

Community Facilities

This chapter makes recommendations regarding public schools, public parks and recreation, and other community facilities such as post offices, libraries, government centers, police stations, and Montgomery College. These community facilities are the locations at which needed services are provided to residents of Germantown and the Upcounty.

Objectives

Public community facilities, such as schools and parkland, should be adequate to serve the end-state population projected by this Plan. Specifically, the objectives of this Plan are to:

- Provide community facilities that promote the health, safety, and welfare of a variety of users including the elderly, the handicapped, and children.
- Provide conveniently located parks and other facilities for both active and passive recreation to meet the needs and interest of various segments of the community.
- Promote access to recreational opportunities and facilities.
- Provide appropriate facilities to meet the general and specialized educational needs of area residents.

This chapter describes in detail several existing and planned community and public facilities in the Germantown Planning Area. To facilitate an understanding of the major conclusions, the following points should be highlighted: (1) the Germantown area generally has adequate park and recreational facilities to serve the existing population, except for ball-field recreational areas; (2) the end-state population will need additional local parks, of which nine are included in the current Capital Improvements Program (CIP); and (3) the number of future elementary school sites has been reduced from 28, shown on the 1974 *Master Plan*, to 12, since families, on the average, are

having fewer children. The number of secondary schools has been reduced from three senior high schools shown on the 1974 *Master Plan* to two. Six junior high schools have been reduced to three middle schools.

Public Schools (Figure 40)

The Germantown area is currently served by one high school, two intermediate, and six elementary schools. As indicated in Table 21, these schools are currently in the Seneca Valley and Watkins Mill clusters. Eight of these schools are located in the Germantown Planning Area, while one of the schools is located outside the planning boundaries with a service area that includes part of the planning area.

TABLE 21
PUBLIC SCHOOLS BY HIGH SCHOOL CLUSTER

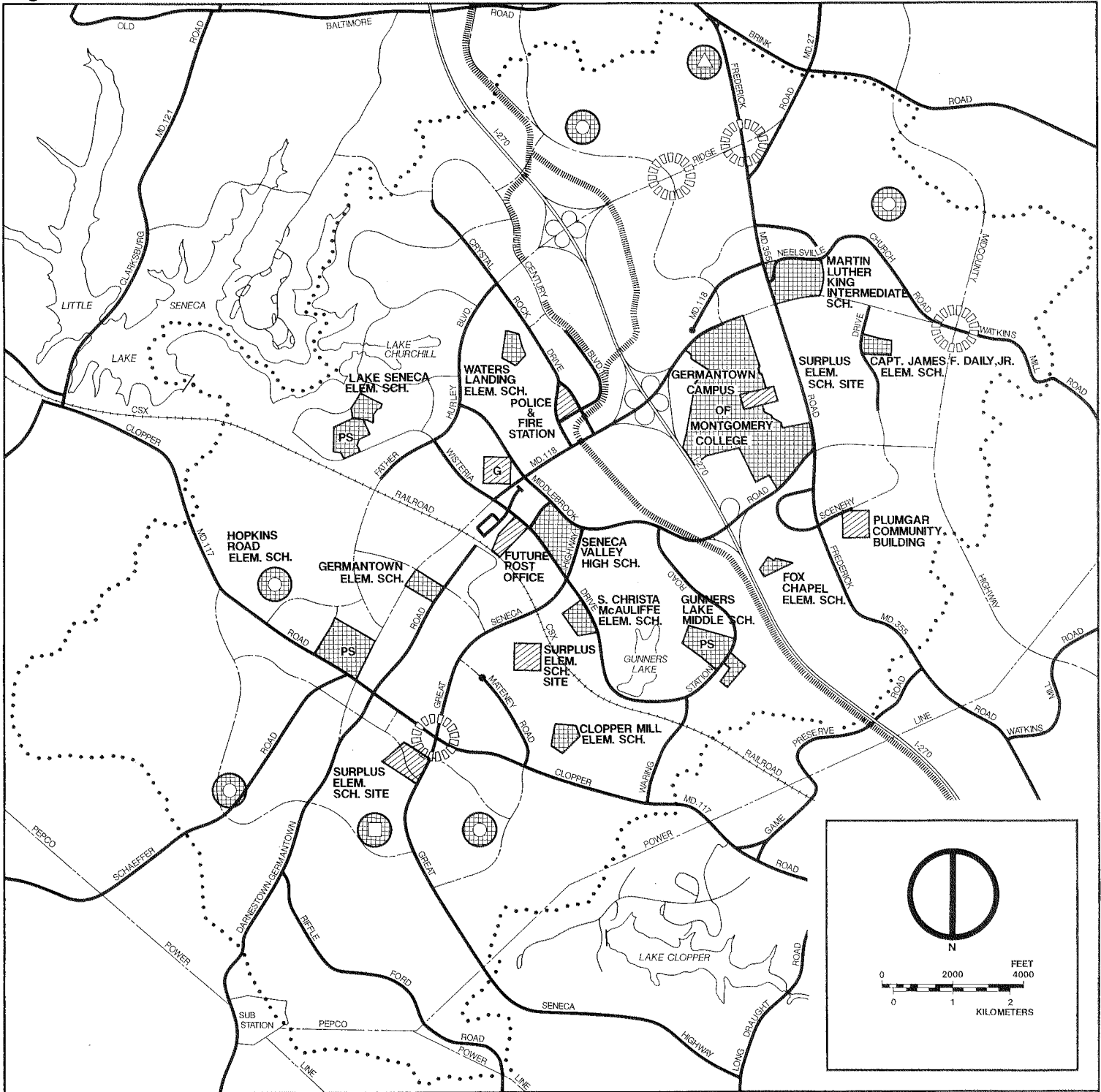
High School Cluster/ School Name	Date Orig.	Modern- ized	Site Size (Acres)	Number of Classrooms
SENECA VALLEY CLUSTER				
Seneca Valley High	1974		32.8	75
Martin Luther King	1981		31.6	43
Clopper Mill Elem.	1986		9.0	29
Fox Chapel Elem.	1974		10.6 PK	28
Germantown Elem.	1935	1978	8.0	21
Lake Seneca Elem.	1985		10.6	26
McAuliffe Elem.	1987		10.6 PK	33
Waters Landing Elem.	1988			33
WATKINS MILL CLUSTER				
*Montgomery Village	1968		15.1	38

* Not located inside planning boundaries, but has a service area that includes part of the planning area.

NOTE: PK denotes an adjacent park site; park acreage is in addition to that shown.








SOURCE: Requested FY 90 Capital Budget and the FYs 90-95 Capital Improvements Program, November 1, 1988, Montgomery County Public Schools.

Figure 40



Existing and Proposed Community Facilities

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 Montgomery County, Maryland
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- Proposed Elementary Schools 
- Proposed Middle Schools 
- Proposed Senior High Schools 
- Existing Public Schools 
- Other Facilities 
- Site owned by Montgomery County Public Schools 
- Proposed Upcounty Government Center/Library and Area 3 Offices of Montgomery County Public Schools 

NUMBER OF SCHOOL SITES⁴

The average number of elementary school-age children per single-family detached household has declined from 0.90 in the early 1970s to 0.48 in the mid-1980s. This change, combined with the increase in enrollment capacity in the new elementary schools, results in a significant reduction (from 28 to 12) in the number of elementary schools needed for end-state development. The secondary school yield also dropped from 0.50 to 0.42, which reduces the number of senior high schools needed from three to two.⁵ Public school needs are analyzed in Appendix J.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS NEEDS

There are six existing elementary schools and two under construction; an additional elementary school is recommended for construction in the FY 90-95 Capital Improvements Program. In addition, three more elementary schools, for a total of 12, will be needed to accommodate the enrollment of end-state Germantown development.

The enrollment policy for elementary schools has changed since the adoption of the 1974 *Master Plan*. Elementary school capacity at individual schools has increased from 400-500 students to approximately 690-740 students. This increase requires greater building area and more parking area. Also, additional classrooms are needed for specialized programs. The 10-acre elementary school sites acquired for the smaller schools cannot easily accommodate the larger facilities. This Plan, therefore, recommends that the size of future elementary school sites should be a minimum of 10 usable acres (or, generally, 12 total acres). Further, new school sites should not be constrained by unusual topographic features and they should generally be level to facilitate the development of larger school buildings and ballfields.

SECONDARY SCHOOL NEEDS

Seneca Valley High School, Martin Luther King, Jr. Junior High School, and Ridgeview Junior High School currently meet the secondary school needs of Germantown residents.

Although existing and programmed secondary school capacity should accommodate Germantown's enrollment for the next six to ten years, additional capacity will be needed to accommodate the end-state

development of Germantown. An additional four-year senior high school and two middle schools are expected to be needed. The proposed locations for these schools are shown on Figure 40.

USE OF SURPLUS SCHOOL SITES RECOMMENDED IN 1974 PLAN

Three elementary school sites, owned by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), have been declared surplus, and other sites may be in the future. The recommended use for each of these sites is presented in the Land Use and Zoning Chapter.

Schools provide important community recreational facilities. This Plan has evaluated alternative uses, particularly local-use parks, for surplus school sites. As fewer schools with accompanying ballfields are being constructed, there is a greater demand for parks to provide active public recreation facilities.

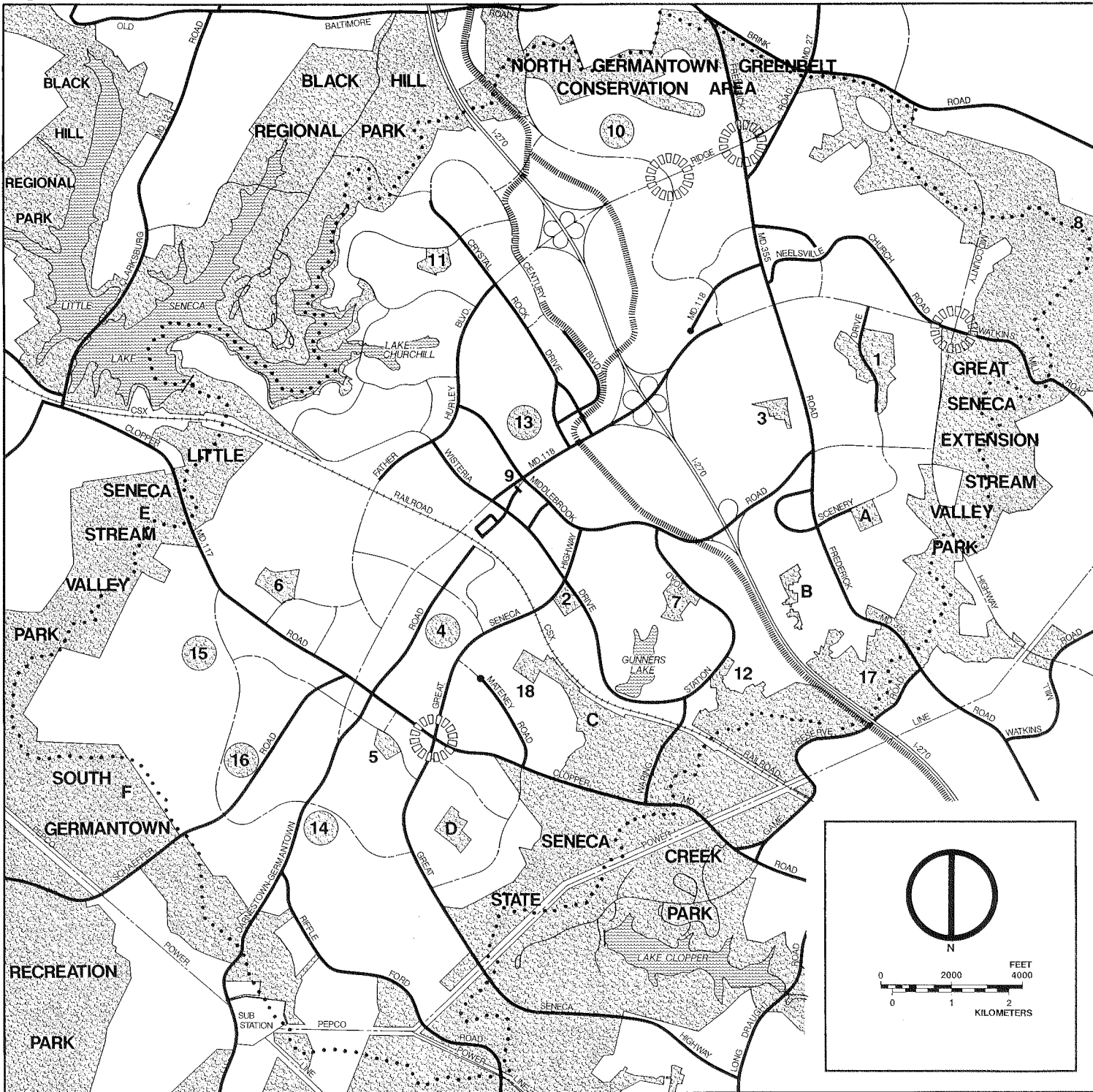
Public Parks And Recreation (Figure 41 and Appendix K)

Germantown is surrounded by a wide greenbelt of large parks and has an interior scattering of smaller local parks. The Germantown greenbelt, as shown on this Plan and on the Park Acquisition Map, is composed of Seneca State Park and County stream valley, regional, and conservation parks. The intent of the system of greenbelt parks is to provide an effective visual and physical border which establishes the edges of the Germantown Community. As planned, it varies from over a mile in width to 500 feet, with most sections ranging from 1,500 to 2,000 feet. Its boundaries have been established to protect the stream valleys, steep slopes, and wooded areas around Germantown, to provide locations for active recreational facilities, and in consideration of existing property lines and development. Thus, although most of the greenbelt will remain in its natural state as a conservation park, some areas have been designated as locations for active recreational facilities. Such facilities have already been developed in South Germantown Recreation Park and Black Hill Regional Park.

Recreation facilities are also available at Germantown's public schools and at the Germantown Campus of Montgomery College. Most of the larger

- 4 The future school needs recommended in this Plan were developed in close cooperation with Montgomery County Public School planning staff.
- 5 When the 1974 *Master Plan* was adopted, secondary education was provided in junior high schools (grades 7-9) and senior high schools (grades 10-12). This Montgomery County Public Schools policy has been changed, and middle schools (grades 7 and 8) and senior high schools (grades 9-12) are being constructed.

Figure 41



Existing and Proposed Public Parkland

EXISTING LOCAL PARKS

- A Plungar
- B Fox Chapel
- C Gunners Branch
- D South Gunners Branch
- E Seneca Day Camp
- F South Germantown

PROGRAMMED LOCAL PARKS

- 1 Clear Spring
- 2 Gunners Lake
- 3 Germantown East
- 4 Clopper
- 5 Old Germantown
- 6 Germantown Estates
- 7 Waring Station
- 8 Blunt Road
- 9 Germantown Square

PROPOSED LOCAL PARKS

- 10 Millwood
- 11 Waters Landing
- 12 Gunners Village
- 13 Germantown Center
- 14 Cedar Creek
- 15 Kingsview
- 16 Schaeffer Road
- 17 Middlebrook Hill N.C.A.
- 18 Bellefields N.C.A.

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residential subdivisions also have their own privately-maintained recreation facilities.

The provision of adequate parkland and recreation facilities is an important goal for all areas of the County, and is especially important in Germantown because of its recent rapid rate of development and the large number of people living in townhouses and apartments. The parks provide open areas for recreation, nature observation, conservation, wildlife habitat preservation, and open space, and the definition of community form provided by natural features such as the several major streams and their tributaries.

The adopted Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Master Plan projects outdoor facility needs to 1995. The number of existing local recreation facilities and those needed in 1995 are shown below:

Facility	Number Existing	Number of Additional Needed by 1995	Total Number Needed by 1995
Ballfields	15	19	34
Tennis Courts	18	7	25
Park Playgrounds	4	14	18
Basketball Courts	12	21	33

The additional facility needs to 1995 can adequately be met by future school sites and park sites currently programmed for the Germantown area. The schools and park facilities beyond those in the CIP are estimated to be adequate for the recreational needs of the end-state population. This adequacy will be reviewed every five years, during updates of the PROS Plan.

The lighting of playing fields should only be initiated after extensive community input and careful design to assure that no negative visual or acoustic effects occur on adjacent land uses. Given the difficulty of adequately controlling illumination from tall lighting standards and the difficulty of controlling noise generated on- and off-site, this Plan recommends locating such facilities only in areas where residences are sufficiently distant.

Park proposals in Germantown have been examined in terms of the need to provide:

1. Adequate local recreation to serve each of the Germantown villages;
2. Larger scale regional recreation needs to serve the area as a whole; and
3. Adequate preservation of watersheds and conservation areas.

LOCAL RECREATION NEEDS

Germantown has several local parks where ballfields, tennis and basketball courts, and picnic and playground areas are available. (See Appendix K for acreage and available facilities.) At end-state development, at least two local parks will be available in each village except Churchill Village.

Churchill Village's parks currently are provided by the developer. In addition, local recreation facilities such as ballfields, tennis and multi-use courts are recommended to be provided on two parcels in Churchill Village. (See Analysis Areas CH-1 and CH-2.)

There are two local parks in Gunners Lake Village. Gunners Lake Local Park is located on a park-school site and Middlebrook Road Local Park is located at the tip of an 18-acre lake. Clopper Village also has two developed local parks, Gunners Branch and South Gunners Branch, both serving the southern portion of the Village. Three additional parks are planned for this Village. In Kingsview Village, Germantown Estates Local Park is programmed for construction. Two additional parks are planned for future development in the western portion of the village.

Middlebrook Village has two local parks in the southern portion of the area: Fox Chapel, a park-school; and Plumgar, which has a recreation center that provides community programs. A new local park, Clear Spring, is under construction in the northern portion of the Village. Germantown East Local Park, west of MD 355, is also programmed for construction.

In Neelsville Village, one local park is recommended near the Dr. William A. Waters House, an historic resource.

Also, local recreation opportunities are currently provided by facilities in two larger parks: Camp Seneca and South Germantown Regional park. Camp Seneca has a recreation building and a playfield, with a multi-use court, playground, and lodge. South Germantown Recreation Park includes the Shaeffer Road Athletic Area, which will provide six athletic fields for Germantown residents. Current construction plans for the park include tennis and basketball courts, play equipment, football/soccer fields, and a shelter with restrooms.

PRIVATE RECREATION FACILITIES IN DEVELOPING AREAS

Many large residential developments are being constructed in Germantown. In such areas, developers should be encouraged to provide sufficient private neighborhood recreation areas and facilities that no additional public neighborhood parks need be developed.

Summer swim leagues are expanding into the Germantown area. All community swimming pools, therefore, should be sized for competitive swimming. The pools should be 25 meters long, preferably with 8 lanes, but with a minimum of 6 lanes. These lanes can also be used by adults for lap swimming.

The development of private open space areas to serve various age groups can be done relatively inexpensively by encouraging the provision of sitting areas, pathways, open play areas, and playgrounds in attractive open spaces.

Dedication of neighborhood parks may also be accepted, provided the site is suitable for the development of neighborhood recreation facilities and does not pose exceptional maintenance problems.

In non-residential developments, large office and commercial complexes should provide amenities for their employees and customers. These may include, for example, landscaping, sitting areas, and outdoor places to eat a bag lunch.

REGIONAL RECREATION NEEDS

Black Hill Regional Park will be Germantown's largest Regional Park. It includes a 500 acre lake, boating facilities, picnic areas, play equipment, a visitor's center, and trails.

Additional park facilities at South Germantown Regional Park are currently being considered for development after 1994. This Park might be appropriate for lighted fields in the future. As noted above, the lighting of fields should be carefully considered.

A portion of North Germantown Greenbelt Park could be an additional location for a grouping of ballfields. Specifically, the location is the cleared area in the triangle of land formed by MD 355, MD 27, and Brink Road.

A portion of Great Seneca Extension Stream Valley Park, adjacent to proposed Midcounty Highway (M-83), should be considered for development by the Montgomery County Parks Department into an area with parking areas, limited picnicking, walking trails, and a sledding run. Access could be provided across from roadways leading into residential areas to the west from Midcounty Highway.

PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITIES

The Montgomery County Department of Recreation has developed a community building in Plumgar Local Park. It has an indoor basketball court, meeting room, and catering kitchen.

In the FY 88-93 CIP, there is a project for a major community recreation building and outdoor pool with future expansion to include an indoor pool. Analysis Area KI-5 (the 30-acre school site on Clopper

Road) is recommended to be a location for these facilities.

CONSERVATION NEEDS

The Germantown greenbelt of parks is made up of a number of large parks that provide both recreation and conservation areas. These include Seneca Creek State Park (operated by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources), and the following parks owned by the Montgomery County Parks Department: Black Hill Regional Park, South Germantown Recreation Park, Great Seneca Extension Stream Valley Park, and the North Germantown Greenbelt Conservation Park. Acreage and recreation facilities existing and proposed at each park are indicated in Appendix K.

Most stream valley and conservation land is preserved through the existing and proposed greenbelt of parks around Germantown. Thus, the greenbelt assists in watershed protection and reduction of flooding, sedimentation, and erosion.

Other Community Facilities (Figure 40)

The adequate provision of other public services such as police stations, fire stations, libraries, colleges, recreation facilities, youth facilities, elderly facilities, and parks is important to the development of a new community.

Demographic characteristics, utilization rates, and the delivery of these services have changed during the last 10 to 15 years. Therefore, the number, location, and size of these facilities were examined in the preparation of this Plan to assure that an adequate capacity is provided for the residents of Germantown.

The delivery of services is dependent on a number of factors such as size of client population; utilization rates; availability, location, and size of facilities; and operating budget allocations. The need for these facilities will change as the population of Germantown grows and matures. The number, location, and size of these facilities recommended in this Plan are based on information from the agencies responsible for the delivery of these services.

POST OFFICE FACILITIES

Postal services are available at the Germantown Post Office on existing MD 118, opposite the Germantown Elementary School. Germantown has outgrown this facility, and the U.S. Postal Service has identified a site for a new, larger post office in the Town Center, at the intersection of Wisteria Drive and Crystal Rock Drive. (See Analysis Area TC-7.)

LIBRARY SERVICES

The Gaithersburg Regional Library at Montgomery Village Avenue and Christopher Avenue currently serves Germantown. Library services in Germantown are provided at a store-front library in The Germantown Commons Shopping Center. The Childrens' Services staff serve public schools and other day-care centers on a scheduled basis. The community can also utilize the library at the Germantown Campus of Montgomery College.

A 16,500-square foot community library facility in Germantown is proposed for completion by 1990. This library will be a major component of the Upcounty Government Center, and will provide a full range of services, with a collection of approximately 65,000 volumes. A branch library, if needed in the future, should be provided at the Kingsview or Clopper Village Centers.

UPCOUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER

The Upcounty Government Center will be located in the Town Center on a 5-acre site at the northwest corner of the intersection of Middlebrook Road and Relocated MD 118. The Center is currently under construction.

The Center will have a public library as its anchor program, and will include area Recreation offices, a child day-care center to accommodate approximately 70 children, the administrative offices of the Upcounty Government Center, a Health Center, Health Department offices, Social Service offices, and the Area 3 offices of Montgomery County Public Schools.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Police protection is provided by the Germantown District Police Station, which is located at Aircraft Drive north of MD 118. Currently 135 officers and other personnel are stationed in Germantown. Facility

renovations are planned for the Germantown station in 1988. These changes will provide additional space to accommodate short- and long-term staffing increases in the District. Patrol staffing levels are primarily based on service area population, crime levels, and response time. These staff levels are reviewed and adjusted periodically to reflect growth in the area. This Plan anticipates a future expansion of the police station in response to continuing residential and non-residential growth.

Fire, rescue, and emergency medical services are provided by the Germantown Station of the Hyattstown Volunteer Fire Department, located on Aircraft Drive north of MD 118, adjacent to the Police Station. This station has a staff of 10 career fire and rescue employees and 46 volunteers and is equipped with two fire engines, one 100-foot aerial ladder truck, one 4-wheel drive brush vehicle, one ambulance, and one paramedic chase car. The current CIP includes a project to construct a 5,500-square foot addition in 1988 which will provide adequate work and living space for the life of the facility. Staffing and equipment needs will be reviewed periodically and expanded to reflect growth in the area.

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

The Germantown Campus of Montgomery College is located on approximately 200 acres, bordered generally by I-270, Relocated MD 118, MD 355 and Relocated Middlebrook Road. There are three major facilities on the campus: Humanities Building, Science Building and Gymnasium. In addition, child day-care services are offered in two relocatable buildings. The courses, programs and facilities available are a significant resource to residents in Germantown and the upcounty area.

Additional courses, programs, and facilities are explored periodically. The residents and business community are involved in this process.