

# APPENDIX E: ENVIRONMENTAL DISCUSSION OF POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

## **Trees and Forest Conservation**

The County Forest Conservation Act is designed to protect existing forest and requires the planting of new forest and trees when protection thresholds are not met. As development occurs in the urban environment of East Silver Spring, some properties will be subject to forest conservation requirements. Creating a forest on-site is the preferred option for meeting planting requirements under the statute. However, in these highly developed areas very few on-site areas will be available for planting forests. Off-site reforestation within the Silver Spring/Takoma Park planning area is the next preferred option. If no planting locations for forest are available within the planning area, then tree cover, including neighborhood planting and street trees, can be utilized to meet the afforestation requirements.

To be prepared to take full advantage of developers' planting requirements, priority areas for additional street trees and landscaping should be identified in the entire planning area by M-NCPPC with the help of the County DPWT, the City of Takoma Park DPW and other appropriate agencies. The narrow rights-of-way, utility easements, and dense development pattern in East Silver Spring often make it difficult to find space for new or replacement street trees. Innovative options for street trees, including planting outside road rights-of-way and relocation of utility lines, should be examined as part of this project.

## **Water Quality and Stormwater Management**

To address the difficulty of stormwater management in older suburban neighborhoods, the State and County are working to create new policies for the redevelopment of sites with high existing imperviousness. The goal is to protect water quality while not allowing stormwater management to become a barrier to redevelopment. This re-evaluation recognizes that stormwater management requirements should complement the State's Smart Growth program, should be flexible, and should reduce impervious surfaces, where possible.

In addition to policy reviews, the County is undertaking a Watershed Restoration Action Plan for Sligo Creek that will include an update of stream restoration work completed and planned to date, a trash reduction strategy, and options for interagency stream restoration and stormwater management projects in the Long Branch tributary. Watershed-based stormwater management, such as has been implemented in Sligo Creek, is practical and effective in urban areas, providing greater environmental protection than could be achieved through smaller isolated stormwater management facilities.

The County currently has two water pollution prevention programs. The Clean Water Partners Program encourages businesses to pledge to protect water quality through a variety of on-site procedures, including changes in the use of hazardous chemicals and conducting routine maintenance on water quality facilities. The County is also instituting a new program to educate businesses and the public about the impacts of automobile leakage on water quality.

