

# **DAMASCUS MASTER PLAN**

## **Planning Board Draft**

A comprehensive amendment to the Damascus Master Plan, 1982, and the 1993 Amendment to the Damascus Master Plan. It also amends 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  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760

To be approved by:  
**THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL**

To be adopted by:  
**THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**

**ABSTRACT**

**TITLE:** Damascus Master Planning Board Draft

**AUTHOR:** The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

**SUBJECT:** Comprehensive amendment to the Damascus Master Plan, 1982

**DATE:** August 2005

**PLANNING AGENCY:** The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760

**SOURCE OF COPIES:** The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760

**ABSTRACT:** This Master Plan is a comprehensive AMEMDMENT of land use, housing, zoning, transportation, environmental resources, and community facilities in the planning area.

**CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL AND ADOPTION**

## **THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**

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.

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission encourages the involvement and participation of individuals with disabilities, and its facilities are accessible. For assistance with special needs (e.g. large print materials, listening devices, sign language interpretation, and others), please contact the Community Relations Office, 301-495-4600 or TDD 301-495-1331.

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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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