 acres, is located immediately west of the Master Plan area. It [is to] will be connected to Damascus via the County's trail system. Little Bennett has a golf course, with a driving range, trails, and a campground. Additionally, the Master Plan area has many acres of linear parkland along stream valleys, and over 900 acres in the Patuxent River State Park. This Plan identifies:

Page 66: Revise first bullet as follows:

- Augment planned recreation opportunities at the new Damascus Community Recreation Center. These should include additional fields, a skateboard park, and a roller hockey court.

Page 66: Revise fourth and sixth bullets as follows:

- Acquire additional conservation or recreation parkland in designated locations through dedication from properties in cluster zones. Full analysis of these properties will occur at time of subdivision, but future parks are contemplated on properties near the Oak Ridge Conservation Park, [(along the headwaters of Little Bennett Creek)], and adjoining Patuxent River and Great Seneca Creek tributaries.
- Small urban parks, whether publicly or privately owned, can enhance the Damascus Town Center area. Public parks and privately maintained open space in or near the Town Center include the existing Damascus Neighborhood Park on Locust Drive, which could be enhanced and enlarged to provide a pleasant oasis in proximity to the Town Center, and the planned Magruder Branch Trailhead Park. When the Trailhead for the Magruder Branch Stream Valley Park is planned, the planning team should include a representative from the Washington Suburban Sanitation Commission (WSSC). Coordination with WSSC is important as trail and trailhead alternatives may require use of part of the adjoining WSSC property. If WSSC decides to surplus any portion of the site, the property should be added to the park system.

Page 67: Revise map to properly label the right-of-way for Damascus Lane; replace the proposed east-west Trail Corridor at the north end of the Magruder Branch Trail with a trail head; and ensure this map and the map on page 73 show consistent trail alignments.

Page 68: Revise chart title and chart as follows:

[Inventory of Existing Facilities and Parkland Owned, Leased and/or Maintained by the M-NCPPC] Existing Parks in Damascus

11	U	Seneca Springs Local Park	57.4							
Neighborhood Conservation [Park] Area										

Page 69: Under Natural Resource Conservation and Protection, revise the first sentence of the second paragraph as follows:

Since it contains the headwaters for several major streams and the Patuxent River, a [A] major concern in the Damascus area is the continued protection of the drinking water supply of the County [since it contains the headwaters for several major streams and the Patuxent River].

Page 69: Under Parkland Historic and Cultural Settings, revise first sentence of first bullet as follows:

- The **Elisha Warfield** house (25723 Woodfield Road), near Seneca Springs Local Park, dates from 1900 to 1902.

Page 69: Under Parkland Historic and Cultural Settings, revise first sentence of second bullet as follows:

- The **Kingstead Farm** (11415 Kingstead Road), near Little Bennett Stream Valley Park, was the early 19th century homestead of John Duckett King.

Page 70: Revise first sentence of first bullet as follows:

- The **Ira Jones Farm** (15601 Kings Valley Road) barn, near Little Bennett Stream Valley Park, was built around 1921.

Page 70: Revise table and add an additional footnote as follows:

1	North Point [NP] <u>NCA</u>	Retain as neighborhood conservation park
9	Damascus [Recreational] <u>RP</u>	Acquisition of adjacent property would enhance park

NCA – Neighborhood Conservation Area

Page 71: Revise map to properly label the right-of-way for Damascus Lane and correct #9 in the Park Ownership list to be Damascus [Neighborhood] Recreational Park.

Page 72: Revise the last sentence of the second paragraph as follows:

This Plan particularly notes the need for providing a safer trail crossing at Sweepstakes Road, and ensuring a safe crossing of Bethesda Church Road and Damascus Lane when that segment is developed.

Page 72: Revise second sentence of the second paragraph as follows:

This critical element is the only paved trail in the Damascus [planning] plan area.

Page 72: Revise the first bullet as follows:

- Reflects the east-west natural surface trail corridor being added to link the Seneca Greenway Trail to the east to the Little Bennett Trail system to the west.

Page 73: Revise map to properly label the right-of-way for Damascus Lane; replace the proposed east-west Trail Corridor at the north end of the Magruder Branch Trail with a trailhead; and ensure this map and the map on page 67 show consistent trail alignments.

Page 74: Under Legacy Open Space Program, revise first sentence of second paragraph as follows:

The Legacy Open Space Program is designed to protect a broad range of valuable open space resources with a variety of tools ranging from easements to parkland acquisition and/or dedication.

Page 74: Under Legacy Open Space Program, revise the third sentence of the third paragraph as follows:

Further study was needed to determine specific sites to protect, [and d] During the Master Plan process the two sites were studied in depth.

Page 74: Under Legacy Open Space Program, revise fourth paragraph as follows:

Of the three sites evaluated only the Little Bennett Creek watershed headwaters is recommended for addition to the park system. The Bennett Creek and the Upper Patuxent River [Forest area] Watershed Area are not proposed to be part of the park system.

Page 74: Under Recommendations, revise bullets as follows:

- The Little Bennet Creek Headwaters Area is recommended for protection – primarily through parkland dedication and acquisition.
- The Bennett Creek Headwaters Area and the Upper Patuxent River [Forest] Watershed Area are recommended for protection – primarily through easements.

Page 75: Revise table as follows:

Other Sites – not Class III			
<p>Upper Patuxent River [Forest] Watershed Area Site consists of multiple parcels north and south of Gue Road adjacent to Patuxent River State Park. Already protected in Water Supply and Rural Open Space Protection categories.</p>	<p>Large area of contiguous forest with high quality upland and riparian forest stands that buffer tributaries of Patuxent River.</p> <p>Many stream valley wetlands.</p> <p>Contributes to protecting water quality of Patuxent River.</p>	<p>Add to Natural Resources Category (Class I).</p> <p>Retain within Water Supply and Rural Open Space Protection categories.</p>	<p>Protect through development review process and conservation easements as appropriate.</p>

Page 76: Revise legend as follows:

Upper Patuxent River Watershed Area (Natural Resource Site, Water Supply Target Area)

Page 77: Under Damascus Community Recreation Center, revise the second sentence of the first paragraph as follows:

The facility serves the [Up County] Upcounty region, which includes Damascus and Clarksburg.

Page 77: Under Damascus Community Recreation Center, revise the last sentence of the second paragraph and the first two bullets of the third as follows:

The Department of Recreation is also [studying] seeking a location to meet the aquatic recreational needs of this area.

Recommendations for this facility include:

- [Provide sidewalks along the front of the property and from the entrance along the interior roadway leading to the community center to provide a safe passage for pedestrians, including the students from adjoining Baker Middle School.]
- [Study the need for] Locate an aquatic recreational opportunities in the Upcounty region.

Page 77: Under Schools, revise first paragraph and first sentence of the second paragraph as follows:

The Damascus Master Plan area contains eight school sites that total approximately 120 acres (see Community Facilities map). The Damascus Cluster includes the high school, a middle school, four elementary schools and two future elementary school sites within the [planning] plan area. There are no private schools in the Master Plan area. Based on the land use recommendations [for] of this Plan [area] no additional [schools] school sites [appear to be] are warranted.

There are two vacant school sites in the [planning] plan area – an elementary school site on Oak Drive across from the Baker Middle School, and an elementary school site along Hawkins Creamery Road.

Page 78: Under “Fire and Rescue” revise all paragraphs as follows:

Within the Damascus Master Plan area, fire, rescue and emergency medical services are provided by career and volunteer fire fighter-rescuers assigned to [four] five fire stations: Station 13 located at 26334 Ridge Road in Damascus, Station 9 on Frederick Road in Hyattstown, Interim Station 35 in Clarksburg on Gateway Center Drive, Station 17 on Route 108 in Laytonsville, and Station 29 on Crystal Rock Drive in Germantown. Fire and Rescue units from other nearby stations, including those in Frederick, Carroll and Howard Counties, also respond into this area when [requested] needed. The Damascus area will also be served in the

future by units from new stations to be built in nearby Clarksburg and the east side of Germantown.

Damascus Station 13 received an extensive renovation in 1993-94, and no further major renovations are anticipated over the next 10-20 years. Due to its small size and condition, Laytonsville Station 17 may be renovated on its present site or relocated to a nearby site in the next 10 years. Hyattstown Station 9 and Germantown Station 29 are expected to remain at their present sites. Anticipated dates for the opening of the new Germantown-East and permanent Clarksburg fire-rescue stations are 2008 and 2010, respectively.

[An MCFRS study addressing county-wide aerial unit deployment recommended the addition of an aerial unit at Damascus Station 13. An aerial unit (i.e., ladder truck, aerial tower, or quint, which is a single unit with combined capabilities of both an aerial unit and an engine) might eventually be placed at Station 13 as funding becomes available. In addition, redeployment of certain fire-rescue units within the Damascus area may also occur over the next 20 years based upon changing needs of the area.]

The Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services (MCFRS) recognizes that a significant portion of the Damascus [study] area lacks municipal water supply and fire hydrants. To enhance the fire suppression capabilities within areas lacking fire hydrants, the MCFRS urges builders and property owners to voluntarily install underground water tanks directly on their property, or at the entrance to housing developments, for use by the MCFRS. These underground water tanks should hold 20,000 gallons or [greater] more based upon fire fighting water flow requirements of the property to be protected. Tanks should meet the requirements of National Fire Protection Association Standard 1142 (“Standard on Water Supplies for Suburban and Rural Fire Fighting”), including appropriate connections for hook-up to pumpers and a roadside sign and/or pavement [marking] marker identifying the tank’s location to fire fighters. The property owner would be responsible for maintenance of the tank and fire department connections.

Persons [with] having ponds on their property [could also] are encouraged to make water readily accessible to fire fighters by installing “dry hydrants” and providing improved access to them (e.g., paved or gravel roadway and turnaround area) for fire suppression vehicles. A dry hydrant consists of a pipe extending into a body of water or waterway, and an above ground connection that allows fire fighters to quickly hook-up pumpers to the water source [of water]. The property owner would be responsible for maintenance of the dry hydrant.

[These] This Plan and MCFRS recommend[at]ions support for the January 1, 2004 County law requiring fire sprinkler systems in single-family homes [and small businesses] as the front line measure in fire protection. Sprinkler systems within structures located in areas lacking municipal water require a dedicated indoor tank, supplied by an on-site well, to store water to directly supply the sprinkler system. Underground tanks, and ponds with dry hydrants, are supplemental to fire sprinklers and may be used by fire fighters to suppress fires in buildings without sprinklers, vehicles (e.g. trucks, farm machinery), and outdoor areas (e.g., woods, brush, cropland).

Page 79: Revise map to properly label the right-of-way for Damascus Lane.

Page 80: Under Police, revise the first two sentences as follows:

Police service in the Damascus Master Plan area is provided by the 5th District Police Station, located at 20000 Aircraft Drive in Germantown. [The 5th District Police Station is located at 20000 Aircraft Drive in Germantown.]

Page 81: Under Tobacco Farming, revise the second sentence of the first paragraph as follows:

Maryland produced one[-fourth] quarter of all tobacco in the country, and Montgomery County planters contributed about [one-] a fifth of its total.

Page 81: Under Tobacco Farming, delete the fifth sentence of the second paragraph as follows:

[In the Damascus area, farmers continued growing tobacco into the early 20th century.]

Page 81: Under Early Log Houses, revise the second sentence as follows:

[Still standing is the] The Warfield Log House[,] on Damascus Road (MD 108)[,] near Etchison is still standing.

Page 82: Under Mills, revise the first paragraph as follows:

Grist mills were established along major waterways in the late 1700s. During this period, before towns and villages were laid out, the mills formed a kind of community center. The communities of Goshen and Browningsville, for example, grew around mill complexes. [The] Goshen Mills, [complex] established by 1792, included a massive three-story brick merchant mill and a frame gristmill. The complex was built on the Goshen Branch of Great Seneca Creek. [Another mill stood on a nearby tributary by 1798. Harry Dorsey operated the mill and built a house nearby] A mill on a nearby Goshen tributary was built by 1789 and was operated by Harry Dorsey. About 1804, James Day built a mill on Bennett Creek, in the area later known as Browningsville.

Page 82: Under Dairy Farming, 1920s-1930s, revise the fifth sentence as follows:

By the mid-1930s, it was a major source of income for local farmers.

Page 83: Revise the last sentence of the second paragraph as follows:

The Damascus High School opened at its current location in 1950.

Page 83: Revise the second sentence of the third paragraph as follows:

The theatre, designed after Washington's Apex Theatre [(no longer standing)] operated until the 1970s.

Page 84: Revise the first and second paragraph as follows:

[Three] Within the Damascus Master Plan area, there are three designated historic sites [are in the Damascus Master Plan area]: the Druid Theater, #11/6-2; Mendelssohn Terrace, #10/12; and the Perry G. Etchison Farm, #15/23. These sites have been designated on the [Master Plan for Historic Preservation] Master Plan for Historic Preservation and this Plan [reconfirms] confirms that designation, with the environmental settings and descriptive language included in the original designation.

The Historic Preservation Commission is in the process of reviewing [the] potential historic resources within the Damascus Master Plan area to determine if they are eligible for designation on the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*. The resources in Planning Area 11 and Planning Area 14 are currently under review, and the resources in Planning Area 10 and Planning Area 15 will be completed as time and staff resources allow. [Resources] The Damascus area resources listed below are [in the Damascus Planning Area] currently included on the *Locational Atlas* [are listed below]. Those marked with an asterisk (*) are nominated for addition to the *Locational Atlas*.

Page 84: Under Planning Area 11: Damascus and Vicinity, delete the following item:

[11/14 Gartrell/E. Brooke Lee Farm]

Page 84: Under Planning Area 14: Goshen, Woodfield, Cedar Grove and Vicinity, revise as follows:

14/6 Jerry Williams Farm

[12] 14/33 Franklin King (Coleman) Farm

Page 85: Under Patuxent Watershed Conservation Area, delete the following item:

[15/10 Gue-Thompson Log House]

Page 86: Update Damascus Historic Sites map.

Page 87: Under Implementation Plan, revise the first paragraph as follows:

[The final segment] This section of [this] the Master Plan contains the proposed actions to implement the land use recommendations of the Plan. [A two-tier mixed-use zone, t] The Mixed-Use Town Center (MXTC) Zone [or a modification of a similar existing zone, is] and the MXTC/TDR Zone are proposed for the Town Center. In the Transition Areas, zoning changes are proposed in the Town Neighborhood Area, Neighborhood Transition Area, and the Rural Transition Area. In the Rural Area, the Rural Density Transfer (RDT) Zone is retained with minor adjustments. Also in the Rural Area [a new zone,] the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone [or modification to an existing zone] is proposed to protect existing rural villages.

Page 87: Under Implementation Plan, move the Summary of Zoning Recommendations table from page 94. Revise and insert after the first paragraph as follows:

Summary of Zoning Change Recommendations

Location	Existing Zone	Proposed Zone
Town Center		
	Mixed Commercial, Industrial, Residential Zones	[Town Center] <u>MXTC</u> and <u>MXTC/TDR</u>
Transition Areas		
Town Neighborhood Area	RE-2C	R-200 RE-1
Neighborhood Transition Area	RE-2C	R-200 RE-1 RNC [4]/TDR [1.0] R[ural]C[cluster] R-90
Rural Transition Area	RE-2C and RC	R[ural]C[cluster] RNC/TDR
Rural Areas		
Etchison, Browningsville, Purdum	R-200, C-1, RDT	<u>R-200, C-1, RDT with Rural Village Center Overlay</u>

Page 87: Under Zoning Recommendation, revise the last sentence of the first paragraph as follows:

This Plan recommends changing all the existing zones [into] to [a new zone, or modification of an existing zone,] the MXTC or MXTC/TDR Zones with different levels of emphasis, and slightly different intensities.

Page 87: Under Zoning Recommendation, revise the second paragraph as follows:

[A new mixed-use zone or a modification to an existing zone] The MXTC Zone or MXTC/TDR Zone will be used for all properties in the Town Center. This mixed-use zone will establish town-scale development that emphasizes the scale, proportion, design, and architectural context of structures, rather than separation of uses. The zoning [will] allow a broad range of uses, but with density and review standards appropriate for this small town setting. The [Town Center (TC)] MXTC Zone will allow appropriately scaled development that emphasizes how structures fit into the Town Center context rather than focusing on the uses within the structures. It will allow a very broad range of [permitted] residential, commercial, light industrial, service, and institutional uses, but it will require site plan review for most new structures and major structural modifications. The range of uses allowed will limit certain uses [now] previously allowed that are not appropriate for a small town context, and will encourage mixed-use structures that can more easily evolve over time as market demand changes. The MXTC/TDR is recommended for properties where the existing zoning is a lower density residential zone and for split-zoned properties or jointly-owned properties where a portion of the property is a lower-density residential zone.

Page 87: Under Zoning Recommendation, revise the third paragraph as follows:

The areas included in the [TC Zone] Town Center will have two levels of emphasis with slightly different intensities. The [TC-1] outer area will encourage, but not be limited to, residential uses and have slightly higher residential density allowed. The [TC-2 area] inner core will encourage, but not be limited to, commercial uses and have slightly higher commercial intensities allowed. The zoning densities will not exceed the potential intensity within the cumulative range of the existing zones in the Town Center. Allowing a wide variety of uses within the Town Center is critical for residential development and supporting community-oriented businesses.

Page 88: Replace the first paragraph and table with the following:

The Plan recommendations will encourage the use of residential potential in the Town Center and are intended to reduce allowable commercial densities. Although analysis of development potential considered theoretical maximums to ensure traffic and school balance, realistic development potential is considerably less, as discussed below.

Commercial Potential - The proposed zoning would allow a theoretical maximum of 1.6 million square feet of additional commercial uses. Again, a calculation reflecting the historic development yield in Damascus reveals significantly lower probable development will occur, adding approximately 1.2 million additional square feet of commercial property.

Residential Potential - On properties that are anticipated to develop during the life of the Plan, the proposed zoning would allow a theoretical maximum of approximately 1,700 new dwelling units, including MPDUs (see Theoretical Maximum Potential table below). However, historic development yields in Damascus indicate less development will occur, adding approximately 997 additional dwelling units to the existing residential units (see Realistic Potential table below).

In addition to the historic patterns of development, there are other reasons to support the Plan assumption that the theoretical maximum build out estimates do not reflect realistic building potential. First, Town Center development will include a mix of these alternatives. This Plan encourages mixed-use buildings that include commercial uses on the ground floor, and office or residential uses on the upper floors. Second, development guidelines for building height, environmental constraints on individual sites, and protecting the character of nearby existing development will reduce the maximum yield in the zone. Finally, some owners may decide to develop or redevelop at lower intensities for market or other business reasons.

Summary of Zoning Changes and TDR use in Town Center¹

An MXTC/TDR Zone is recommended in the Plan for certain properties in the outer area of the Town Center to encourage the use of transferable development rights (TDRs). The Zone requires the use of TDRs to achieve additional residential density above 8 du/acre in these properties. The TDR potential for all properties designated for the MXTC/TDR Zone that are realistically anticipated to develop could provide up to 600 TDRs if all properties anticipated to develop achieve full density. The calculation based on historic yields for this type of mixed-use

zone reflect less development potential, and substantially lower TDR usage (potentially no more than 150 TDRs – see tables below).

Development Potential in the Town Center – The following tables provide a summary of calculation of development potential in the Town Center for the most realistically developable properties. The first table identifies the maximum development potential for these properties.

Theoretical Maximum Potential¹

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Standard Method Development</u>		<u>Optional Method Development</u>		
		<u>Dwelling Units per Acre</u>	<u>Dwelling Units</u>	<u>Dwelling Units per Acre</u>	<u>Dwelling Units</u>	<u>TDR Potential</u>
<u>Inner Core (MXTC)</u>	<u>21.40</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>171</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>321</u>	<u>NA</u>
<u>Outer Area MXTC</u>	<u>19.42</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>155</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>388</u>	<u>NA</u>
<u>Outer Area MXTC/TDR</u>	<u>49.98</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>399</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>999</u>	<u>600</u>
<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>90.8</u>	<u>~</u>	<u>725</u>	<u>~</u>	<u>1,708</u>	<u>600²</u>

1. MPDU potential is included in the these calculations
2. Potential TDRs depend on single family or multi-family dwelling use

The following table summarizes the realistic potential yields that are expected with the recommended zoning over the life of the Plan, based on historic yields in Damascus and for zones similar to the MXTC zone:

Realistic Potential^{1,3}

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Standard Method Development</u>		<u>Optional Method Development</u>		
		<u>Dwelling Units per Acre</u>	<u>Dwelling Units</u>	<u>Dwelling Units per Acre</u>	<u>Dwelling Units</u>	<u>TDR Potential</u>
<u>Inner Core (MXTC)</u>	<u>21.40</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>171</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>235</u>	<u>NA</u>
<u>Outer Area MXTC</u>	<u>19.42</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>155</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>213</u>	<u>NA</u>
<u>Outer Area MXTC/TDR</u>	<u>49.98</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>399</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>549</u>	<u>150</u>
<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>90.8</u>	<u>~</u>	<u>725</u>	<u>~</u>	<u>997</u>	<u>150²</u>

1. MPDU potential is included in the these calculations
2. Potential TDRs depend on single family or multi-family dwelling use
3. Calculation based on historic density yield for mixed-use zoning countywide

Town Center Development Guidelines

Guidelines for density and bulk regulation are as follows:

	<u>MXTC and MXTC/TDR Outer Area</u>	<u>MXTC Inner Core</u>
<u>Density:</u>		
<u>Commercial, Industrial or Mixed-Use</u>	<u>0.5 FAR</u>	<u>1.0 FAR</u>
<u>100% Residential</u>	<u>20 du/ac</u>	<u>15 du/ac</u>
<u>Height:</u>		
<u>Commercial, Industrial or Mixed-Use</u>	<u>55'</u>	<u>55'</u>
<u>100% Residential</u>	<u>55'*</u>	<u>45'</u>

* At the time of development, the Planning Board must evaluate compatibility with adjacent residential neighborhoods and limit height on the outer edge of the Town Center to reflect the heights of adjacent residential neighborhoods.

At the time of site plan review of specific development proposals, the Planning Board may consider waiver of height, setback, or public use space requirements due to restrictions caused by extenuating existing circumstances. In particular, consideration can be given to meeting public use space requirements along Main Street in the Town Center through provision of street amenities, and to adjustments to development plans in response to adjacent properties that are not developed in accordance with the Plan recommendations.

Page 88: Under Transition Areas, revise the last sentence of the second paragraph as follows:

These neighborhoods will have [visibility from the residential areas] vistas [to] of the surrounding fields and forests in the Rural Transition Area and the Rural Area.

Page 89: Under Neighborhood Transition area, revise the first and last sentences of the first paragraph in the first bullet and the bullet heading as follows:

Create the Rural Neighborhood Cluster/Transferable Development Rights (TDRs) Zone

The Plan recommends creating TDR receiving ability for the RNC Zone for [five] six properties.

The base yield generally reflects the existing two-acre density, and in order to address [Agricultural Protection Goals] agricultural protection goals, additional density yields reflect the use of [Transferable Development Rights (] TDRs [)].

Page 89: Under Neighborhood Transition Area, revise the sub-bullets as follows:

- **Burdette Property Recommendation**
RNC 0.4/TDR 1.0 Zone allowing from [32] 16 to 100 dwelling units with up to [50] 65 TDRs

- **Warfield Property Recommendation**
RNC 0.4/TDR [1.0] 0.75 Zone allowing from [31] 15 to [95] 71 dwelling units with up to [47] 42 TDRs
- **Kingstead/Leishear Properties Recommendation**
RNC [0.4/TDR 1.0] 0.2/TDR 0.5 Zone allowing from [55] 27 to [168] 84 dwelling units with up to [83] 41 TDRs
- **Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway Properties Recommendation**
RNC 0.4/TDR 1.0 Zone allowing for [24 - 69] 10 to 61 dwelling units with up to [36] 40 TDRs
- **Casey/Lewis Properties Recommendation**
RNC 0.4/TDR [1.0] 0.5 Zone allowing from [20] 9 to [61] 27 dwelling units with up to [30] 13 TDRs
- **Stanley/Leishear- Day Properties Recommendation**
RNC 0.4/TDR 1.0 Zone allowing from [10] 5 to 32 dwelling units with up to [17] 21 TDRs

Page 90: Revise map per Council decisions and properly label the right-of-way for Damascus Lane.

Page 91: Revise map to reflect Council decisions; properly label the right-of-way for Damascus Lane; delete one of the receiving stars to reflect that there are 6 TDR receiving areas, not 7; and correct spelling of “receiving” in the legend.

Page 92: Under Summary of Zoning Changes in the Transition Areas, revise first sentence as follows:

These recommendations provide from [183] 143 to [491] 385 additional dwelling units, with [227] 222 of those only allowed through the use of TDRs.

Page 92: Replace table and footnote as follows:

Summary of Proposed Zoning Changes in the Transition Areas

Name	Zoning Modification	Potential Maximum Yield	Potential MPDU DU	Potential TDRs
Town Neighborhood Area – Conformance to Existing Lot Size				
Ridge Road South Neighborhood	RE-2C to	33	NA	NA
Ridge Road North Town Neighborhood	R-200	49	NA	NA
Town Spring Neighborhood	RE-2C to	33	NA	NA
Ridge Road North Transitional Neighborhood	RE-1	23	NA	NA
Neighborhood Transition Area – Increased Development Potential				
Burdette*	RE-2C to RNC/TDR	100	15	65
Warfield*		71	10	42
Casey/Lewis*		27	4	13
Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway*		61	9	40
Stanley/Leishear-Day*		32	5	21
Kingstead/Leishear*	RC and RE-2C to RNC/TDR	84	12	41
Souder*	RE-2C to R-90	14	NA	NA
Miller	RE-2C to RE-1	25	NA	NA
Rural Transition Area – Patuxent Watershed Protection				
Patuxent Area Properties	RE-2C to RC	316	NA	NA
TOTAL		868	55	222

* Potential Yield II includes TDR and MPDU potential

Page 93: Revise map to properly label the right-of-way for Damascus Lane; remove one TDR receiving star; revise legend per Council decisions; revise legend to correct spelling of “receiving”; and revise legend #9 to read Stanley/Leishear-Day.

Page 94: Under Zoning Recommendations, revise the first paragraph as follows:

With the exception of the areas proposed within the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone discussed below, the Plan recommends maintaining the existing zoning in the Rural Areas of Damascus.

Under Implement the Rural Village Overlay Zone, revise title as follows:

Implement the Rural Village Center Overlay Zone

Page 94: Under Implement the Rural Village Overlay Zone, revise the first and second paragraph as follows:

[A modified version of the] The Rural Village Center Overlay Zone, with appropriate types of uses and levels of intensity, is recommended for Etchison, Browningsville, and Purdum. A zone of this type was initially recommended in the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space Master Plan (1980). This zone will protect these village areas from inappropriate uses that are

allowed in the commercial, residential, and industrial zones found in some of these villages in the County. The zone will limit development potential, yet allow a wide variety of uses at a scale appropriate in a rural setting. This zone should be amended to prohibit larger auto-oriented commercial uses. The rehabilitation or replacement of dilapidated structures in these communities should be encouraged, and they should be allowed to evolve with some additional residential, institutional, and commercial uses.

Public sewer and water is not recommended for these communities except as needed by public health concerns[, although innovative wastewater treatment systems are appropriate to consider]. [Larger auto-oriented commercial uses will not be allowed in the villages.] Since many of these villages face problems with aging septic systems or water quality, the use of innovative individual or community sewage disposal systems should be encouraged. This concern was also the subject of one of the goals of the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space Master Plan (1980). This Plan supports the use of such systems to address community health problems in rural villages.

Page 94: Revise and move the Summary of Zoning Change Recommendations to page 87. See revisions for page 87 on page of this resolution.

Page 94: Insert a new section at the bottom of the page as follows:

SPECIAL EXCEPTION GUIDELINES

Guideline for Rural Vista Protection – The visual character of the Rural Areas surrounding Damascus are unique as they are the highest elevations in the County. When special exceptions are proposed in Transition and Rural Areas within the Damascus Master Plan area, their review should take into special consideration the preservation of these long vistas that are a part of the unique character of this community. Any proposed land use that would impede those vistas should be discouraged unless it serves an important public purpose.

Page 95: Rename the [Purdum Rural Village] boundary to Rural Village Boundary.

Page 96: Under Community Sewer Service, revise first paragraph as follows:

The provision of community sewer service in the Damascus [planning] plan area is guided by the County's Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan, the General Plan, and prior Master Plans; as well as regional environmental policies, such as the Chesapeake Bay Initiatives and the Maryland Smart Growth policies.

Page 96: Under Community Sewer Service, revise second, third, and fourth paragraphs of the third bullet as follows:

- If cluster development is used, sewer service is recommended for the Burdette, Warfield, Kingstead/Leishear, Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway, Casey/Lewis, and Stanley/Leishear-Day properties. Sewer [is recommended] for the Burdette and Kingstead/Leishear properties[.] is recommended only for those areas that can be served by gravity sewer or

grinder systems [outside environmental buffers] that minimize stream or stream buffer impacts. The proposed relocation of the pump station that would serve the Burdette property may modify or expand the areas that can be accessed, but must not be used as a rationale for zoning changes beyond those recommended in this plan.

Sewer service for the Warfield and Casey/Lewis properties should utilize existing gravity sewer where available but may use grinder systems and small pressure systems where necessary, subject to WSSC feasibility analysis.

[New pump stations are anticipated to serve the Stanley-Leishear property and the Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway properties.] Given the topography of the Damascus area, the provision of community sewer service to many of the sites recommended for such service will require means besides standard gravity sewer extensions for conveying flows into the Damascus sewerage system: extra-depth or contour sewers, individual grinder pump/pressure sewer systems, and central wastewater pumping stations. The implementation of new sewer service should minimize—as much as is feasible—the need for additional pumping stations, which add to WSSC’s operations and maintenance costs. However, this master plan does anticipate the need for additional WSSC-owned and operated pumping stations; the Stanley/Leishear and Smart/Miner/Rice/Conway sites are likely but not necessarily the only locations for these facilities. The County will address the need for new pumping facilities through the development review process, which will include coordination with Comprehensive Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan policies and with WSSC operations and capital improvement program requirements. In any case where a new pumping station is required, the siting of the station and its force main will need to accommodate a balance between maximizing the feasibility of gravity sewer main extensions to new development and minimizing impacts such as sewer main stream crossings and disruption to sensitive environmental buffer areas.

Page 97: Revise the fourth bullet at the top of the page as follows:

- Provide community sewer service to neighborhoods, in close proximity to the existing community sewerage system, that are likely to have difficulty in continuing to function on existing, on-site septic systems (see the following discussion). Where community sewer service is not currently accessible, [C] comprehensively analyze designated neighborhoods for alternative ways to address failing septic systems including, but not limited to, the provision of community sewer service.

Page 97: Under Aging Septic Systems, revise first paragraph as follows:

Most of the [planning] plan area is served by individual septic systems with the exception of the sewer envelope in the Magruder Valley. Older areas of Damascus were built under now outdated septic system regulations. If these systems fail, unfavorable soil conditions and relatively small lot sizes could make it impossible for the Department of Permitting Services to grant new permits for replacing them with traditional septic systems that satisfy current

regulations. This analysis should consider how service could be provided in a way that will benefit the entire neighborhood that is subject to the same conditions without expanding community services to areas not recommended for sewer in this Plan.

Page 97: Under Aging Septic Systems, insert a new first bullet and revise the fourth bullet as follows:

This Plan recommends:

- Extend the recommended sewer service envelope to nearby properties where, because of relatively small property sizes and the age of existing septic systems, owners will likely have severe limitations on the ability to replace those septic systems when they fail. The recommended zoning for these properties – RE-1, RE-2, and RE-2C – would generally otherwise exclude them from community sewer service. These neighborhoods have reasonable access to the existing Damascus community sewerage system, and in a few cases are already adjacent to existing sewer mains. The extension of community service in these neighborhoods is intended to address existing or anticipated public health concerns. Water and Sewer plan policies that limit each existing property to a single service connection within an area so designated do so to maintain the existing housing stock and development patterns in these areas, not to promote new subdivision or resubdivision activities. Future Water and Sewer Plan amendments must follow this intent. As a result of this recommendation, community sewer service will become available for a few vacant properties included in these neighborhoods. However, community sewer service is not intended to promote substantial new development in these areas, especially the wholesale redevelopment of existing neighborhoods.
- The Department of Permitting Services modify existing regulations to allow innovative septic systems in residential areas with the intent to reduce nutrient loads.

Page 97: Under Community Water Service, add sentence before first sentence as follows:

The provision of community water service in the Damascus Plan area is guided by the County's Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan, the General Plan, and Smart Growth policies.

Page 98: Revise table as follows:

Stanley/Leishear-Day Property	W3	S3
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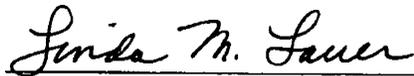
Page 99: Revised Public Sewer Envelope Map per Council decisions and modify Stanley/Leishear label to read Stanley/Leishear-Day.

General

All figures and tables included in the Plan are to be revised where appropriate to reflect District Council changes to the Planning Board Draft Damascus Master Plan and to reflect actions taken on related zoning text amendments prior to the final printing of the approved Master Plan. Maps should be revised where necessary to conform to Council actions. The text is to be revised as necessary to achieve clarity and consistency, to update factual information, and to convey the actions of the District Council. All identifying references pertain to the Planning Board Draft Damascus Master Plan.

The Council recommends that M-NCPPC establish a Damascus Advisory Committee to support the development in the Damascus Master Plan area. Responsibilities of the Advisory Committee should include monitoring implementation of Plan recommendations and assuring that problems with implementation are promptly brought to the attention of the Planning Board and/or Council.

This is a correct copy of Council action.



Linda M. Lauer, Clerk of the Council

M-NCPPC



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760
301-495-4500, www.mncppc.org

M-NCPPC No. 06-11
MCPB No. 06-48

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, by virtue of Article 28 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, is authorized and empowered, from time to time, to make and adopt, amend, extend and add to the General Plan for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, pursuant to procedures set forth in the Montgomery County Code, Chapter 33A, held a duly advertised public hearing on November 4, 2004, on the Public Hearing (Preliminary) Draft of the Damascus Master Plan; the Master Plan of Bikeways, 2005, as amended; the General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, as amended; and the Master Plan of Highways within Montgomery County, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Planning Board, after said public hearing and due deliberation and consideration, on July 28, 2005, approved the Planning Board (Final) Draft of the proposed Damascus Master Plan, and recommended that it be approved by the District Council and forwarded it to the County Executive for recommendation and analysis; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Executive reviewed and made recommendations on the Planning Board (Final) Draft of the Damascus Master Plan and forwarded those recommendations with a fiscal analysis to the District Council on December 13, 2005; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Council, sitting as the District Council for the portion of the Maryland-Washington Regional District lying within Montgomery County, held a public hearing on January 24, 2006, and February 28, 2006, wherein testimony was received concerning the Planning Board (Final) Draft of the Damascus Master Plan; and

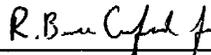
WHEREAS, the District Council, on May 25, 2006, approved the Planning Board (Final) Draft of the Damascus Master Plan subject to the modifications and revisions set forth in Council Resolution No. 15-1485; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Montgomery County Planning Board and The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission do hereby adopt said Damascus Master Plan and the associated amendments to the Plans noted above, including the General Plan for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District, as amended, and the Master Plan of Highways within Montgomery County, as amended, as approved by the District Council in the attached Council Resolution No. 15-1485; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of said Amendment must be certified by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and filed with the Clerk of the Circuit Court of each of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, as required by law.

* * * * *

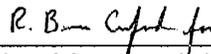
This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Montgomery County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on motion of Commissioner Perdue, seconded by Commissioner Robinson, with Commissioners Berlage, Robinson, Perdue, and Wellington voting in favor of the motion, and Commissioner Bryant being absent, at its regular meeting held on Thursday, June 15, 2006, in Silver Spring, Maryland.



Trudye Morgan Johnson
Executive Director

* * * * *

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted on March 15, 2006, and ratified by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on motion of Commissioner Bryant, seconded by Commissioner Squire, with Commissioners Bryant, Clark, Eley, Parker, Perdue, Robinson, Squire, and Vaughns voting in favor of the motion, and with Commissioners Berlage and Wellington being absent, at its regular meeting held on Wednesday, June 21, 2006, in Silver Spring, Maryland.



Trudye Morgan Johnson
Executive Director