

# Vision for the Future

## *Overview*

Ten key policies have guided the preparation of the Clarksburg Master Plan. All the land use, zoning, urban design, and transportation recommendations reflect these policies.

These policies will carefully guide the growth of Clarksburg from a rural settlement into a transit- and pedestrian-oriented town surrounded by open space.

## *Policy 1 Town Scale of Development*

This Plan envisions Clarksburg as a town, at a larger scale than proposed in the 1968 *Clarksburg Master Plan* but smaller than a corridor city such as Germantown.

The Concept Plan for Clarksburg, as shown in Figure 7, envisions a transit-oriented community located in a natural setting. About 80 percent of all future development is channeled to the Town Center and a series of transit-oriented neighborhoods. Approximately 40 percent of the Study Area is designated as agricultural and rural open space.

The proposed scale of Clarksburg in terms of estimated population at build-out is compared to the 1968 *Clarksburg Master Plan* and the 1989 *Germantown Master Plan* below:

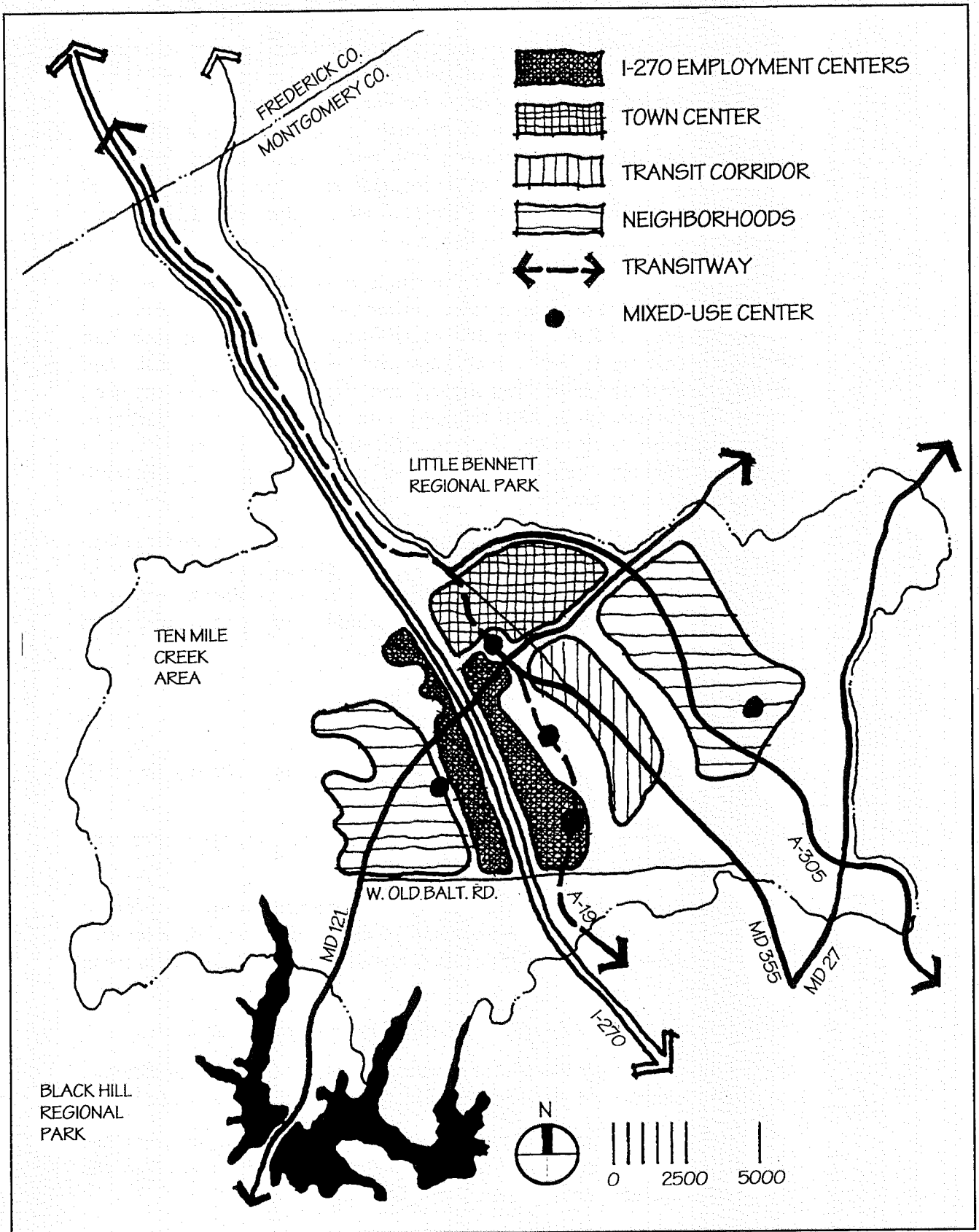
	1968 Clarksburg Master Plan	1989 Germantown Master Plan	1994 Clarksburg Master Plan
Population	41,900	92,000	43,000

### **This Plan:**

- Includes the Clarksburg Historic District as a key component of an expanded Town Center.
- Balances the need for higher densities to support transit with the need to protect the area's environmental resources.
- Organizes future development into a series of neighborhoods.
- Includes housing mix guidelines by neighborhood to assure a variety of housing types.
- Limits higher density, residential development (9-11 units per acre) to neighborhoods within walking distance of transit.
- Strives to maintain an identity for Clarksburg separate from Germantown or Damascus.
- Recognizes the importance of civic spaces and public uses to the development of a town concept.
- Continues the role of I-270 as a high technology center but proposes a scale and intensity of employment uses that is consistent with a town scale of development.

# Town Scale of Development

Figure 7



## *Policy 2 Natural Environment*

This Plan recommends that Clarksburg's natural features, particularly stream valleys, be protected and recommends Ten Mile Creek and Little Seneca Creek be afforded special protection as development proceeds.

Clarksburg offers a rich array of environmental resources, including Little Seneca Lake, streams with very high water quality, a large number of stream headwaters, extensive tree stands, and an impressive array of flora and fauna, particularly in stream valleys. These resources give Clarksburg a unique character and must be protected.

Environmental concerns are the single most important reason why Clarksburg is proposed as a town rather than a larger corridor city. Densities proposed are intended to be high enough to support Plan objectives relating to housing mix, compact neighborhoods, transit- and pedestrian-oriented land use patterns, and retail and employment uses, yet moderate enough to help reduce pressure on Clarksburg's environmental network. Achieving this rather delicate and imprecise balance is a difficult goal but one which must be achieved if Clarksburg's outstanding environmental setting is to be preserved.

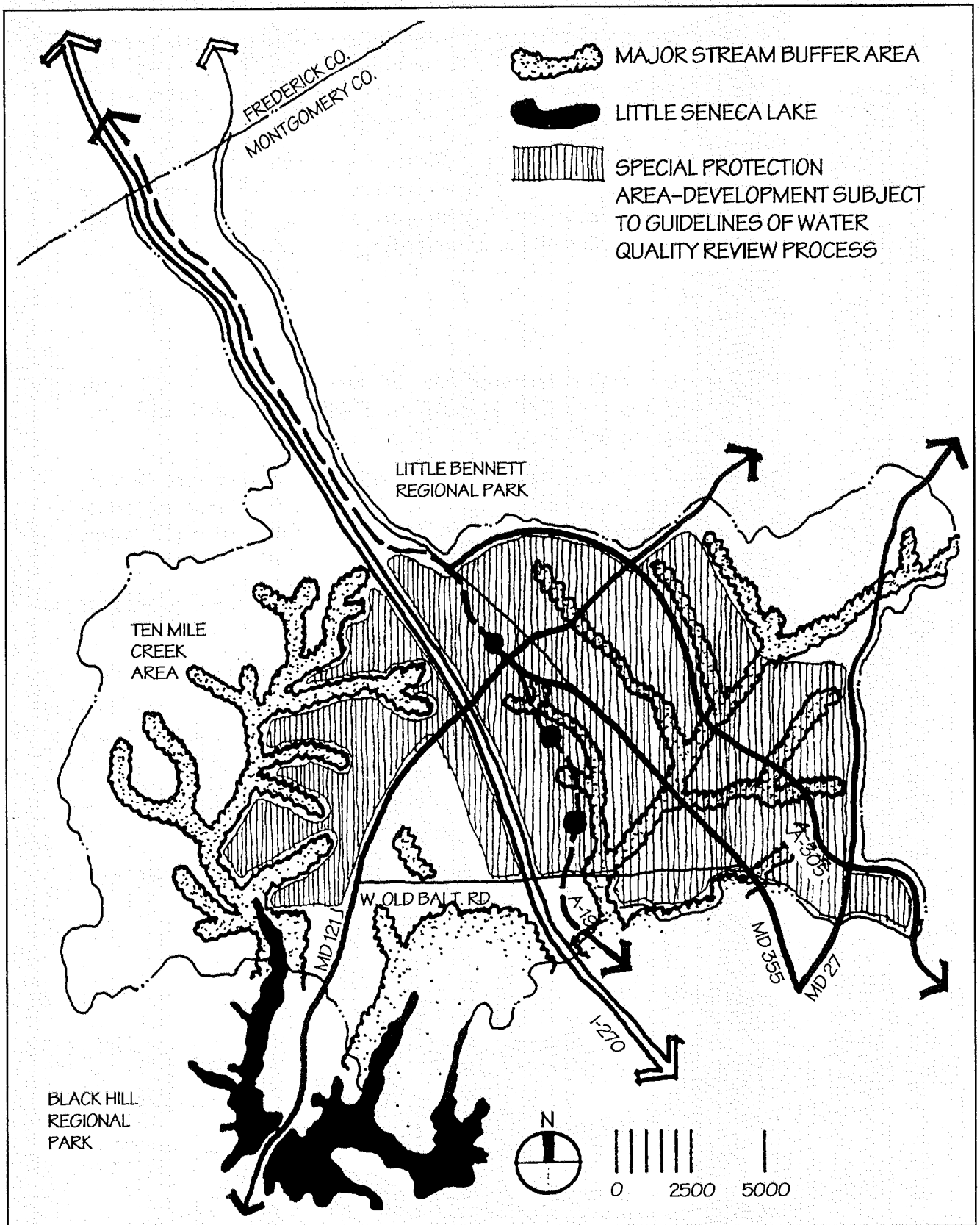
Efforts beyond the current environmental guidelines are considered crucial to address development impacts on the high-quality environment of Clarksburg. This Plan protects the most sensitive environmental resources by applying additional water quality review and monitoring requirements (see Figure 8).

### **This Plan:**

- Identifies the Ten Mile Creek watershed as an environmentally sensitive area of County-wide significance.
- Recommends forested buffers along all stream valleys to promote water quality.
- Identifies those streams most likely to experience adverse water quality impacts from development and recommends special development guidelines to mitigate these effects and maintain high-functioning streams.
- Recommends public acquisition of all the main stream branches.
- Endorses the preparation of a wetlands management plan in conjunction with the Maryland State Department of Natural Resources.
- Recommends development in the most sensitive watershed (Ten Mile Creek) occur only after the implementation and evaluation of the water quality review process has been completed.

# Natural Environment

Figure 8



### *Policy 3 Greenway Network*

This Plan recommends a multi-purpose greenway system along stream valleys.

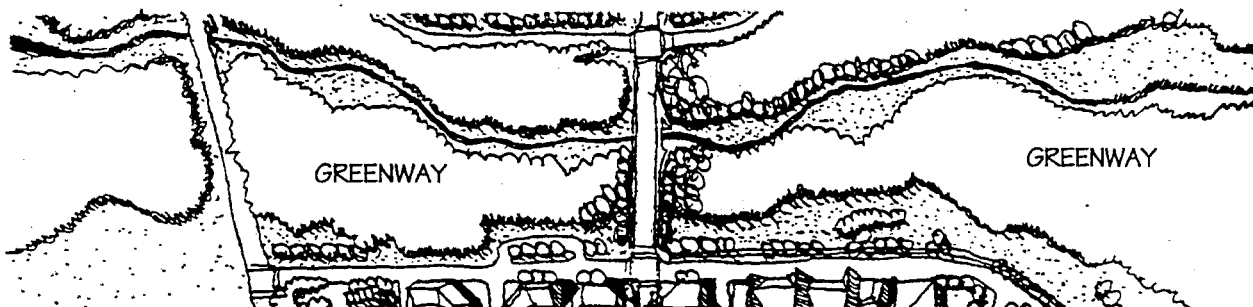
A “greenway” is simply a linear corridor — it may be as elaborate as a paved hiker-biker trail or as simple as a woodland path. Facilities in greenways should be compatible with environmental goals.

The greenway system shown in Figure 9 is approximately 11.5 miles in length and for the most part follows stream valleys. The greenway is the major organizing element of an open space network, which includes local parks, schools, stream buffer areas, and a hiker-biker trail system.

#### **This Plan:**

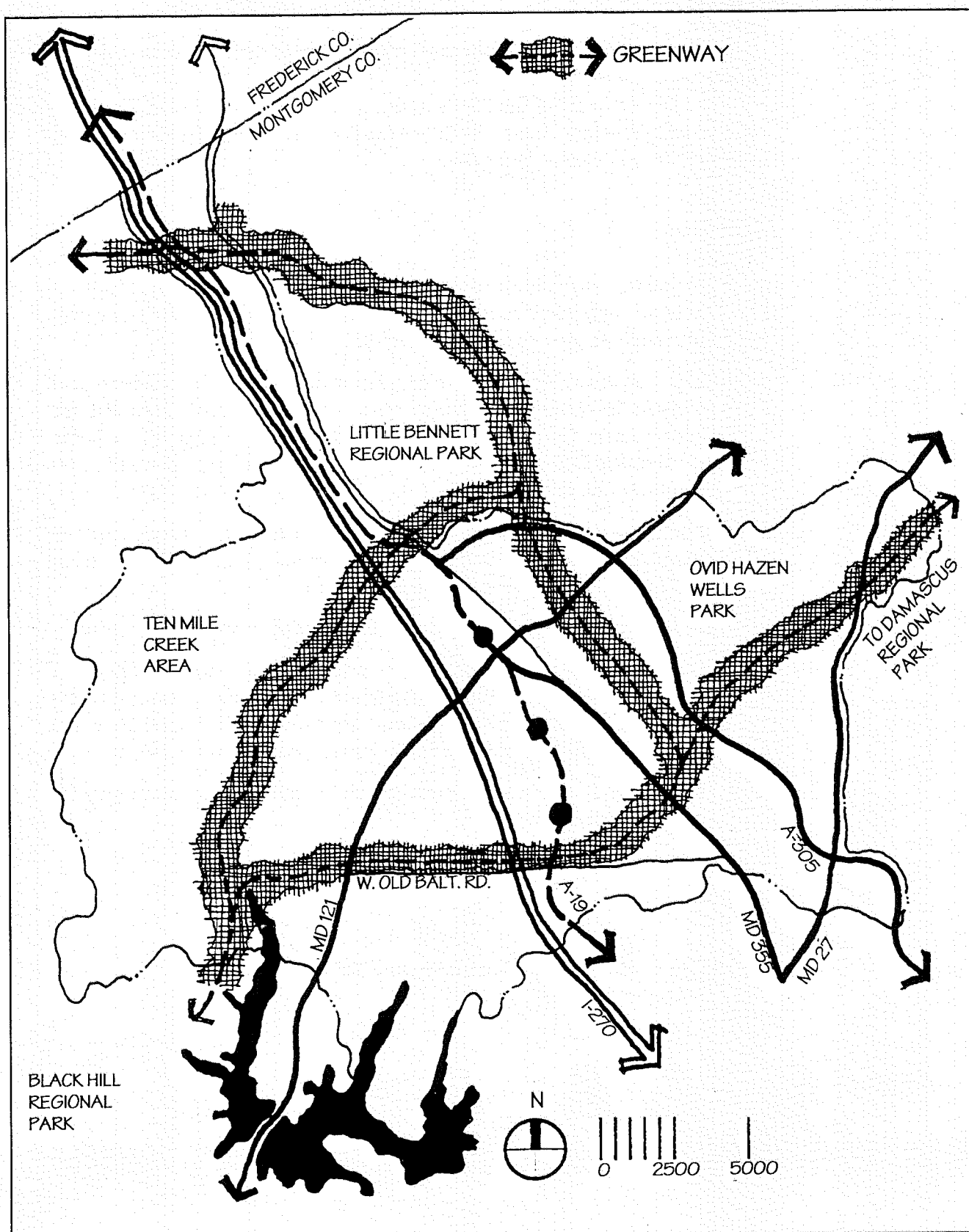
- Provides a trail system that links the three major parks in the Study Area: Little Bennett Regional Park, Black Hill Regional Park, and Ovid Hazen Wells Park.
- Links Clarksburg to the larger regional park and open space system, including Frederick County to the northwest, the Damascus Stream Valley Park to the northeast, and the Seneca Creek State Park to the south.
- Provides future residents of Clarksburg easy access to outdoor experiences.
- Creates a trail system that provides access to the Town Center and key community facilities.
- Proposes a bikeway system that is complementary to the greenway network.
- Recommends schools and local parks be located and designed with convenient access to the greenway.
- Proposes that the greenway network be part of the M-NCPPC park system.

#### *Greenway in the Town Center*



# Greenway Network

Figure 9



## *Policy 4 Transit System*

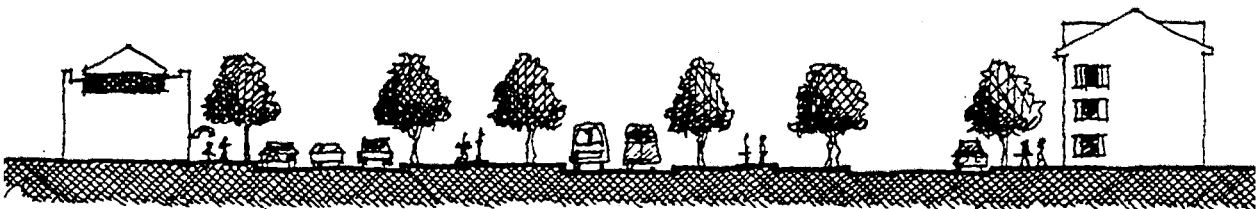
This Plan proposes a comprehensive transit system that will reduce dependence on the automobile.

The key elements of the Plan's transit system are illustrated in Figure 10 and described below. Transit is an essential feature of this Plan; without it, the Plan's vision cannot be realized.

### **This Plan:**

- Includes a regional transitway which will be part of a larger transit network extending south to Germantown and Shady Grove and will ultimately extend north to the City of Frederick.
- The transitway will serve the transportation needs of residents and workers in the I-270 Corridor north of Shady Grove. Forecasts for Montgomery County anticipate that this geographic area will be home to over 200,000 residents and the workplace for more than 185,000 employees by the year 2010.
- For those residents of Clarksburg seeking transit service to the Washington, D.C. marketplace, commuter rail service (MARC) from the Boyds train station is presently available.
- Incorporates the transitway as part of a proposed road right-of-way.
- Designates key arterial roadways as potential bus routes. The intent is to create bus routes within a one-quarter-mile distance from concentrations of development. The local routes will be connected to the through-transit system to form a comprehensive transit network.
- Recommends a bikeway system which emphasizes separate rights-of-way for cyclists.

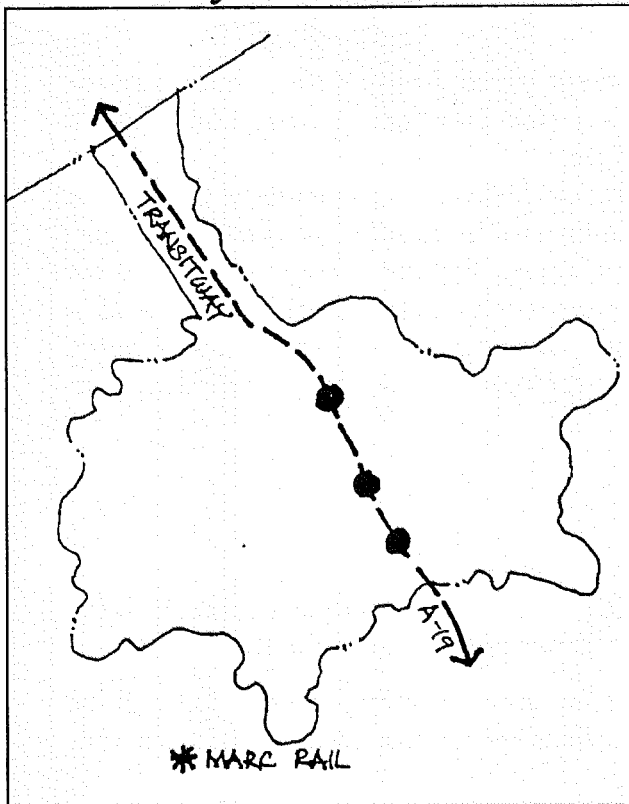
### *A-19 Observation Drive/Transitway and Median*



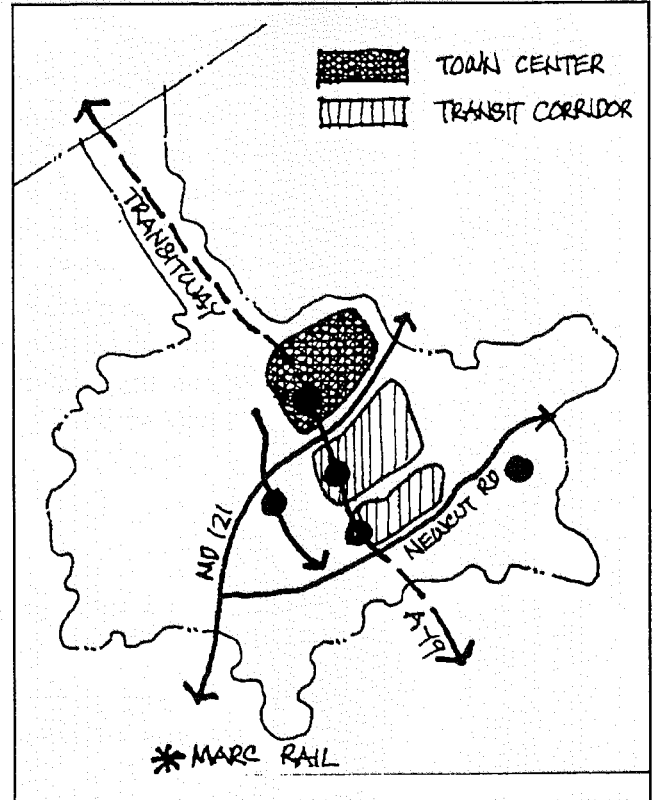


# Transit System

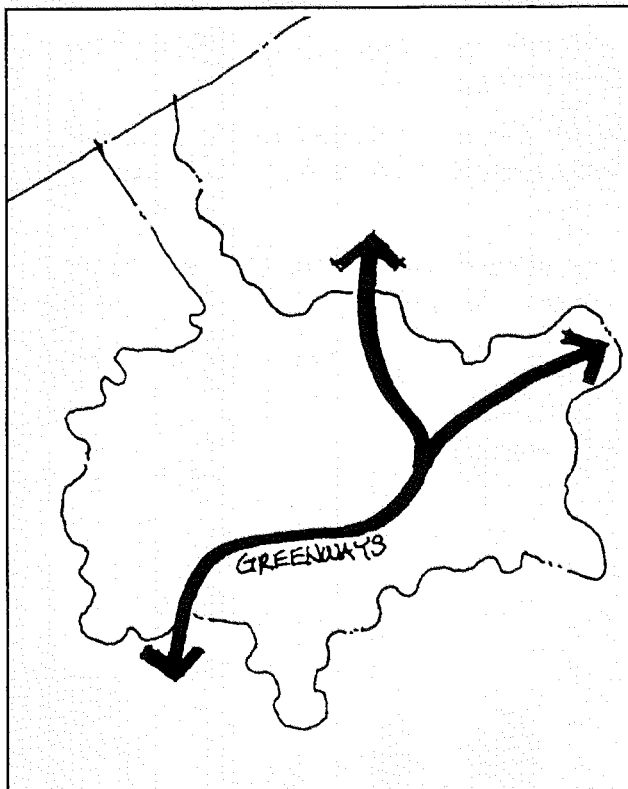
Figure 10



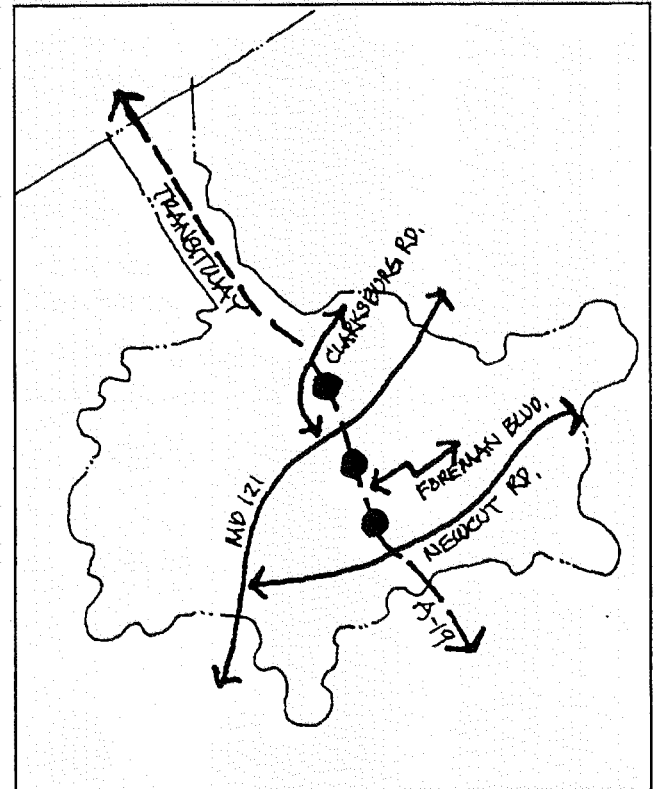
1. Through or Regional Transit



2. Local Transit - Bus Routes



3. Bikeways Along Greenways



4. Bikeways Along Highways

## *Policy 5 Hierarchy of Roads and Streets*

This Plan proposes a street network which clearly differentiates between highways needed to accommodate regional through traffic and roads which provide subregional and local access.

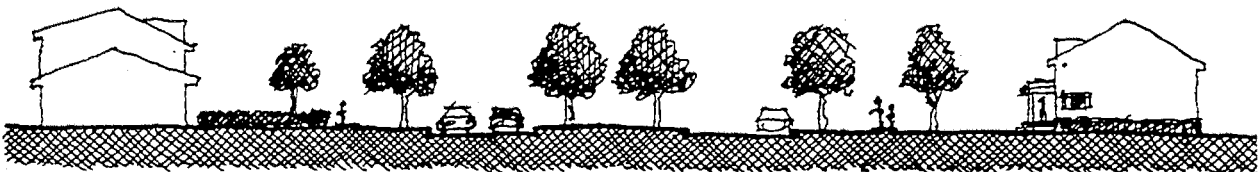
The primary function of roads and highways is to distribute traffic. This Plan also recognizes that the location and design of roads contributes significantly to the character of a community. For this reason, a great deal of attention has been given to the cross-section design of the roads proposed in this Plan, the relationship of roads to neighborhood land use, and design objectives and the relationship of the road network to the proposed park and open space system.

### **This Plan:**

- Proposes a transportation network which encourages through traffic to bypass the major concentrations of development in Clarksburg.
- Recommends that roads linking major highways to neighborhoods be “pedestrian friendly” and include medians, street trees, and generous sidewalk areas.
- Endorses an extensive network of interconnected streets to provide local access within neighborhoods; streets are intended to increase mobility within each neighborhood by providing sidewalks on both sides, street trees, and on-street parking.
- Proposes a special character for Observation Drive (A-19) since this road will include the proposed transitway and serve both residential and employment uses.
- Proposes that MD 355 be reclassified from a major highway to an arterial to support the town scale of development.
- Designates certain historic and scenic roads as “rustic” to help preserve their character.

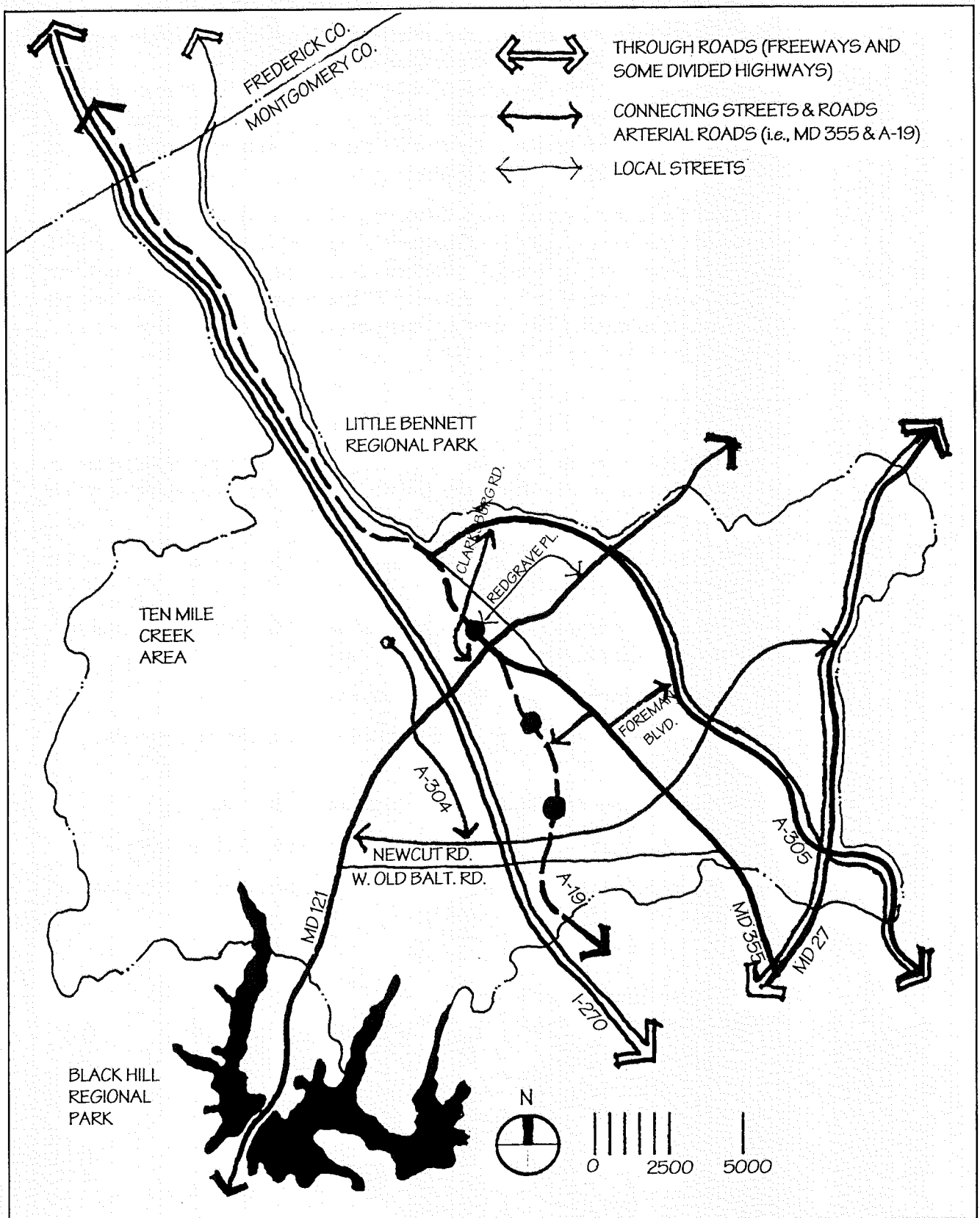
Figure 11 illustrates the hierarchy concept.

*MD 355 (Frederick Avenue)*



# Hierarchy of Roads and Streets

Figure 11



## *Policy 6 Town Center*

This Plan proposes a transit-oriented, multi-use Town Center which is compatible with the scale and character of the Clarksburg Historic District.

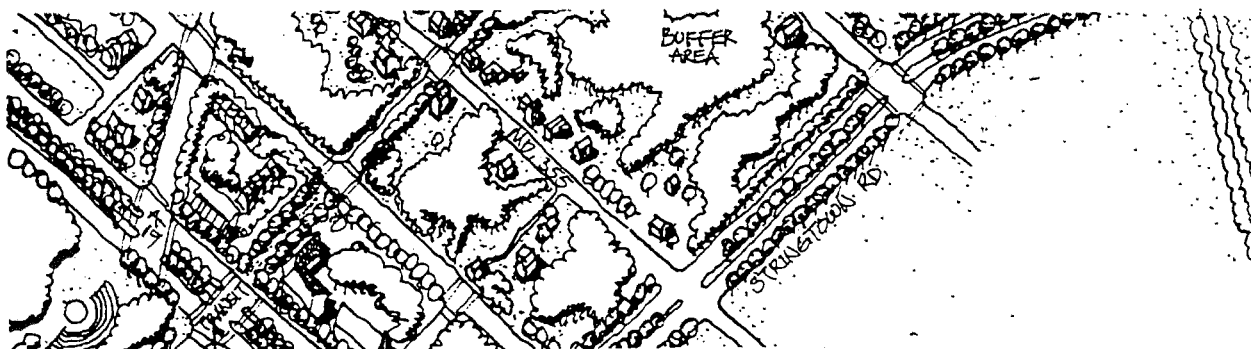
Clarksburg is one of the County's oldest and most significant early communities. It is designated as a historic district on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation for many reasons, one of which is that it retains a large degree of its early 19th-early 20th century character.

This Plan continues the historic function of Clarksburg as a center of community life (see Figure 12). It will be part of an expanded Town Center (635 acres) which will include a variety of uses (a school, civic uses, park, retail centers) and a mix of housing types. Assuring compatibility of future development with the historic district has been a guiding principle of the planning process.

### **This Plan:**

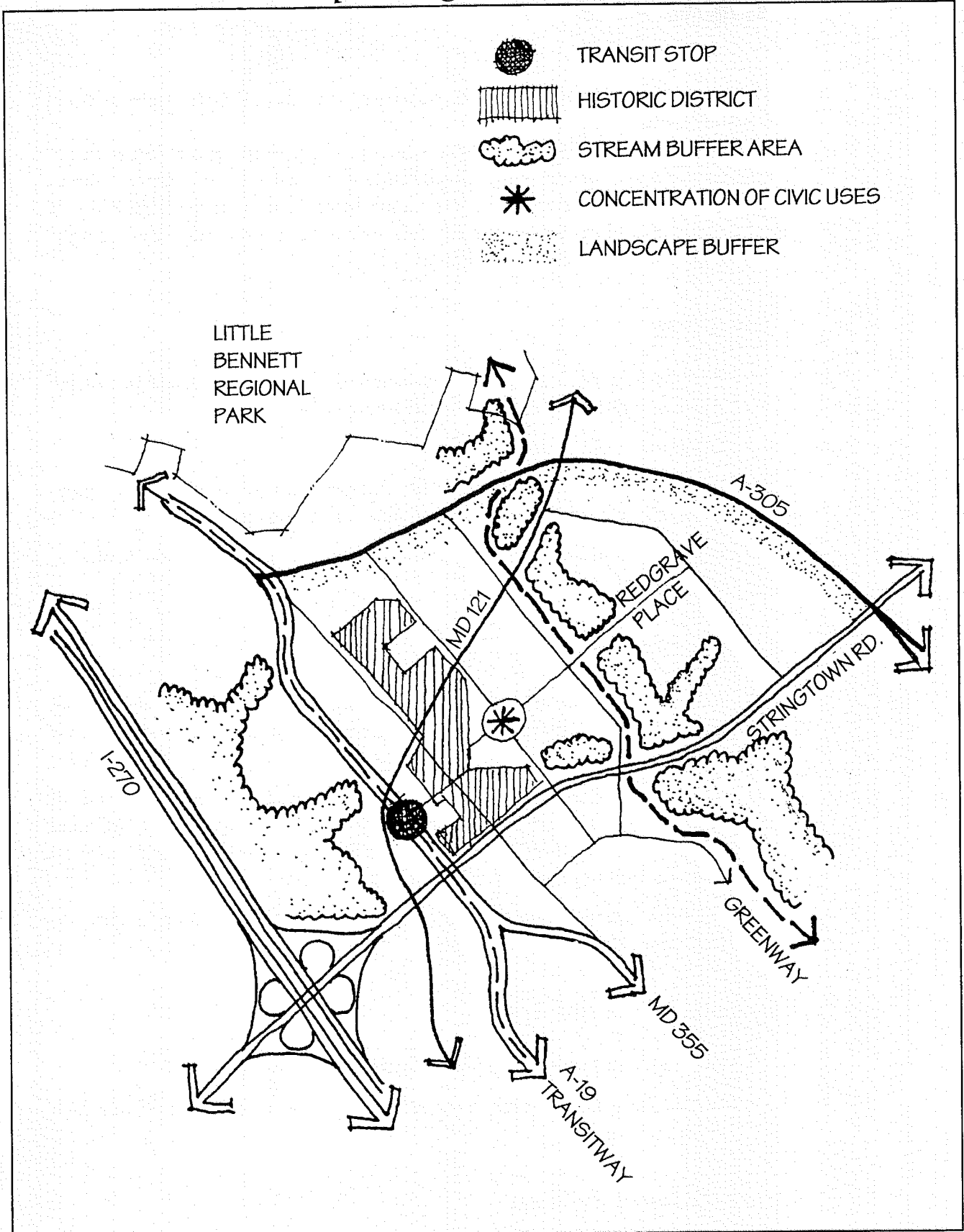
- Provides a concentration of civic uses (library, post office, elementary school, etc.) to help define the Town Center as the focal point of public activities.
- Provides a street system which facilitates pedestrian as well as automobile movement.
- Retains the existing character of MD 355 as a "Main Street" for local traffic rather than a major highway for regional traffic.
- Proposes a transit stop in the Town Center.
- Proposes a buffer concept around the historic district to protect its character.
- Proposes a mix of housing types throughout the Town Center.
- Proposes a pattern of development similar to traditional "town squares."
- Designates an area visible from I-270 for high-technology employment uses.

*Town Center Illustration*



# Town Center Concept Diagram

Figure 12



## *Policy 7 Transit- and Pedestrian-Oriented Neighborhoods*

This Plan clusters development into a series of transit- and pedestrian- oriented neighborhoods.

One of the major Plan challenges is how to channel and direct future development in a way that will allow future residents to feel part of a larger community. The neighborhood is the basic building block in establishing that sense of community. This Plan proposes a number of neighborhoods which are characterized by similar elements as illustrated in Figure 13:

### **Mix of Uses**

- Establishes a mix of uses in each neighborhood to encourage pedestrian travel and reduce dependency on the automobile.
- Discourages separation of uses.
- Provides a pattern of development that provides for retail uses, employment opportunities, open spaces, schools, and housing units.
- Proposes retail and employment uses at a pedestrian scale and oriented to the needs of residents.

### **Interconnected Streets**

- Provides more direct access for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles to all areas of the neighborhood, including transit stations, retail stores, civic space, and residences.
- Encourages the use of a wide variety of road sections available in Montgomery County, which range from tree-lined boulevards (divided primary streets) to the more narrow residential streets (secondary streets) that are found in many of the older neighborhoods.
- Provides sidewalks along both sides of the streets and encourages on-street parking.

### **Diversity of Housing Types**

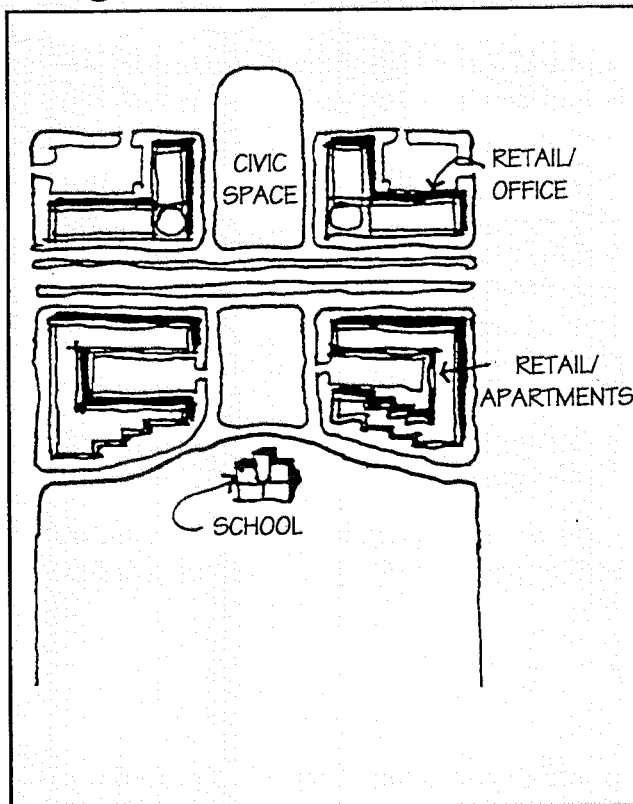
- Endorses a mix of unit types at the neighborhood level.
- Avoids large concentrations of any single type of housing within each neighborhood.

### **Street-Oriented Buildings**

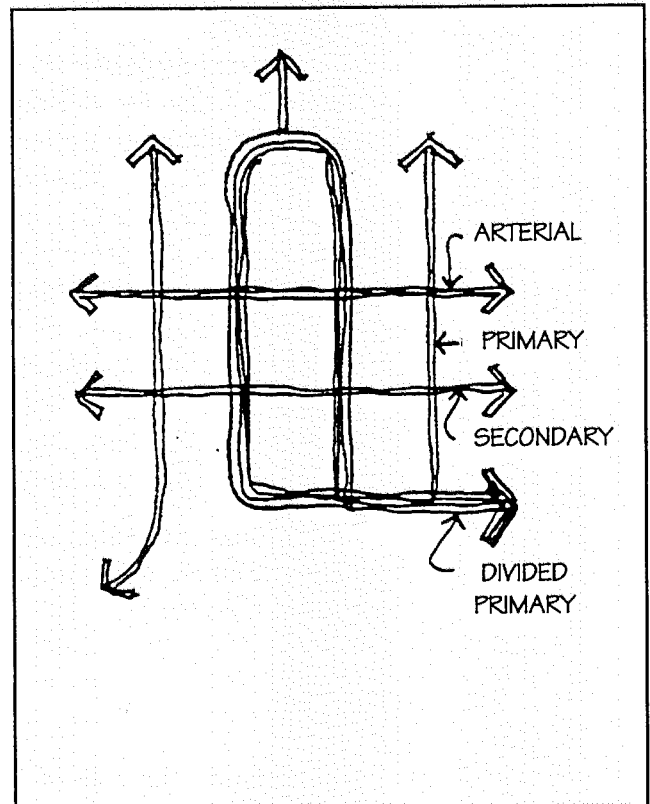
- Fosters the creation of transit- and pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods by proposing that buildings be clustered along streets.

# Transit- and Pedestrian-Oriented Neighborhoods

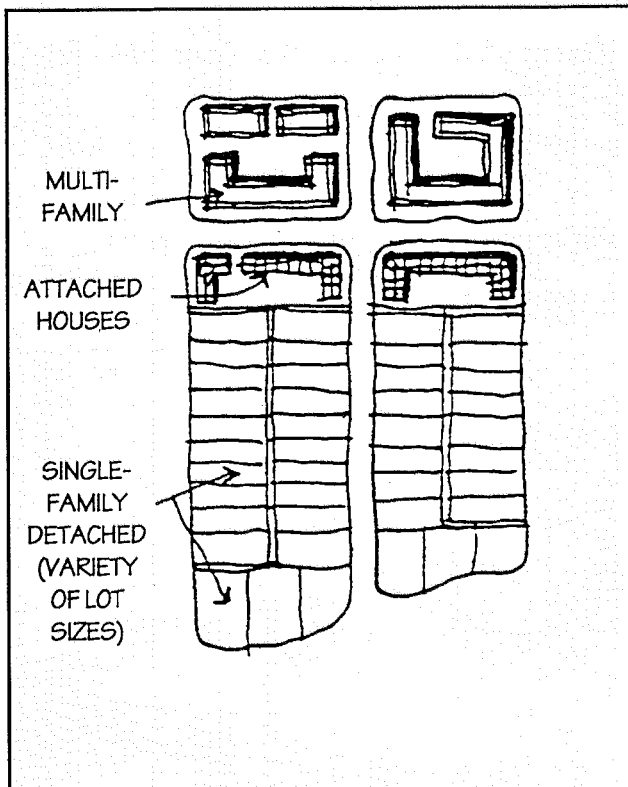
Figure 13



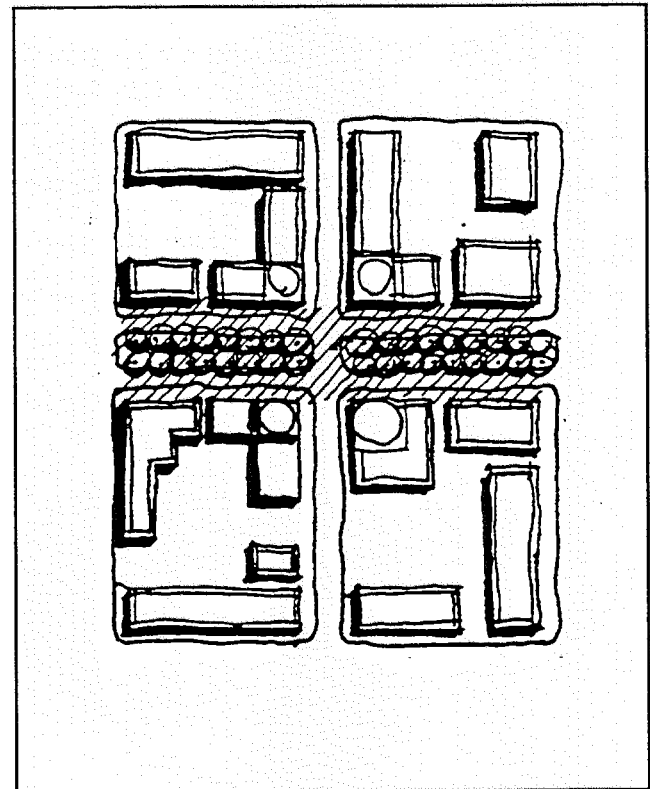
1. Mix of Uses



2. Interconnected Streets



3. Diversity of Housing Types



4. Streets Oriented Buildings

## *Policy 8 Employment*

This Plan emphasizes the importance of I-270 as a high-technology corridor for Montgomery County and the region and preserves key sites adjacent to I-270 for future employment options.

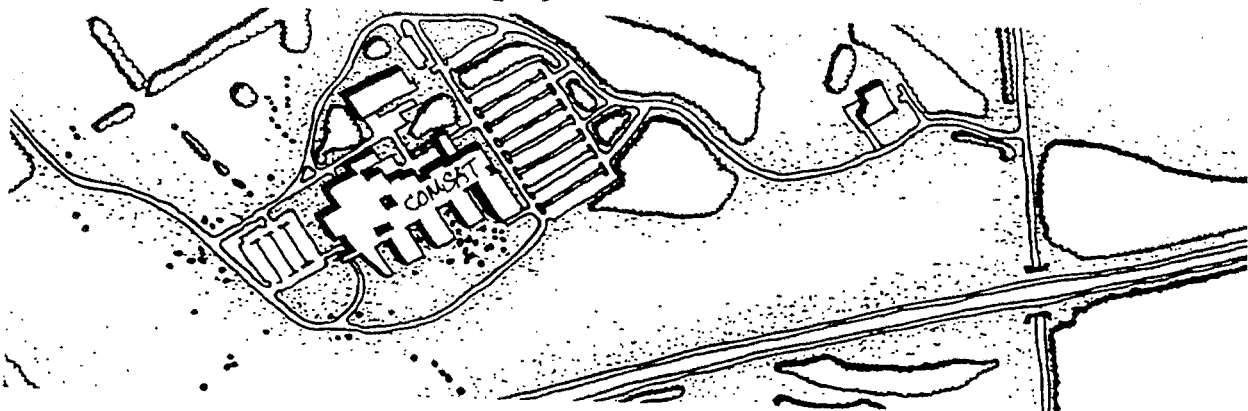
The proximity of Clarksburg to I-270 has resulted in the location of two significant employment campuses in the area: Comsat and Gateway 270. These two areas, both zoned for office and light industrial uses, could ultimately generate more than 20,000 jobs. Although these two campuses are likely to meet employment needs for years to come, this Plan recognizes the long term importance of I-270 as a high-technology corridor. For this reason, the Plan designates acreage on both sides of I-270 for employment sites. In addition to being visible from I-270, these sites lie near existing or proposed interchanges and are large enough to allow comprehensively designed employment centers.

Additional limited employment uses are recommended at transit stops, at the Town Center, and in neighborhoods as part of a mixed-use land use pattern as shown in Figure 14.

### **This Plan:**

- Continues the role of I-270 as a high technology center but proposes a scale and intensity of employment use that is consistent with a town scale of development.
- Supports the continued development of Clarksburg's two major employment areas: Gateway 270 and Comsat.
- Broadens the employment base by identifying areas for non-office, low intensity industrial uses.
- Incorporates office and retail uses as part of neighborhood development.
- Continues small scale industrial uses north of Comus Road.

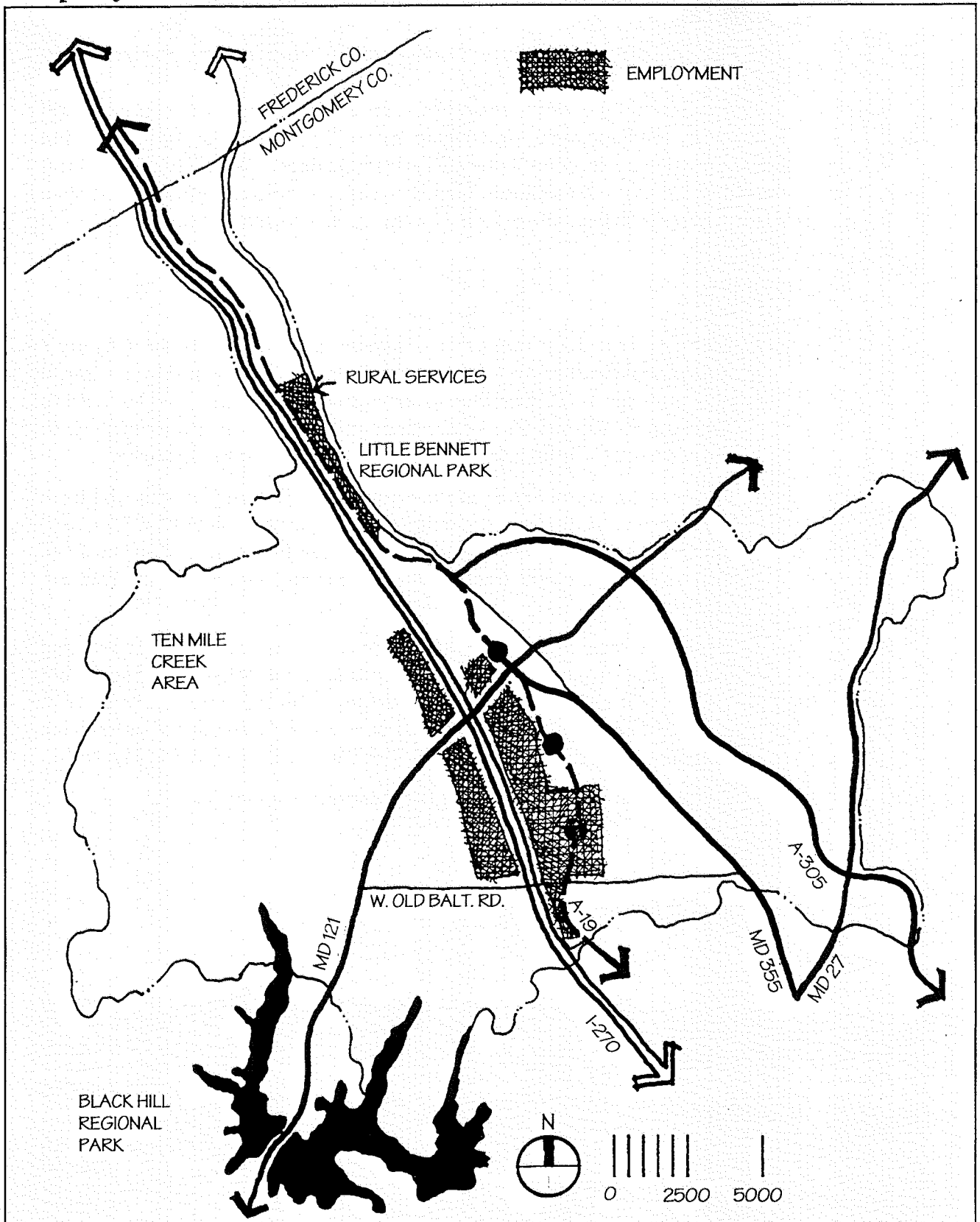
### *Employment Along I-270*





# Employment

Figure 14



## *Policy 9 Farmland Preservation*

This Plan supports and reinforces County policies which seek to preserve a critical mass of farmland.

The Clarksburg Study Area adjoins an area designated as "Agricultural Reserve" by the Functional Master Plan for the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space in Montgomery County (October 1980). That Plan states that when the Clarksburg Master Plan is revised, "additional farmland and open space acreage probably will be added" to the total Agricultural Reserve.

### **This Plan:**

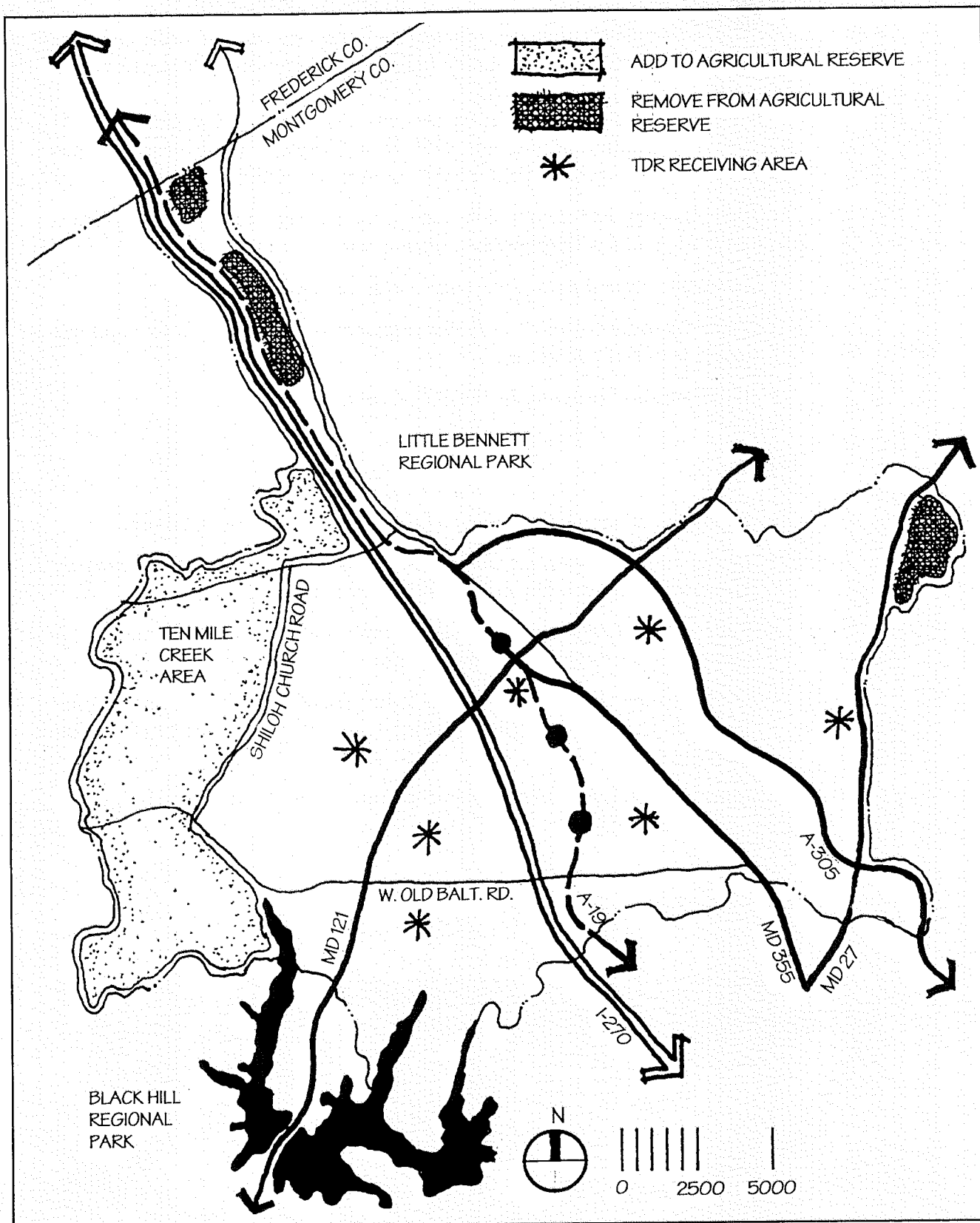
- Proposes that 1,900 acres in Clarksburg be added to the County's Agricultural Reserve Area. This recommendation will help create a transition from the I-270 Corridor to productive agricultural land in western Montgomery County. The preservation of farmland will also contribute to the concept of Clarksburg as a town surrounded by rural open space.
- Proposes that certain areas in the vicinity of Clarksburg be removed from the Agricultural Reserve. Approximately 392 acres are involved. The agricultural character of these areas, also shown in Figure 15, will be changed once the land use and transportation recommendations of this Plan are implemented.
- Designates certain properties as TDR receiving areas. The TDR program is described in more detail in the Implementation Strategies chapter, but essentially it allows the transfer of density from the Agricultural Reserve area to Master Plan designated "receiving areas." Generalized areas being proposed as TDR receiving areas in this Plan are highlighted in Figure 15.
- Endorses the use of agricultural Best Management Practices.

### *Agricultural Reserve Area Illustration*



# Farmland Preservation

Figure 15



## *Policy 10 Staging*

This Plan recommends that development be staged to address fiscal concerns and to be responsive to community building and environmental protection objectives.

The end-state Land Use Plan will require a substantial amount of capital facilities. The Montgomery County Office of Planning Implementation has pointed to the need for additional revenue sources to fund these facilities.

Other planning concerns which underscore the need for opening development areas in accord with established staging principles, include:

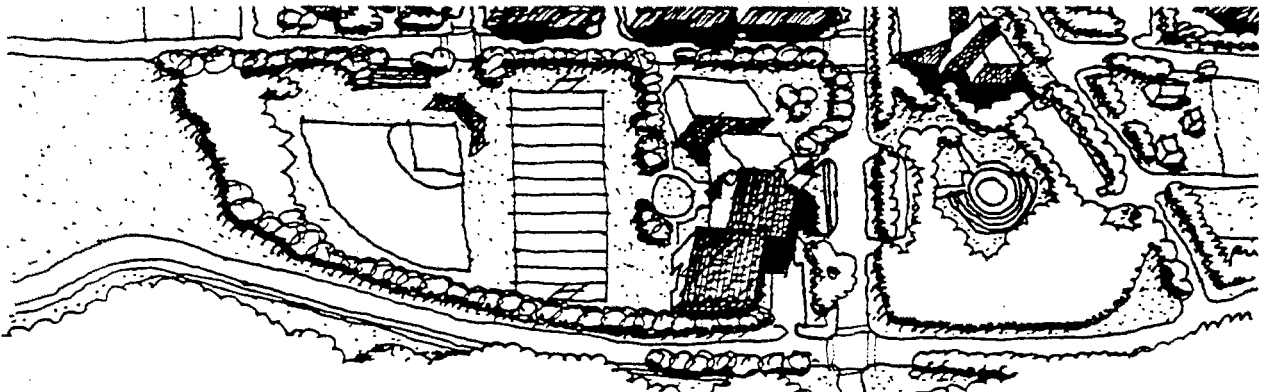
- Sewage treatment and conveyance system capacity constraints.
- Plan objectives to foster early development of the Town Center and the east side of I-270 in general.
- Environmental concerns in Ten Mile Creek.

### **This Plan:**

- Identifies six staging principles to help guide growth in Clarksburg.
- Designates four geographic staging areas (see Figure 54) and staging events which must occur prior to development of each stage.
- Relies on the Comprehensive Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan to implement the staging recommendations.
- Outlines how the Annual Growth Policy (AGP) and the Comprehensive Water Supply and Sewerage Systems Plan can be supportive of zoning strategies.

The properties affected by this recommendation are shown in Figure 16.

### *Public School Illustrative Sketch*



# Staging

Figure 16

