

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

THIS PLAN CONFIRMS. . .

- That a critical mass of active farmland exists in an area defined as the Agricultural Preservation Study Area.
- That Montgomery County's agricultural industry is economically viable and contributes to the regional support of this industry.
- That an agricultural and rural open space preservation program is in the public interest.
- That a preservation program should be linked to a County-wide growth management strategy.
- That development pressure is threatening and eroding the Agricultural Preservation Study Area.
- That farmland, rural open space, and residential development (rural communities and large lot development) can be compatible land-uses within the Agricultural Preservation Study Area, if appropriately located.
- That population centers, defined in the General Plan, such as Clarksburg, Damascus, Olney, and Poolesville are vital elements of the Agricultural Preservation Study Area.
- That the land-use and zoning recommendations expressed in the Boyds Master Plan, Sandy Spring/Ashton Special Study Plan, and Olney Master Plan are supported by the recommendations made in this Plan.

THIS PLAN RECOMMENDS. . .

- Preservation of critical masses of farmland and rural open space.
- Identification of an Agricultural Reserve of 110,000 acres and a Rural Open Space Area of 26,000 acres which are the focus of the preservation program.
- Application of incentives and regulations to preserve farmland and rural open space and to encourage agricultural use of the land.
- Application of specific innovative preservation techniques such as the Rural Density Transfer Zone, Rural Cluster Zone, and County Development Rights Fund.
- Support of full County participation in the State Agricultural Land Preservation Program.
- Support of a rural sanitation policy that does not encourage development within the critical mass of active farmland.