

APPENDIX A  
ASSESSMENT OF BYPASS ALTERNATIVES

During the preparation of this Master Plan, the Planning Board and staff studied and considered several road improvement alternatives to relieve traffic pressures along the main roads leading into Damascus. The alternatives are presented here for purposes of comparison to be used at such time as funding constraints are lifted and proposed interim improvements are not adequate to handle traffic needs.

Following is a description of each alternative, including road improvement components and total estimated cost in 1982 dollars. Alternatives described would apply to the Damascus Road network between the Kings Valley Road-Route 27 intersection to the south, and the Route 80-Route 27 intersection at Clagettville to the north (see map).

ALTERNATIVE 1

Alternative 1 includes a bypass of the town of Damascus to the west, and an extension of Woodfield Road to Route 27 at Faith Lane, bypassing the business area.

<u>Improvement</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost (1982 Dollars)</u>
Western Bypass	5.4 miles of 2-lane new road	\$ 6,300,000
Woodfield Road Extension	1.12 miles of 2-lane new road	<u>\$ 1,300,000</u>
	TOTAL	\$ 7,600,000

This alternative was not endorsed by the Planning Board because of environmental impacts (numerous stream valleys and steep slopes would be traversed), land use concerns (much of the route would cross land designated for agricultural preservation) and the fact a western bypass would not relieve traffic congestion along Woodfield Road. Any future consideration of a western bypass should address these same concerns.

## ALTERNATIVE 2

Alternative 2 involves reconstructing Route 27 as a 4-lane divided highway from Kings Valley Road north to Claggettville. This project is listed on the 1980 State Highway 20-Year Needs Inventory. Listing on this inventory is not a commitment by the State to build this project; their project planning process requires that all feasible alternatives be examined before any project commitment is made. The listing in the Needs Inventory is an ultimate solution to traffic pressures along Route 27.

<u>Improvement</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost (1982 Dollars)</u>
Route 27 Reconstruction	5.07 miles of 4-lane divided highway	\$ 8,600,000
	TOTAL	\$ 8,600,000

Reconstructing Route 27 as a 4-lane undivided highway should also be examined.

### ALTERNATIVE 3

Alternative 3 includes rebuilding Route 27 as a divided highway to the Magruder crossover, building the Magruder crossover, improving or widening Woodfield Road north of the crossover, building an extension of Woodfield Road to Faith Lane, and widening Route 27 north of Faith Lane.

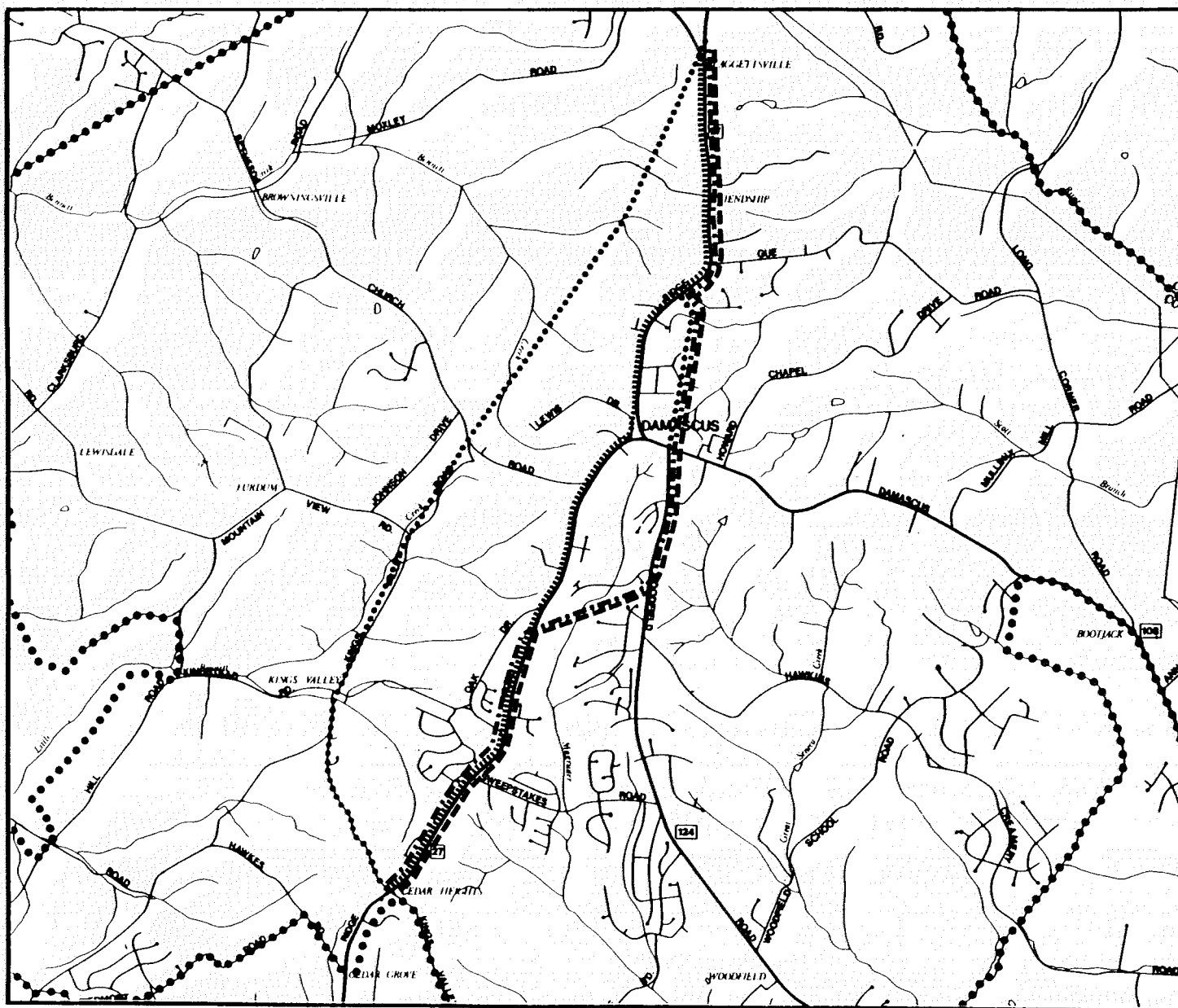
<u>Improvement</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost (1982 Dollars)</u>
Route 27 from Kings Valley Road to Magruder crossover	1.23 miles of 4-lane divided highway	\$ 2,100,000
Magruder crossover	.94 miles of 2-lane new road	\$ 1,100,000
Improve Woodfield Road	.66 miles adding 2 lanes, resurfacing 2 lanes	\$ 400,000
Woodfield Road extension	1.12 miles of 2-lane new road	\$ 1,300,000
Widening Route 27 north	1.29 miles adding 2 lanes, resurfacing 2 lanes	\$ 700,000
TOTAL		<hr/> \$ 5,600,000

This alternative would distribute through traffic in the business area over two routes, thereby reducing congestion.

#### ALTERNATIVE 4

Alternative 4 is similar to Alternative 3, but reflects 1980 State Highway 20-Year Needs Inventory listing of Route 27 as a divided highway north of Faith Lane.

<u>Improvement</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Estimated Cost (1982 Dollars)</u>
Route 27 from Kings Valley Road to Magruder crossover	1.23 miles of 4-lane divided highway	\$ 2,100,000
Magruder crossover	.94 miles of 2-lane new road	\$ 1,100,000
Improve Woodfield Road	.66 miles adding 2 lanes, resurfacing 2 lanes	\$ 400,000
Woodfield Road extension	1.12 miles of 2-lane new road	\$ 1,300,000
Route 27 north of Faith Lane	1.29 miles of 4-lane divided highway	\$ 2,200,000
	TOTAL	<hr/> \$ 7,100,000



## BYPASS ALTERNATIVES

- ..... ALTERNATIVE 1
- ALTERNATIVE 2
- . - . - ALTERNATIVE 3
- ALTERNATIVE 4

Approved and Adopted: June 1982

## DAMASCUS MASTER PLAN

Montgomery County, Maryland



Resolution No. 9-1781

Introduced: May 18, 1982

Adopted: May 18, 1982

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

By: District Council

SUBJECT: Approval of the Final Draft Damascus Master Plan

WHEREAS, on November 19, 1981, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission approved the Final Draft Master Plan for Damascus and duly transmitted said approved Final Draft Master Plan to the Montgomery County Council and the Montgomery County Executive; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Council held a public hearing on February 10, 1982, wherein oral and written testimony was received concerning the Final Draft Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Council conducted worksessions on the Final Draft Master Plan on March 3 and March 17, 1982, at which time detailed consideration was given to the evidence of record developed at the public hearing and to the comments and concerns of interested parties attending the worksession discussions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Council sitting as the District Council for that portion of the Maryland-Washington Regional District within Montgomery County that said Final Draft Master Plan for Damascus is hereby approved with such revisions, modifications, and amendments as hereinafter set forth.

Council changes to the Final Draft Master Plan for Damascus, dated December, 1981, are identified below by chapter, section and page number. Deletions to the text of the plan are indicated by ~~dashed lines~~, and additions by underscoring.

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

### DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES, Page 18

The Drainage Basin Map identifies the boundaries of the major drainage basins and their sub-basins within the Damascus Master Plan Area.

The Magruder is the most fully developed basin. Much of Magruder Branch stream valley is subdivided and most of the remaining sewage treatment plant (STP) capacity is committed to the proposed developments. Subdivision activity is occurring although it is evident that a fairly high percentage of the land is poorly suited for development. Developers are constrained by steep slopes, erodible soils, floodplains and access. The headwaters reach of Magruder Branch, above the Sewage Treatment Plant at Welsh Road and extending to its terminus within the commercially zoned section of town center, is a highly sensitive area.

All development in the headwaters of this watershed should be carefully controlled to protect the stream valley and to preserve water quality. By acquiring the floodplains and adjacent steep slopes of this stream valley for parkland, there would be opportunities for protecting and preserving the stream in more or less its natural condition. It is recommended that all floodplain areas above Welsh Road be acquired by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission or preserved as private conservation areas. Developers of land, along and adjacent to the stream and its tributary drainage/ways, should be encouraged to observe a minimum 50-foot building setback from the 100-year floodplain or from the defined channel of minor tributaries; a setback of up to 200 feet from the stream bank. Exact delineation of the boundaries would be determined at time of subdivision or site plan review. Existing regulations require all developers of residential subdivisions and commercial, industrial or institutional sites to manage stormwater runoff on-site, including safe conveyance of flows to an acceptable outfall. ~~An exception should only be made if an off-site facility is programmed and is 50 percent funded.~~

### SUBDIVISION REVIEW CRITERIA, Page 22

This Plan endorses and is complementary to the recommendations contained within M-NCPPC's "Functional Master Plan for Conservation and Management in Seneca Creek and Muddy Branch Basins." The Functional Master Plan presents recommendations concerning water quantity and water quality, erosion and sedimentation and general environmental quality.

Slope protection will be a key concern in the subdivision review process. Primary concerns relate to erosion. Increases in erosion, due to extensive grading and changes in impervious area, will produce more sediment transported by runoff. This could produce detrimental effects on surface water quality and aquatic systems. No development, land disturbance or stripping will be permitted on slopes in excess of 25 percent.

Similarly, approval should not be given to a subdivision where paved surfaces, structures or septic fields are likely to be located on slopes in the range of 15-25 percent, and where soils are classified as severely eroded. Such areas should be included in the open space required by the zoning. Where such open space is not available, lots should be designed to provide a buildable area which does not intrude on the 15-25 percent slopes.

Specific environmental criteria which should be used in reviewing preliminary subdivision plans is included in the Environmental Technical Appendix. These criteria relate to slopes, floodplains, stormwater management, groundwater protection, woodland protection and noise levels.

#### STORMWATER MANAGEMENT, Page 22 and 24

The entire Damascus Planning Area is located within the sensitive headwaters of Patuxent, Bennett, Little Bennett and Seneca watersheds. Preliminary analysis suggest that without proper stormwater management and erosion/sediment control measures the proposed land uses may adversely impact the natural stream systems. The Seneca and Muddy Branch Functional Plan, Rock Creek Functional Master Plan and the Council of Governments land use guidelines identify preventive measures (Best Management Practices) to prevent the degradation of water resources. These techniques are also applicable to the Damascus Planning Area.

Although it is generally desirable to control stormwater by preventive measures (land use, subdivision, zoning and site planning), it may not be possible to entirely rely on such measures without severely curtailing the provision of more housing, which has been identified as a County goal. To avoid such curtailment, appropriate stormwater management protective measures such as retention/detention ponds would be necessary.

The Seneca and Muddy Branch Functional Master Plan has identified a need for approximately 60 acre-feet of storage capacity to control the 2-year flood in the Magruder Branch Basin. No storage capacity numbers are available for the Bennett and the Patuxent watersheds because no basin-wide analyses have been done for these basins.

~~Greenhorne and O'Mara in their preliminary report to the County Department of Environmental protection have identified sites for two facilities in the Magruder Basin and~~



~~the County has preliminarily approved a site for a potential SWM facility in Bennett Creek. These sites are shown on the Land Use Plan Map for purposes of Public Hearing.~~

~~The Planning Board staff is undertaking a detailed analysis, scheduled to be completed in late January, to evaluate these sites and to recommend, where appropriate, alternative sites. This analysis will be available for County Council work sessions on this Master Plan. All sites proposed on the Land Use Plan as stormwater management facilities should be reserved at time of subdivision.~~

In the Magruder Branch sub-watershed a central stormwater management facility should be programmed in the Capital Improvements Program Budget for design and construction in the general vicinity as indicated by Potential Stormwater Management Facility Site #1 on the Proposed Land Use Plan. This facility will provide the major portion of channel protection for the downstream reach of the main stem of Magruder Branch within the Planning Area. This structure should provide stormwater management more economically and in a more environmentally satisfactory manner than can be provided on-site on some of the development sites located on the steeper slopes of this narrow valley. In some cases, stormwater management waivers have been granted by the Montgomery Soil Conservation District due to infeasibility associated with severe site constraints.

This Plan recommends that the County Department of Environmental Protection further investigate the technical feasibility and cost-effectiveness of other sites shown on the Land Use Plan, and recommend appropriate projects in the Capital Improvements Program. These facilities could be funded entirely by the developers or with contributions from the County.

On-site stormwater management is recommended for areas not controlled by the programmed centralized facilities, on a case-by-case basis. Waivers should be discouraged unless the facility is programmed and synchronized with development.

The most potentially erodible channel reach of the Magruder Branch is in the proposed parkland. Techniques such as instream gabion weir, stilling basins and rip rap should be considered on selective locations to help reduce erosion.

For smaller tributary streams not controlled by centralized facilities, a conservation easement up to 200 feet from the bank is recommended. Exact delineation of the boundaries would be determined at time of subdivision.

## PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

### HOW CAN CONGESTION IN THE DAMASCUS BUSINESS AREA, DUE LARGELY TO THROUGH TRAFFIC, BE RELIEVED? Page 37

The adopted Damascus Master Plan proposes an ultimate solution: a by-pass of the business area to the east (see Long Term Solutions Map). The 1980 State Highway 20-Year Needs Inventory does not include the by-pass on its list of needed improvements. This means that, as of this date, the State does not recognize a need for the by-pass. Instead, the State lists reconstruction of Route 27 as a divided highway as a needed project with no schedule for construction. This Plan recommends that Route 27 should not be considered for widening to a divided highway in the Planning Area until such time that the traffic load indicates improvements are needed. At that time, alternatives to widening Route 27 between Cedar Grove and Claggettsville should be considered. Alternative routes discussed during the preparation of this plan are found at Appendix A.

### PROPOSED IMMEDIATE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS: DAMASCUS BUSINESS DISTRICT, Page 43

As noted, the State Highway 20-Year Needs Inventory recommends reconstruction (widening) of Route 27 to relieve future congestion. This Plan has explored the possibility of constructing a parallel road west of Md. 27 (between Gue Road and Md. 80) to provide additional capacity. The cost of acquiring a right-of-way and building 9000 linear feet of roadway is estimated to be \$2.8 million. The estimated cost of adding one or two lanes to Route 27 ranges from \$450,000 to \$778,000. This Plan therefore endorses the idea of reconstructing Route 27 within the present right-of-way north of Faith Lane rather than building a new road paralleling Route 27.

### ACCESS BETWEEN RIDGE ROAD AND ROUTE 124: CROSSING THE MAGRUDER VALLEY, Page 43

Ridge Road and Route 124 are the two major access roads to Damascus. Between them lies the Magruder Stream Valley and substantial residential development. The 1966 Transportation Plan proposes four connections between Ridge Road and Route 124. The revised Plan endorses three of the four crossings (see Proposed Transportation Map):

- P-4, Sweepstakes Road - this is an existing road;
- A-11A, a road originally proposed as part of the 1966 Plan by-pass (this Plan reduces the paving from 4 to 2 lanes). Although the majority of right-of-way for this road is already acquired, ~~although~~ there are drawbacks to this

road from an environmental viewpoint (steep slopes, in particular). ~~A-11A is important to long term transportation improvements in Damascus. When Woodfield Road is extended north of Route 108, A-11A will help divert through traffic from the business area and help relieve congestion along Ridge Road. This Plan recommends construction of A-11A to be programmed in accord with the extension of Woodfield Road (A-12).~~ Valley Park Drive, located just north of proposed A-11A, is unbuilt but dedicated along much of its length. It is designated a primary road and crosses the Magruder Valley in an area already filled and graded. Designating Valley Park Drive as a potential substitute for A-11A would make use of existing grading and filling and existing dedicated rights-of-way. More study is needed, however, to determine if the alignment is adequate to handle large volumes of traffic and whether additional right-of-way in approved subdivisions may be reserved if needed. To maintain Valley Park Drive as an alternative crossing to A-11A, this Plan recommends Valley Park Drive be designated an arterial rather than primary roadway. If further study supports A-11A as the preferred alignment, Valley Park Drive would be redesignated a primary. The Master Plan should be amended to reflect the final selected alignment, whether it is A-11A or Valley Park Drive.

#### DAMASCUS BUSINESS AREA PLAN, Page 49

This Plan reaffirms and plans for the continuation of the Damascus Business Area as the commercial center for northern Montgomery County and Western Howard County. In addition to providing typical shoppers goods, Damascus offers important farm-related products which help support the area's agriculture heritage. Farm-related commercial uses are specifically encouraged by this Plan.

The community has expressed a desire for a second shopping center location in the business area. ~~Two sites were proposed for public comment at the Planning Board Public Hearing. After hearing citizens' comments and after studying environmental, transportation and land use impacts, the Planning Board is recommending a shopping center site along Ridge Road (Site B). Both sites are shown for purposes of Public Hearing by the County Council; however, the Planning Board does endorse Site B. This Plan recommends a shopping area site along Ridge Road at the southern edge of the existing business area.~~

#### EXISTING CONDITIONS, Page 49

There are presently 71 acres of commercially zoned land in the business area. About 55 acres are actually developed; much of this acreage is not fully utilized.

The largest concentration of retail floor space is 130,000 square feet in the Damascus Shopping Center. Safeway is the major tenant; other occupants include a drug store, a hardware store, restaurants, the County library, clothing stores and other specialty shops. Of 42 stores in the shopping area, ~~11 are vacant, including a theatre and a store for a junior department store~~ many were vacant during the time this Plan was under study in 1982. Many causes were suggested at public meetings for the high vacancy rate, including poor access from Main Street and inconvenient Mall layout.

TABLE 4, DAMASCUS MARKET AREA, POPULATION AND SUPPORTABLE COMMERCIAL ACREAGE, Page 55

TABLE 4

<u>Damascus Market Area</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
Number of People*	12,730	14,000	15,460
Supportable Commercial Acreage**	<del>25-30 acres</del> <u>25-50 acres</u>	31-62 acres	41-82 acres

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A FUTURE SHOPPING AREA SITE, Page 56

Despite market forecasts, community residents have presented strong testimony that additional acreage should be planned to allow a second shopping area. The possibility of additional ~~Additional~~ competition, they feel, is needed to offer merchants an alternative to locating in Damascus Shopping Center and to spur design and building improvements in the Center.

~~In response to community testimony, the Preliminary Draft Plan included two alternative shopping center sites and land use configuration (see maps). Based on Public Hearing testimony and staff analysis, the Planning Board is recommending the site fronting Ridge Road just north of Damascus High School (Site B). This site is the preferred location for the following reasons:~~

- ~~The Ridge Road location (Site B), is preferable from an environmental viewpoint (see Environmental Comparison Table);~~
- ~~A pumping station will not be required to service Site B since it flows by gravity to the treatment plant;~~

~~The road network needed to service the Route 108 site (extension of Woodfield Road) will not be in place for many years, road improvements needed for Site B will be part of the development package; and~~

~~The site has excellent visibility which is important for merchandising.~~

In response to this testimony, this Plan recommends a site for a second but smaller shopping area. The proposed location is along Ridge Road at the southern edge of the Damascus business area much of which would otherwise be designated general commercial. This site has excellent visibility from Ridge Road and sewage will flow by gravity to the sewage treatment plant.

During the Plan process, another site was analyzed east of Damascus Shopping Center. This site was not selected because needed road improvements (the extension of Woodfield Road to Ridge Road) and sewerage facilities are not planned for 10 to 20 years. However, this Plan does recommend the use of this location for a shopping area in the future if development of the site along Ridge Road does not occur.

The type of shopping envisioned by this Plan is a grocery store and several small convenience shops. Only 80,000 square feet of floor area is recommended to ensure a scale of development compatible with the neighborhood; a regional-type shopping mall is not proposed.

#### PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A FUTURE SHOPPING AREA SITE, Shopping Center Development Criteria, Page 57 and 61

##### ~~Shopping Center~~ Commercial Development Criteria

The preparation of a Planned Development (PD) application should be guided by the following plan principles:

- Environmental disruption should be minimized (the topography at the rear of the site includes steep slopes and erodible soils);
- The design and layout should be in keeping with the character of Damascus and related to the existing commercial center;
- Proper traffic and pedestrian access should be included and the site should be linked to the Magruder Valley park;

- Retail floor area should not exceed 80,000 square feet (for purposes of comparison, Damascus Shopping Center is 130,000 square feet). This would require 12 acres of commercial zoning; and
- Office floor area should not exceed 10,000 square feet--
- ~~As much parking as possible should be located in the rear of the shopping center. This would maintain building frontage along the road.~~

The approval of the PD application would be conditional on the applicant meeting several design criteria including, but not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Extension of Bethesda Church Road from Ridge Road to Route 124;
- Construction of an additional lane on Route 27 (Ridge Road) to accommodate turning movements;
- Phasing of development of the shopping center in ~~accord~~ coordination with residential development (7 units per acre) so that a mix of commercial and housing occurs;
- ~~A building layout oriented to Ridge Road, with parking in the rear.~~
- ★ An on-site or central stormwater management facility which protects water quality and quantity in the Magruder Valley;
- A pedestrian pathway system that links the shopping center and the residential development to Magruder Valley parkland ~~and~~ and
- Appropriate buffering between commercial uses and the high school.

The relationship between the high school and the proposed shopping area is of particular concern to the School Board and to parents of students at Damascus High School and Damascus Elementary School. To help assure that the shopping center is developed with sensitivity to the close proximity of the high school and elementary school, the Plan recommends the following development and design criteria:

- to the maximum extent possible, residential development should be located between the high school and commercial uses;

- parking lots should be visible from nearby roads;
- buffering along Bethesda Church Road should be of such type and extent to channel pedestrian movement to the signalized intersection at Bethesda Church and Ridge Road;
- buffering along Bethesda Church Road should be in place prior to the completion of the shopping area;
- an anti-loitering program should be submitted as part of the PD application.

In reviewing the Planned Development application, the Planning Board will also seek input from the School Board and the principals of Damascus Elementary and Damascus High Schools regarding the appropriate mix of stores, lighting plans, and accessibility.

As noted, a major planning concern is the viability of the Damascus market to support a second shopping area. When a PD application is filed, staff will evaluate market conditions and the potential impact of the commercial development on existing businesses.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL COMPARISON OF SHOPPING CENTER SITES A AND B, Page 60

Delete table entitled, "Environmental Comparison of Shopping Center Sites A and B" in its entirety.

#### OTHER COMMERCIAL LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS, Page 62

##### The Damascus Shopping Center Area

The northeast section of the Business Area is dominated by the Damascus Shopping Center. The Center is partly vacant in part due to market conditions and, according to residents, in part due to mall design. As part of Plan implementation, staff will contact mall owners and managers to offer design assistance to increase the mall's attractiveness and to improve access and circulation.

Just north of the shopping center is a vacant 5-acre lot which has no public road access from Ridge Road on Route 108. This Plan recommends medium density residential homes and the shopping center. Commercial development is not proposed here but is channeled to Ridge Road, where the Plan proposes enough commercial land use to support a retail shopping center.

The Plan proposes a residential density of 6 8 units per acre on the site. A low intensity office building developed under C-T (Commercial Transitional) or O-M (Office, Moderate Intensity) zoning standards would be compatible if the project followed development standards in the RT-6 RT-8 (townhouse) zone regarding building mass, density, heights, setback and lot coverage. It should be noted that development of this site is dependent on road access which may not be available until Route 124 is extended north of Route 108.

A residential Planned Development Zone (PD-5) is recommended east of the Damascus Shopping Center. This area is not planned to develop until additional sewage treatment capacity is available (sometime beyond 1995) so as not to compete with development in the Magruder Valley. Review of an application for a PD-5 would include, but not be limited to the following development criteria:

- Extension of Route 124 north of Main Street along the length of the property;
- Construction of a pumping station to pump sewage into the Magruder Valley sewage system;
- Construction of on-site stormwater management facilities to protect water quality in the Patuxent River basin;
- Pedestrian and bicycle linkages to commercial areas; and
- If the proposed Ridge Road shopping area is not developed, this Plan would support commercial uses in the PD application.

Commercial uses in the PD would be appropriate if a market for additional commercial uses exists and if the shopping area along Ridge Road has not commercially developed.

#### OTHER COMMERCIAL LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS, Page 63

##### Magruder Valley Headwaters

The 1966 Plan recommends office, commercial and residential development (14 units per acre) in the Magruder Valley headwaters area.

The Draft Plan recommends the same land uses but reduces residential densities, reduces commercial acreage, and recommends site plan review of any development in this sensitive area.



Vacant land in the headwaters area consists of two parcels: a 6 acre tract (the Acme property), an interior parcel that lies behind existing commercial uses along Ridge Road; and a 5 acre tract to the rear of ~~Warfield Chevrolet Sales~~ the Damascus Motor Company.

The Plan recommends residential, rather than commercial zoning, on both properties and proposes conservation areas along two streams. A density of 8 units per acre is recommended.

~~The vacant Warfield-Chevrolet property is wedged between the sales department and the Magruder Branch. Residential development is unlikely given the configuration of the land, but General Commercial zoning (G-2) is undesirable because it does not allow the level of site plan review that is needed to assure protection of this sensitive headwaters area. This Plan recommends, therefore, residential zoning. However, an application by the owner for C-3 zoning (Highway Oriented Commercial), which does allow the Planning Board site plan review and which would permit the expansion of the existing automobile sales business, would be consistent with this Plan subject to, but not limited to, the following conditions:~~

- ~~- a conservation buffer along the stream is preserved;~~
- ~~- stormwater management is adequately addressed; and~~
- ~~- a C-3 application is filed for the entire tract (including the existing show room and carport).~~

~~This recommendation strikes a balance between the property owner's desire to expand his business at some future date and Plan objectives to protect steep slopes and stream valleys from development.~~

Vacant property (approximately 5 acres) lies between the Damascus Motor Company and the Magruder Stream Valley. This Plan recommends enough commercial zoning (no more than 3 acres) to allow expansion of the service department but proposes the balance of acreage be dedicated as parkland to protect steep slopes and stream valleys from development and to enhance pedestrian access to the business area from the proposed Magruder Stream Valley Park.

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL LAND USE POLICIES IN THE TRANSITION AREAS, Page 70

9. ~~Bethesda Church Road Area~~

~~The Bethesda Church Road transition area is predominantly rural and agricultural. Residential development has occurred north of the road, but the land use pattern to the south, consists of farmland and woodland.~~

To allow a small amount of residential infill north of Bethesda Church Road, the Plan recommends a density of 1 house per 2 acres. Soils here are poor for septic tanks (sewerage lines are being extended to nearby Lewis Drive to relieve failing septic tanks) so residential development should be limited. This area is inappropriate for agricultural preservation because of the existing development pattern and because of the rough terrain.

~~South of Bethesda Church Road, the predominant land use is agriculture. This area, which is discussed in more detail in the Agricultural Preservation Chapter, includes a long-standing family farm operation and is traversed by a tributary to the Little Bennett, a trout bearing waterway. The Plan recommends 388 acres be included in the County-wide agricultural reserve area.~~

~~4. Ridge Road, South of Damascus and Route 124, South of Damascus~~

2. Rural Entryway along Ridge Road and Woodfield Road

\* \* \*

~~5. 3. Woodfield Road and Route 108 Transition Area~~

\* \* \*

#### RURAL OPEN SPACE LAND USE POLICIES IN THE TRANSITION AREA

As shown on the Transition Areas map, Rural Open Space densities (1 house per 5 acres) are proposed as a transition from residential land uses to the Agricultural Reserve. This policy is discussed in the Agricultural and Open Space Preservation chapter.

#### TRANSFERABLE DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR) RECEIVING AREAS, Page 73

The proposed Agriculture Reserve area in Damascus (P.A. 11) consists of 970 ~~1500~~ acres. Development rights are created at the rate of 1 development right per 5 acres. Thus, a "pool" of 194 development rights would be created by the proposed Agricultural Reserve area (see Agriculture and Open Space Preservation Section).

In accord with Planning Board policy to examine all Master Plans under review for TDR receiving areas, this Plan proposed two alternative Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) receiving areas where development rights could be transferred to increase density. These alternative areas are located on the southern edge of Damascus (PA 11). These properties help form a "rural" entry way along Ridge Road and Route 124. Increasing density through the TDR program may reduce the rural character of these particular parcels, but it will help strengthen the larger, County-wide agricultural reserve. This trade-off is proposed to further the public interest, namely, preservation of farmland. All TDR subdivision plans will be carefully reviewed to help ensure the rural residential character of the entry way is retained.

These receiving areas, if fully developed in accord with TDR program, would absorb development rights. Density increases in two of these Receiving Areas will require sewage treatment capacity. As discussed in the Implementation Section, most of the treatment capacity in Damascus has been allocated; many allocations, however, have not been used so the Treatment Plant is not operating near its capacity. TDR receiving areas would simply compete for recaptured allocation. The third TDR receiving area should be eligible for public water in accord with the TDR program.

The proposed TDR receiving areas are:

Receiving Area A: Cedar Grove Area (91 acres)

- Present Zoning - Rural (1 house per 5 acres)
- Proposed Base Density Without TDR - Rural Residential (1 house per 2 acres)
- Proposed TDR Optional Density - 2 units/acre (half-acre lots)
- Maximum Density Increase With TDR - 135 houses

This parcel is part of the low-density entryway proposed for Damascus and is not proposed for public sewer. If ~~designated~~ developed as a receiving area, density in this property could increase to 2 units per acre. ~~and be eligible for a sewer service category change.~~

#### TRANSFERABLE DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR) RECEIVING AREAS, Page 78

Although this Plan designates the entire 126 acres as a receiving area, the Planning Board recognizes only a portion of the property flows by gravity to the sewage treatment plant. This Plan does not endorse the construction of a pumping station to serve the property but the acreage which can be served by gravity can only be determined by detailed engineering studies which are not part of this Master Plan. These studies should

be undertaken at time of subdivision. Only that portion of the property which can be served by gravity is recommended as a receiving area.

~~A third receiving area located north of Watkins Road and south of Damascus Regional Park, is being studied by staff. — It is being included for purposes of Public Hearing. More detailed study will precede Council work sessions. This property is bounded to the north by Damascus Regional Park and to the south by Agriculture Reserve land. Owners of the Agriculture Reserve land also own the 213 acres north of Watkins Road. Allowing the transfer of development rights would permit an "internal" transfer from one portion of the property to another.~~

#### AGRICULTURAL AND OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION, Page 80

##### Kings Valley Road

~~Most of the 680 acres proposed for Agricultural Reserve are part of a family dairy farm operation (the King family). The land area is heavily wooded and includes a tributary of the Little Bennett Creek, a natural trout waterway.~~

Because of its long-standing agricultural character, its physical separation from nearby residential development and its common boundary with agricultural land identified in the Agricultural and Rural Open Space as critical, this Plan recommends the Kings Valley area be included in the Agricultural Reserve, approximately 325 acres be included in the Agriculture Reserve and 170 acres be designated for Rural Cluster zoning (1 house per 5 acres, cluster option).

#### AGRICULTURAL AND OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION, Page 82

##### Howard Chapel Road

Farms operate to the north and south of Howard Chapel Drive. The major farms in the area are 238 and 104 acres respectively. The northern portions of these two farms abut residential development (½ to 2 acre lots) along Gue Road but the southern acreage (340 acres) is undeveloped and adjoins farmland in the Agriculture Reserve area. Two acre densities (with a cluster option) are recommended north of Howard Chapel Drive. Rural Cluster zoning is recommended south of Howard Chapel Drive to provide a transition from 2-acre residential development to the Agriculture Reserve. ~~Agriculture Reserve is recommended south of Howard Chapel Road as a continuation of farmland preservation policies in the Patuxent Watershed.~~

## RURAL OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS, Page 83

~~To east~~ East of Woodfield Road and south of Route 108, extensive development has occurred on 1 to 2 acre lots. This Plan continues the rural residential character of this area.

The only density change involves land to the east of Great Seneca Creek. Most of the remaining vacant land adjoins the Creek; Rural Cluster (1 house per 5 acres) rather than 2 acre lots is recommended to reflect environmental constraints to development and to encourage clustering away from Great Seneca Creek.

This Plan recommends that subdivision applications already on file in this area at time of Plan adoption be permitted to proceed through the subdivision process when proposed development is generally in accord with Rural Cluster densities.

## HOW CAN LOCAL RECREATION NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY BE MET, Page 88

This proposed Plan recommends that local recreation centers and parks proposed on the outskirts of Damascus by the 1966 Plan be eliminated and that future local park development focus on close-in sites like Moyer Road.

Another park that is being re-evaluated as to need is Oak Ridge Conservation Park. About 64 acres are in public ownership; another 12 acres are proposed for acquisition (this compares to 132 acres proposed in the 1966 Plan). Oak Ridge is primarily forested and includes a tributary of Little Bennett Creek. Development would be conservation oriented with primarily passive recreation facilities (hiker-biker and nature trails; picnic and playground areas). Oak Ridge would provide a park link between Damascus and Little Bennett Regional Park. The need for this park will be explored in more detail in light of the final recommendations of the Master Plan for surrounding land use.

### Little Bennett Stream Valley Park

This stream valley park follows Little Bennett Creek and lies upstream from Little Bennett Regional Park. This is a significant natural resource area because of Little Bennett Creek's high water quality and its attributes as a natural trout stream (brown trout reproduction). All efforts should be made to protect the natural environment in this stream valley area, as well as protecting the migration routes for wildlife in and out of Little Bennett Regional Park.

The Park taking line identifies approximately 115 acres in this stream valley park. A sizeable portion of this acreage in the park taking line is from one property, the King Farm, totalling approximately 75 acres. Every effort will be made to negotiate for a scenic easement, without public cost, on this portion of the stream valley park area if two objectives can be met: (1) public access for future trail system through the property, and (2) the conservation criteria usually associated with stream valley parkland, which should also provide for protection against over grazing and over cropping.

CURRENT AND PROJECTED SCHOOL ENROLLMENT: 1980-1985 - DAMASCUS MASTER PLAN AREA, Substitute the following Table for the Table on Page 90

CURRENT AND PROJECTED SCHOOL ENROLLMENT: 1980-1996  
DAMASCUS MASTER PLAN AREA

School	Enrollment Capacity	Enrollment By Year			
		1982-83	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96
Woodfield Elementary	380	431	442	Restudy*	
Cedar Grove Elementary	329	266	295	361	390
Damascus Elementary	593	498	469	509	547
Baker Junior High	730	610	535	463	521
Damascus High School	1,180	1,120	1,148	776	778

\* Restudy for possible boundary changes or building addition if overutilized.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO ALLOW CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT ON PUBLIC WATER IN RE-2C ZONE, Section 59-C-1.522, Page 96

59-C -1.5 CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

59-C-1.52 Special Requirements

59-C-1.522 Community water and sewer. No land shall be subdivided under this method and no building permit shall be issued unless the resulting development will be connected to community water and sewer. The only exception to this requirement is the RE-2C zone where land that is not served by community sewer may be subdivided under this method if it meets all of the following conditions:

- (a) An approved and adopted master plan or sector plan specifically recommends cluster development with community water but not community sewer.
- (b) The resulting development will be connected to community water.
- (c) The resulting development meets all of the requirements for individual sewerage systems outlined in the most recent County Comprehensive Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan and Executive Regulation No. 5-79 on Individual Water Supply and Sewage Disposal Systems.

The RE-2C zone permits cluster development on parcels of land containing less than 50 acres only upon the Planning Board's finding that cluster development is desirable from an environmental perspective. Such a finding would support the Plan's intent to encourage property owners to cluster away from environmentally sensitive steep slopes and towards ridge lines.

### WATER AND SEWER SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS, Allocation Policy, Page 104

#### Allocation Policy

2. Two areas proposed as TDR receiving areas are recommended for a base density of 1 house per 2 acres. No public sewer is proposed at this base

density. By participating in the TDR program, developers would be eligible for a density increase to 2 houses per acre (half-acre lots) and public sewer.

3. Approximately 213 acres south of Damascus Regional Park are proposed as a TDR receiving area. The base density proposed is 1 house per 2 acres without public water or public sewer. To encourage the transfer of development rights, a TDR density of 1 house per 1 acre with public water is proposed. Sewer service is not recommended.

APPENDIX A, Add assessment of bypass alternatives undertaken during preparation of Master Plan.

#### GENERAL

All figures, tables, and maps are to be revised where appropriate to reflect County Council changes to the Final Draft Master Plan for Damascus and to reflect the FY 1982-87 Capital Improvements Program. The text is to be edited as necessary to achieve clarity and consistency, to update factual information, and to convey the actions of the County Council. All identifying references pertain to the Damascus Master Plan document dated November, 1981.

A True Copy.



MCPB            82-8  
M-NCPPC        82-12

## RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, by virtue of Article 66D, Annotated Code of Maryland is authorized and empowered to make, adopt, and from time to time amend, extend, and add to a General Plan for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, pursuant to said law, held a duly advertised public hearing on September 21, 1981, on the Preliminary Draft Damascus Master Plan, being also a proposed amendment to the 1966 Master Plan for Damascus, as amended in 1971; the Functional Master Plan for the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space, October 1980; the Patuxent River Watershed Park Master Plan; the Clarksburg and Vicinity Master Plan, 1969; the Master Plan for Historic Preservation, 1979; the General Plan for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District; and the Master Plan of Highways within Montgomery County, Maryland; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, upon due deliberation and consideration did approve a Final Draft Damascus Master Plan for submittal to the Montgomery County Council, with the recommendation that Council approve said Final Draft Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Council, sitting as the District Council for that portion of the Maryland-Washington Regional District, lying within Montgomery County, pursuant to said laws, held a duly advertised public hearing on February 10, 1982 on the Final Draft Damascus Master Plan, and on May 18, 1982 approved said Plan by Resolution Number 9-1781;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Montgomery County Planning Board and The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission do hereby adopt the Damascus Master Plan consistent with County Council Resolution Number 9-1781; said Plan being an amendment to the 1966 Master Plan for Damascus, as amended in 1971; the Functional Master Plan for the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space, October 1980; the Patuxent River Watershed Park Master Plan; the Clarksburg and Vicinity Master Plan, 1968; the Master Plan for Historic Preservation, 1979; the General

MCPB            82-8  
M-NCPPC        82-12

Plan for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District; and the Master Plan of Highways within Montgomery County, Maryland; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this copy of said Plan shall be certified by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and filed with the clerks of the Circuit Courts 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 Granke, seconded by Commissioner Krahnke and Commissioners Brennan, Christeller, Granke, Heimann, and Krahnke voting in favor of the notion, at its regular meeting held on Thursday, June 3, 1982 in Silver Spring, Maryland

\* \* \* \*

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on motion of Commissioner Christeller, seconded by Commissioner Shoch, with Commissioners Brennan, Brown, Christeller, Cumberland, Dukes, Granke, Heimann, Keller, Krahnke, and Shoch voting in favor of the motion at its regular meeting held on Wednesday, June 9, 1982 in Prince George's County, Maryland.

Thomas H. Countee, Jr.  
Executive Director