

## **Bikeways**

The bikeway network within Four Corners should be expanded to improve the existing system and to encourage its use as an alternative mode of travel. The recommended bikeway network provides a local system within Four Corners and connects to the regional network in and through Eastern Montgomery County, providing connections to public facilities, Metro stations, parks, schools, and commercial areas.

### *Objective*

- Develop a local and regional bikeway network that connects important destinations and provides an option to motorized travel.

### *Recommendations*

- Expand the local bikeway network. Table 3 shows the proposed classification for each bikeway and Figure 20 shows the existing and proposed bikeway network.
- Include bikeways in options that are being considered to provide safe access to the Blair High School site.
- Construct a Class I bikeway around the new Blair High School to serve the school and local neighborhoods.
- Implement a bikeway sign program within State rights-of-way, similar to the County program.

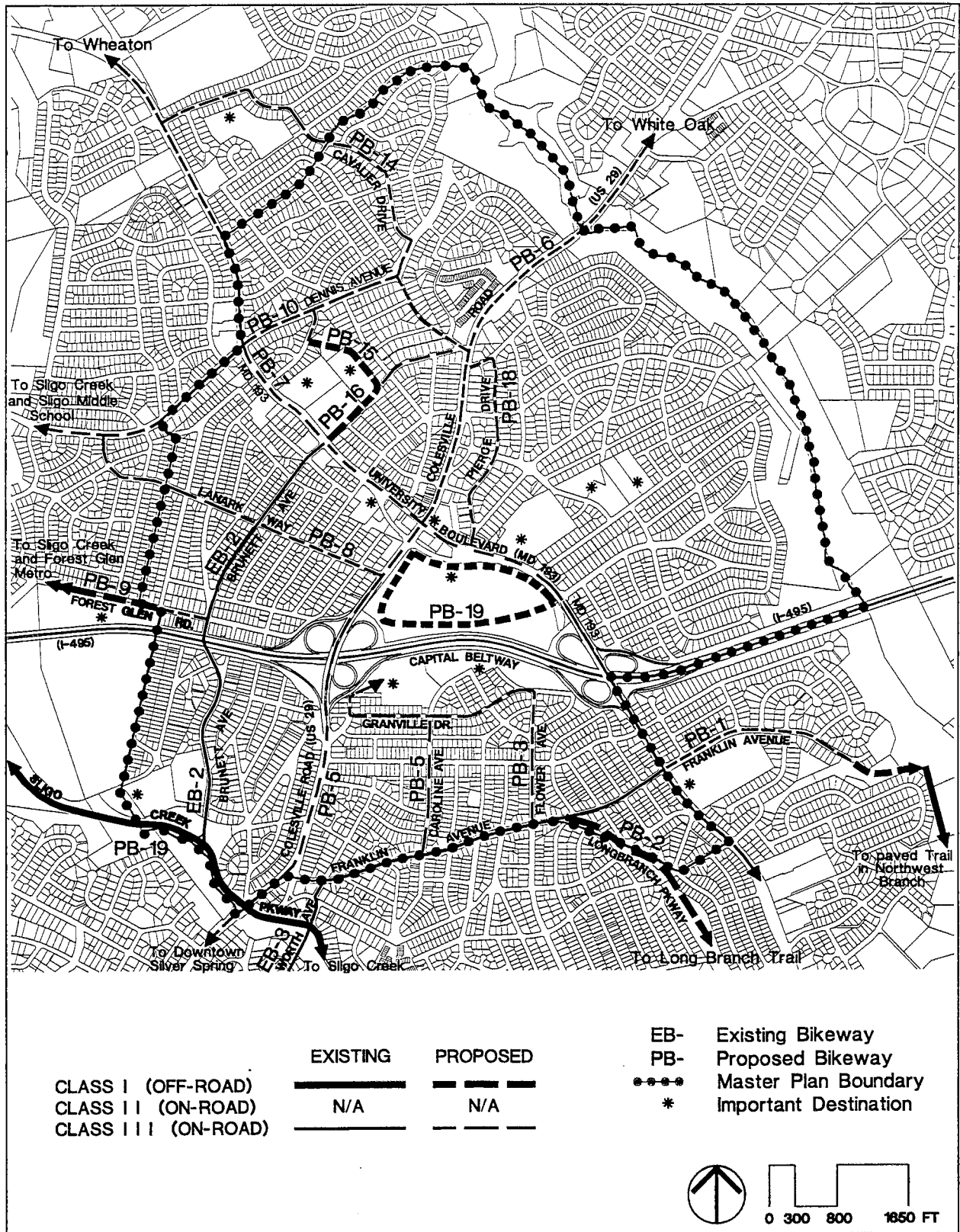


Table 3

**BIKEWAY PLAN IN FOUR CORNERS**

ROUTE	NAME	LOCATION	CLASS	STATUS
EB-1	Sligo Creek Park Trail	Along Western Boundary Line	I	Existing
EB-2	Brunett Avenue	Sligo Creek Trail to University Boulevard (MD 193)	III	Existing
EB-3	Worth Avenue	Franklin Avenue to Sligo Creek Trail	III	Existing
EB-4	Franklin Avenue	Worth Avenue to University Boulevard	III	Existing
PB-1	Franklin Avenue	University Boulevard to Northwest Branch Trail	I + III	Class III from University Boulevard to end of Franklin Avenue. Class I from Franklin Avenue into Northwest Branch to connect with existing Class I.
PB-2	Long Branch Park Trail	Franklin Avenue to Existing Class I north of Piney Branch Road	I	
PB-3	Flower Avenue	Franklin Avenue to Granville Drive	III	
PB-4	Granville Drive	Hastings Drive to Flower Avenue	III	
PB-4	Hastings Drive	Granville Drive to YMCA	III	
PB-5	Caroline Avenue	Granville Drive to Franklin Avenue	III	
PB-6	Colesville Road (US 29)	Sligo Creek Parkway to Northwest Branch	III	
PB-7	University Boulevard (MD 193)	Melbourne Avenue to Eisner Street	III	
PB-8	Lanark Way	Colesville Road to Dennis Avenue (outside Western Boundary Line)	III	
PB-9	Forest Glen Road (MD 192)	Dallas Avenue to Brunett Avenue	III	
PB-10	Dennis Avenue	Sligo Creek Parkway to Lockridge Drive	III	

EB - Existing Bikeway

PB - Proposed Bikeway

Table 3 (Cont'd.)

**BIKEWAY PLAN IN FOUR CORNERS**

<b>ROUTE</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>CLASS</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
PB-13	Eastwood Avenue	Colesville Road (US 29) to Dennis Avenue	III	
PB-14	Cavalier Drive	Lockridge Drive to Chiswell Lane	III	
PB-14	Chiswell Lane	Cavalier Drive to Caddington Avenue	III	
PB-14	Caddington Avenue	Chiswell Lane to University Boulevard	III	
PB-15	Royalton Road	Dennis Avenue to Northwood-Four Corners Local Park entrance off Royalton Road	III	
PB-15	Northwood-Four Corners Local Park	Royalton Road to Edgewood Avenue	I	
PB-16	Brunett Avenue	University Boulevard to Edgewood Avenue	I	Brunett Avenue is not a through street; achieve through subdivision.
PB-17	Southwood Avenue	Edgewood Avenue to Colesville Road	III	
PB-18	Eastmoor Drive	Colesville Road (US 29) to Pierce Drive	III	Eastmoor Drive is not a through street; easement may be required.
PB-18	Pierce Drive	Eastmoor Drive to Lexington Drive	III	
PB-18	Lexington Drive	Pierce Drive to University Boulevard	III	
PB-19	Blair High School	Internal bike path	I	
EB - Existing Bikeway		PB - Proposed Bikeway		

## **VI. COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

Public facilities and services are the building blocks of community. Fire, rescue, and police services ensure safety. Public schools, day care, and elderly services address the needs of all generations. Parks, recreation centers, libraries, and post offices help build a community among people with shared interests, needs, and values. These facilities and services provide a tangible measure of a community's character and value. Frequent shared use of public facilities in a community creates a feeling of belonging and commitment among local residents.

The Four Corners community derives much of its appeal and attractiveness from its proximity to natural resources, particularly the nearby stream valley parks, recreational facilities, and the urban forest throughout the residential neighborhoods. This section describes existing facilities and makes several recommendations for additional resources. This Plan recommends that the physical connections between the community's resources and the residents be strengthened and improved. This is largely achieved through the sidewalk and bikeway recommendations in the Transportation section of this Plan. (See pages 47 and 51.)

### ***Community Facilities Goal***

***Provide community facilities to meet the human service, recreation, security, educational, and other needs of the community.***

### **Parks, Recreation, and Open Space**

There are approximately 140 acres of M-NCPPC parkland within the Four Corners Master Plan area. Stream valley parks form the foundation of the park system, providing natural areas in proximity to residences for hiking, fishing, picnicking, and enjoying nature. Ninety-one acres of the Northwest Branch and 18 acres of the Sligo Creek stream valley parks are within the Master Plan area. In addition, five local parks and a neighborhood conservation area in Four Corners total 31 acres.

This Plan recommends that the six-acre property at 315 University Boulevard, formerly a private school, be acquired for parkland. Acquisition of this property will allow an expansion of the existing local park, North Four Corners, and will provide additional active recreational resources in this heavily populated area. It will also provide open space and park access along University Boulevard. Connections between the proposed new park site and the existing local park should be accomplished with pedestrian walkways and not a road extension through the properties or from the residential streets that terminate at the property line. In addition to this proposed park site, a portion of the Blair High School property will be dedicated to community recreational use. Parkland and other recreational resources in Four Corners are reviewed below and shown on Figure 21 on page 57.

Indian Spring Terrace Local Park is 11.4 acres located in the Indian Spring neighborhood adjacent to the Beltway and the Silver Spring YMCA. The park contains a softball field, a basketball court, two tennis courts, a playground, and a recreation building. A portion of the park is forested.

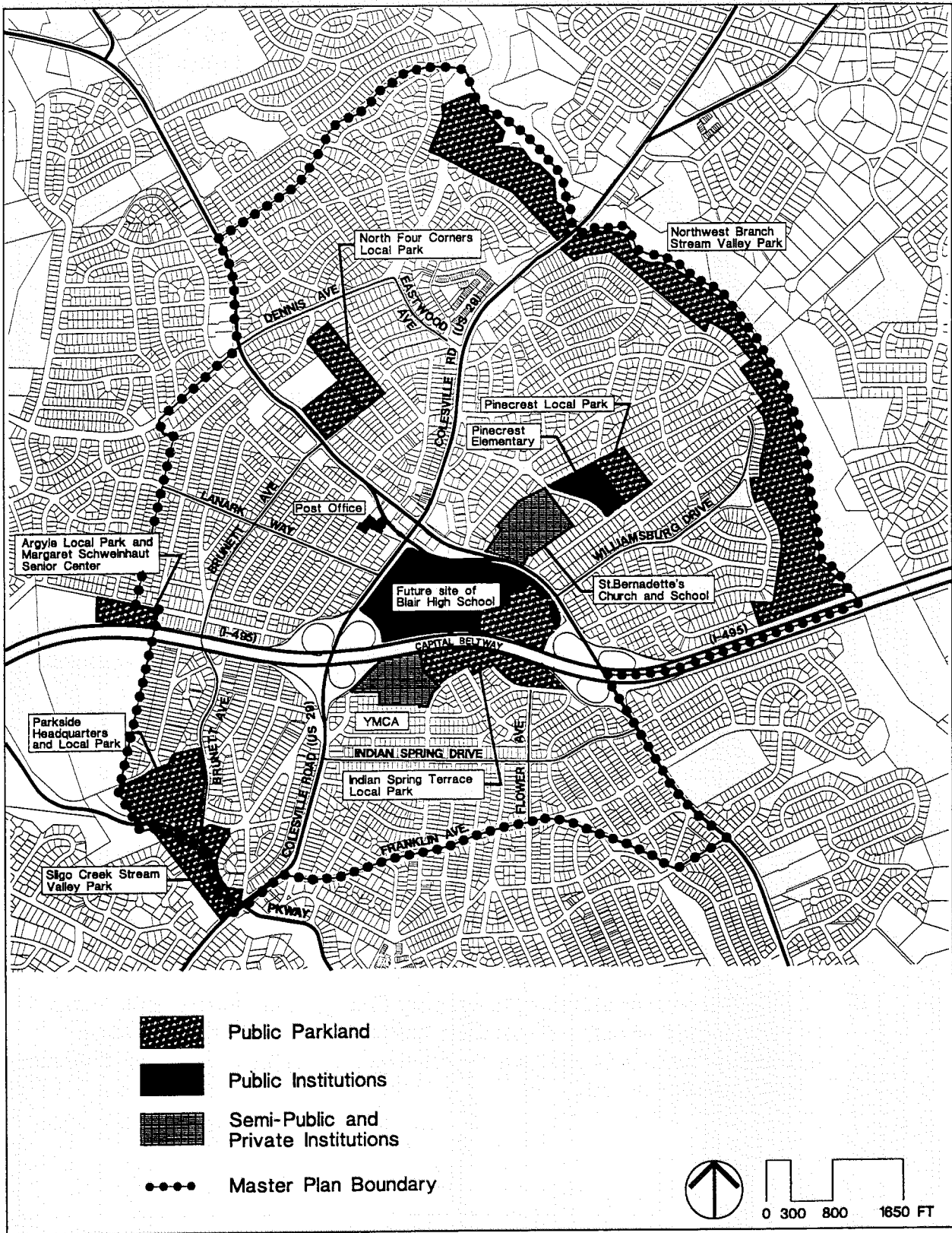
North Four Corners Local Park is 7.9 acres located in the Northwood-Four Corners neighborhood near the Oaks Retirement Community and the currently vacant adjacent property (315 University Boulevard), which is recommended for parkland. The existing park contains a softball field, playground, football/soccer overlay, basketball court, two tennis courts, and a recreation building.

Parkside Local Park is 6.5 acres located in the North Hills of Sligo neighborhood at the Parkside Headquarters site off Brunett Avenue. The park contains a playground and a multi-use court. Replacement of the play equipment and lighting is scheduled for fiscal year 1996.

Pinecrest Local Park is 5.6 acres located adjacent to Pinecrest Elementary School in the Woodmoor-Pinecrest neighborhood. The park contains a softball field, playground, football/soccer overlay, basketball court, two tennis courts, and a recreation building.

Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park includes a total of 1,177 acres, 91 of which are located in the Four Corners Master Plan area. The Northwest Branch forms the northern boundary of Four Corners, separating the Master Plan area from White Oak. The entire park parallels the course of the Northwest Branch stream and runs from the Prince George's County line to Layhill Road in Montgomery County. Along Colesville Road in Four Corners (and visible from the road), the Northwest Branch stream is dammed, creating a lake approximately 80 feet wide. North of the dam the stream is relatively deep and placid. Adjacent slopes are very steep and the floodplain is squeezed into a narrow corridor paralleling the stream. Trails parallel both sides of the stream, with informal connections to the adjacent residential neighborhoods in Four Corners and White Oak.

The topography of the Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park between Colesville Road and the Beltway becomes quite rugged as the stream cuts through the heart of the geographic fall line between the Piedmont and the Coastal Plain. This portion of the park is among the most dramatic and beautiful scenery in the County. A drop in elevation of 80 feet occurs in less than a half mile, creating topography more akin to the mountains than an urbanized, built-up community near the Beltway. The stream is squeezed between very steep slopes so that only a minimal floodplain has developed. The stream course is covered with rocks and huge boulders, some that are 8 and 10 feet in diameter. The stream is broken into many small rivulets, each finding a different route through the rocky ravine. Hundreds of miniature waterfalls and cascades drown out the sounds of nearby traffic. Many trails from the adjacent residential neighborhoods descend along both banks to the stream. South of the Beltway, the stream levels off and the steep slopes give way to a more gentle topography.



Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park includes 375 acres, 18 of which are in the western portion of the Four Corners Master Plan area near the M-NCPPC Parkside Headquarters. This linear stream valley park stretches from the city of Takoma Park to Wheaton Regional Park. Unlike the Northwest Branch park, which is mostly undeveloped, Sligo Creek has a number of active recreation facilities within the stream valley park, all of which are connected by a paved hiker-biker trail that runs the length of the stream valley. This hiker-biker trail is one of the most heavily used in the park system.

Hastings Neighborhood Conservation Area is .42 acres located at Colesville Road and Hastings Drive near the entrance to the YMCA in Indian Spring. The Hastings Neighborhood Conservation Area is planted with grass and trees that are maintained by Montgomery County Parks. Recently planted trees provide a barrier between Colesville Road and the Indian Spring residences along Hastings Drive.

In addition to County parkland in Four Corners, the Silver Spring YMCA is located off Hastings Drive on a 9.5-acre site in the Indian Spring neighborhood. The YMCA site was originally the Indian Spring Country Club, built in the mid-1920s. In operation since 1959, the YMCA is a community focal point and a recreational resource for Four Corners and the surrounding Silver Spring neighborhoods. The YMCA has attempted to meet the needs of the community by providing indoor and outdoor swimming pools, tennis courts, an indoor gym, physical fitness classes, counseling programs, summer camp programs, and year-round child day care. In 1993, the child day care program was expanded from 41 to 150 children and a new 8,400-square-foot center was built.

### *Recommendations*

- This Plan recommends that all existing parkland be preserved and maintained.
- This Plan recommends acquisition of the six-acre property at 315 University Boulevard for parkland.
- This Plan recommends that a portion of the Blair High School site be developed for community use.
- This Plan recommends preserving the special scenic and habitat features of the gorge and torrent section of the Northwest Branch south of Colesville Road and recognizing it as a valuable County resource.
- This Plan recommends that Montgomery County Parks work with the Indian Spring neighborhood to consider options for alternate use of the Hastings Neighborhood Conservation area, including planting the entire parcel with trees or other appropriate uses.



## Libraries

A neighborhood library operated out of a storefront in the Woodmoor Shopping Center in Four Corners until 1992, when the County decided not to renew the library's lease. The library had been an important community focal point and there was great disappointment among residents when the facility closed.

The closest public library to Four Corners is the Silver Spring Library at 8901 Colesville Road, near downtown Silver Spring. It is classified as a community library, serving a four-mile service area. Other area libraries, all within three miles of Four Corners, include Wheaton Regional Library at 11701 Georgia Avenue, White Oak community library at 11701 New Hampshire Avenue, and Long Branch community library at 8800 Garland Avenue. All of these facilities have convenient parking and bus service is available from Four Corners.

### *Recommendation*

- Consideration should be given to providing community access to the new Blair High School media center (library) during non-school hours.

## Public Schools

In 1986 when the *Sector Plan for Four Corners and Vicinity* was completed, school enrollments had been declining County-wide. The Four Corners Elementary School on University Boulevard was closed, renovated, and reused for retirement housing. Ten years later, school enrollments have been increasing steadily due to continued high numbers of births and an increasing number of families moving into the County. At this time, school enrollments are substantially higher in the lower grades, but as students get older enrollment in the upper grades will increase. By 1998, County-wide enrollment is expected to reach 133,000, which will be the largest enrollment since 1972. Between the years 2000 and 2010, peak enrollment will exceed 140,000 students.

Students in the Four Corners Master Plan area are within the Blair Cluster. Some Four Corners public school K-2 students attend Montgomery Knolls Elementary School at 807 Daleview Drive. Montgomery Knolls also has Head Start and magnet programs. The school was built in 1952 and modernized in 1989. Some students in grades 3-6 attend Pinecrest Elementary School at 210 Woodmoor Drive. Pinecrest, originally constructed in 1943, was substantially modernized in 1992. Pinecrest offers a science magnet program. Some public school K-6 students in the Four Corners area attend Forest Knolls Elementary School at 10830 Eastwood Avenue.

Public school students in grades 7-8 currently attend Eastern Middle School at 300 University Boulevard or Takoma Park Middle School at 7611 Piney Branch Road. Eastern Middle School was built in 1951 and modernized in 1976. Students in grades 9-12 currently attend Blair High School on Wayne Avenue.

Blair High School, among the oldest schools in the County, was constructed in 1934. Student enrollment at Blair has exceeded capacity for several years. In 1994, the County Council voted to build a new Blair High School in Four Corners, which is scheduled to open in September 1998.

(See page 20.) Blair High School on Wayne Avenue will become a middle school and will open in 1998, increasing the number of middle schools in the cluster from two to three. At that time, the sixth grade classes will move from the elementary schools to the middle schools, which will alleviate some overcrowding in the elementary schools.

## **Post Office**

Postal services are available at the Woodmoor Branch Post Office at 110 University Boulevard in Four Corners. The post office was originally located in the Woodmoor Shopping Center and moved to its current location in 1961. Parking at and access to this post office are very poor. There are only 10 spaces in the customer parking lot. Based on today's standards, there should be 46 parking spaces for this facility. The Postal Service rents parking spaces for postal employees from the adjacent Safeway. Ingress and egress to the customer parking lot is wide enough to allow only one vehicle to pass at a time, which results in traffic backing up on University Boulevard. In addition, the small turning radius at the entrance makes it difficult for vehicles to exit onto University Boulevard without swinging into two traffic lanes.

The post office interior space is also inadequate. To address the overcrowded and outdated conditions at Woodmoor and other Silver Spring post offices, the Postal Service has located a new facility, the Silver Spring Carrier Annex, at West\*Farm Industrial Park off US 29. All of the sorting and distribution functions at the Woodmoor Post Office have been relocated to the new annex. Retail services -- post office boxes, service counters, vending machines -- will continue at the Woodmoor Branch. The new carrier annex will address the interior space problems, but the Postal Service has no plans to improve vehicular access and parking.

### *Recommendation*

- This Plan recommends that the Woodmoor Post Office remain in Four Corners. If redevelopment occurs on adjacent commercial property, the Postal Service should consider negotiating with adjoining commercial landowners to improve vehicular access and parking at the post office site. When all distribution functions are removed from this facility, the Postal Service should designate the rear area for patron parking.

## **Public Safety**

Fire and basic life support emergency medical services are provided to the Four Corners area by the Silver Spring Volunteer Fire Department Station 16, located at University Boulevard and Williamsburg Drive. The fire station will continue at this location. Additional coverage for auto accidents, larger fire and rescue incidents, and advanced life support is provided by other Silver Spring Volunteer Fire Department stations, the Hillandale Volunteer Fire Department, the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department, and the Wheaton Rescue Squad.

Fire and rescue apparatus use the signal at Williamsburg Drive to exit Station 16. Access to the new Blair High School from University Boulevard also will be aligned with Williamsburg Drive.

This intersection must be carefully designed to ensure that there are no conflicts among fire and rescue apparatus, school buses, and other vehicles accessing the school, the fire station, or the Woodmoor neighborhood at this location.

Police services for Four Corners are provided by the Montgomery County Police, Silver Spring District Station, which is located at 801 Sligo Avenue near downtown Silver Spring.

### *Recommendations*

- This Plan recommends careful redesign of the intersection of University Boulevard and Williamsburg Drive to accommodate school buses, school traffic, fire station vehicles, and local neighborhood access.
- This Plan supports the community policing goals of the Montgomery County Department of Police.

## **Day Care Services**

There are several child day care services in the Four Corners area. The Silver Spring YMCA provides year-round child day care for up to 150 children and runs summer camp programs. The Four Corners Community Nursery program at Marvin Memorial United Methodist Church provides part-time child care during the school year. There are no current plans to provide additional child day care facilities in Four Corners.

## **Greenways**

Greenways are linear open spaces set aside for recreation and conservation uses. Greenways link people, communities, and the natural environment. The greenway system is not a regulatory or land acquisition program. It is a unifying approach that uses existing regulatory and/or voluntary programs to create a network of green spaces in the County and throughout the state. The stream valley parks form the core of the greenway system.

The greenway connectors are major pedestrian and/or bikeway connections that, although they may contain varying amounts of or no green space, are especially important to provide access to greenways. In some places the connectors cross private land where property owners have granted access, as is the case where the Trail Riders of Today (TROT) negotiated easements for public access along specific routes.

The greenways in the Four Corners Master Plan are part of a larger system linked to surrounding master plan areas. Most of the natural environment in Four Corners is within the existing park system. The Northwest Branch, Sligo Creek, and Long Branch stream valley parks are linear corridors of woodland that provide for continuous movement of wildlife associated with instream and streamside habitats, as well as aid in the protection of stream quality. These same parks provide recreation and circulation for pedestrians and bicyclists. Designating these three stream valley parks as greenways will enhance habitat protection, ensure compatible public access, and

provide integral linkages to a larger greenway system that serves surrounding areas. Figure 22 shows the proposed greenways and proposed greenway connectors in Four Corners. Greenway connectors link pedestrians and bicyclists between two or more greenways. For example, Franklin Avenue is a greenway connector because it provides access between all three of the greenways proposed in Four Corners.

### *Objective*

- Expand recreational access between natural areas and neighborhoods in an environmentally suitable manner while protecting and restoring stream valley habitat.

### *Recommendations*

- Designate the Northwest Branch, Sligo Creek, and Long Branch stream valley parks as greenways and provide appropriate signs.
- Designate Dennis Avenue and Franklin Avenue as greenway connectors that link the greenways in Four Corners and provide appropriate signs on these streets.
- Examine park systems to identify potential additional greenways and evaluate options for habitat enhancement.
- Examine homeowner association and community open space property that lies within stream valleys and evaluate options for acquisition of greenways, or for enhancement and preservation.
- Identify interest groups to maintain the Northwest Branch, Sligo Creek, and Long Branch greenways through adopt-a-greenway programs.

