

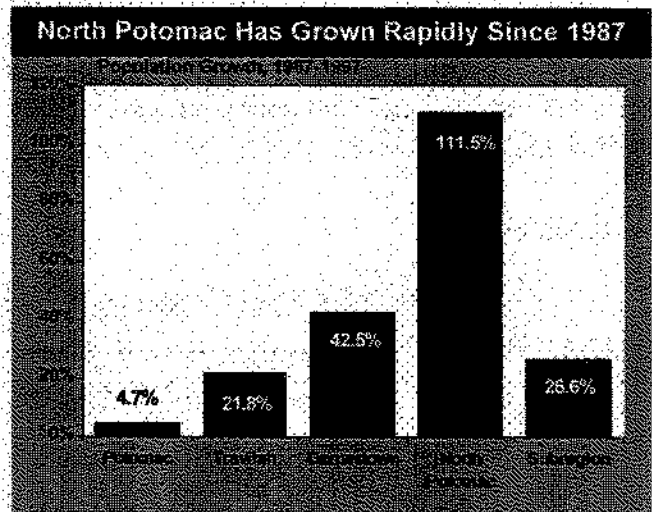
59 percent of the countywide residents have at least a bachelor's degree, and 31 percent have graduate degrees. These numbers have risen significantly over the last ten years. In the Potomac Subregion, the number of residents who have graduate degrees has risen by nearly 10 percent and this is true for each of the four areas. Comparing the four Subregion areas, 47 percent of the Potomac Planning Area residents have graduate degrees compared to 42 percent in Travilah, 32 percent in Darnestown, and 34 percent in North Potomac.

## Population and Household Growth

### Population Growth

Population in the Potomac Subregion as a whole has grown moderately between 1987 and 1997. This pace of growth virtually mirrored the County growth rate but masked great differences in the rates of the four areas within the Subregion. Potomac has grown very slowly over the last 10 years, only 5 percent. This was fully anticipated because it was the first area to experience development, and, therefore, is the first to reach a mature growth stage. With its good access to major employment centers, Potomac has large areas of older, well-established residential communities. In the future, as Potomac continues to mature, its population is apt to decrease as declining household size overbalances fewer added households.

Travilah's population grew 22 percent from 1987 to 1997, but it continues to have a lot of undeveloped land. The area's dependence on septic systems has ensured that houses have considerable space between them. It is expected that Travilah's growth rate will continue to slow as less land becomes available for development. The pressure of population growth will then push northward into Darnestown, the furthest area from the urban center, which still has 42 percent of its buildable land available for development. Darnestown grew by 42 percent over ten years but remains somewhat rural. Residents of this area desire little change and prefer the continuation of houses spread out on large lots.<sup>1</sup>



The most notable change can be seen in North Potomac. The population has grown by a remarkable 112 percent since 1987. North Potomac provides housing along the edge of the I-270 corridor with good access to corridor employment centers. Unlike the other three areas, when asked in the recent survey about their preferences for future development, North Potomac residents strongly preferred clustered housing.

<sup>1</sup> This preference was revealed in the findings of the survey of Potomac Subregion residents in February 1999.

## Household Growth

Overall, the number of households in the Subregion increased at a faster rate than its population between 1987 and 1997. Subregion households increased by 30 percent, to reach a total of 25,635 households, compared to 27 percent population growth indicating overall declining household size.

Like population growth, the overall rate of growth in the number of Subregion households obscured substantial differences among the household growth rates of the four areas. The number of households in Travilah increased 25 percent, in Darnestown 38 percent, and in North Potomac 99 percent, while the number of households in the Potomac Planning Area increased by only 13 percent.

Although the Potomac Planning Area showed relatively slow percentage growth, it absorbed 30 percent of all household growth of the entire Subregion in the 10-year period. North Potomac grew most notably with 57 percent of new households emerging in this area.

## Capacity for Future Growth

After rapid development over the past decade, most of the residential development capacity has been used up in all four areas of the Subregion. The tables below show current development capacity as estimated by our Environmental Planning Division. Total residential development capacity is the sum of estimates for existing dwelling units, approved but not yet built units, and the capacity of still developable land.

Residential Development Capacity in Dwelling Units

	Potomac	Travilah	Darnestown	North Potomac
Existing	14,496	2,040	1,355	7,636
Pipeline	705	708	521	1,250
Developable	358	225* or 425**	444	232
Total	15,559	2,973* or 3,173**	2,320	9,118

\* on septic

\*\* with sewer

Percent of Total Residential Development Capacity

	Potomac	Travilah	Darnestown	North Potomac
Existing	93.2%	68.6%* or 64.3%**	58.4%	83.7%
Pipeline	4.5%	23.8%* or 22.3%**	22.5%	13.7%
Developable	2.3%	7.6%* or 13.4%**	19.1%	2.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

\* on septic

\*\* with sewer

The Potomac Planning Area, with its longer history of subdivision development, has the highest percentage of its capacity (93 percent) already developed. Of its total estimated capacity of 15,559 dwelling units, 705, or 5 percent are approved but not yet built and 358 units, or 2 percent, are not yet subdivided. The largest of the four areas, Potomac has just over half of the total residential development capacity of the Subregion and 57 percent of the existing housing stock. The 1,063 unbuilt units represent only a 7 percent increase over the existing housing stock so this area is virtually built out.

Travilah has between 225 and 425 units of capacity on developable land, depending on the decision of whether to allow these properties to develop with sewer service or to continue to served them with septic systems. The amount of land required for septic fields means fewer lots and lowers the density of development. The decision to allow sewer service or not will be one of the major outcomes of the master plan process. This difference of 200 units makes the estimated total capacity range between 2,973 and 3,173 units. With septic service, the 2,040 existing units represent 69 percent of total capacity, the pipeline of 708 units 24 percent and the remaining developable land about 8 percent. The 933 yet-to-be-built units equal 46 percent of the houses already there. If sewer service is provided the 1,133 future capacity is a 56 percent addition to the present development.

Darnestown, the area farthest from the urban core, has the least amount of total residential building capacity with 2,320 units and the smallest proportion already built with 58 percent completed. The 965 unbuilt units represent a 71 percent addition to the existing housing stock. Just over half of these units are already in the pipeline of approved development.

North Potomac, adjacent to the Shady Grove Life Sciences Center and the rest of the central I-270 corridor area of Rockville and Gaithersburg, has seen rapid growth. It is the smallest area geographically but has the second largest population of the four parts of the Subregion and is by far the most densely settled. Existing units account for 84 percent of total residential development capacity. Already approved units in the pipeline would add 16 percent to the existing housing stock. The largest part of the yet-to-be-built units are in the Traville subdivision; the developer has applied for major changes to the plan so these numbers are subject to change based on the outcome of that process. The relatively small amount of developable land not in the pipeline would support only another 3 percent increase over existing units.

## Other Population Characteristics

### Average Household Size

Family households predominate in the Potomac Subregion and the area's average household size exceeds the County's. Nearly 60 percent of the Subregion's households have three people or more, compared to only 44 percent Countywide. Again, however, there are differences between the more established areas with more mature, empty nest households and a smaller average household

