

burtonsville



crossroads

neighborhood plan



turning a Crossroads into a Community

Public Hearing Draft

## **burtonsville crossroads neighborhood plan**

### **Abstract**

This plan contains the text and supporting maps for a comprehensive amendment to the approved and adopted 1997 Fairland Master Plan. It also amends The General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, as amended, the Master Plan of Highways within Montgomery County, as amended, and the Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan, as amended. This Plan makes recommendations for land use, zoning, design, transportation, environment, and community facilities.

### **Source of copies**

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8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760

Online at: [montgomeryplanning.org/community/burtonsville](http://montgomeryplanning.org/community/burtonsville)

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**burtonsville commercial crossroads  
neighborhood planning study**

Public Hearing Draft  
Prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Department  
May 2012

MontgomeryPlanning.org

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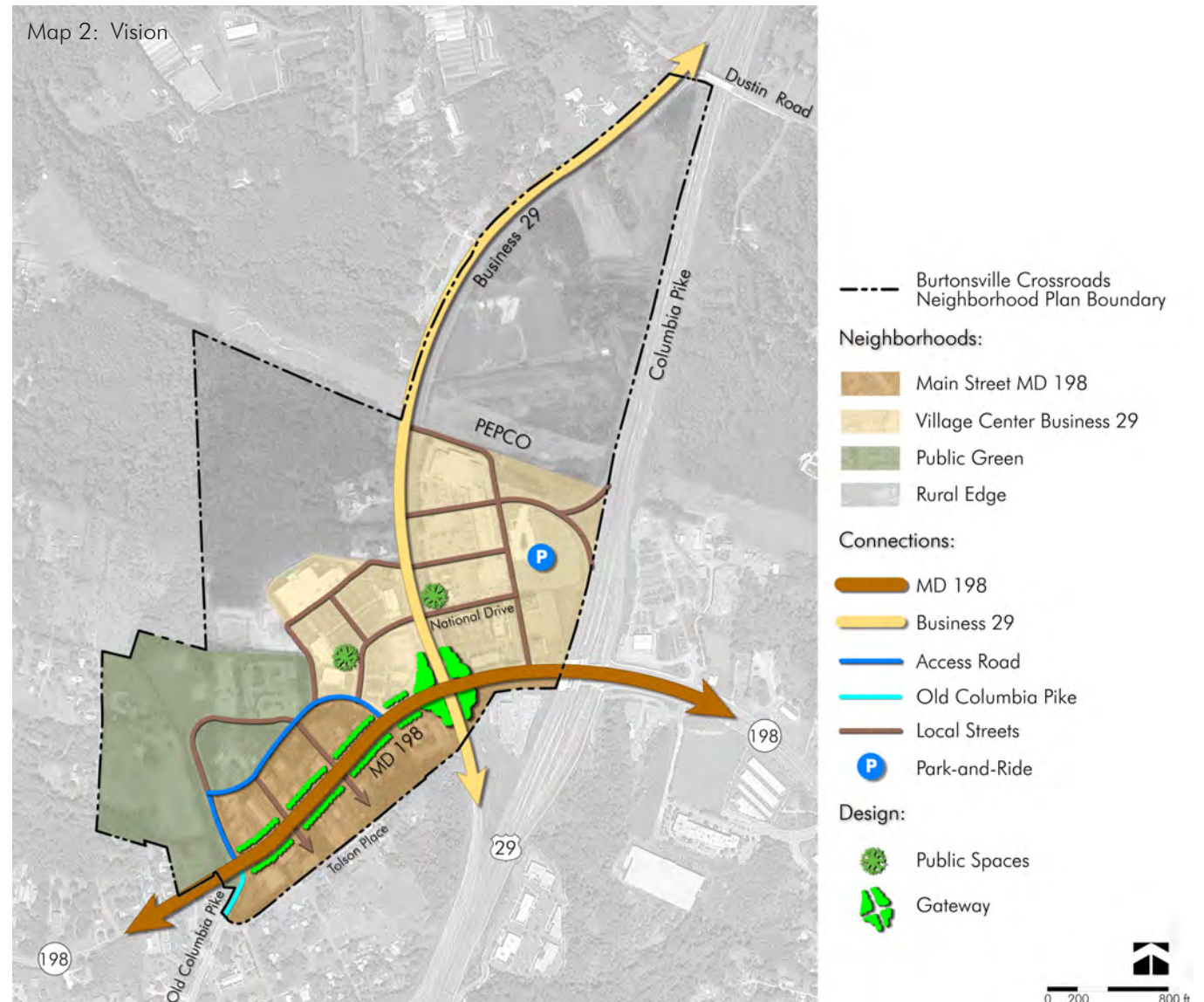
Map 1: Burtonsville Vicinity



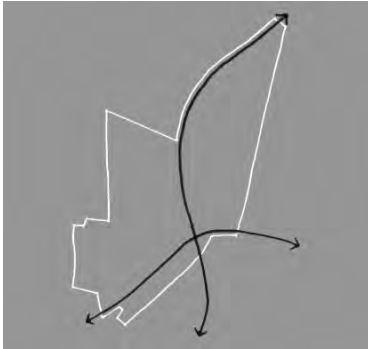
## crossroads into community

The Burtonsville Crossroads Neighborhood Plan will foster the creation of a complete community designed at a scale to serve the surrounding area with small businesses, retail, local services, offices, residential and open spaces for local events, conservation, and recreation. The community will be connected together by a system of enhanced local streets, sidewalks and trails.

Burtonsville will be designed at the scale of a neighborhood center. The communities along US 29 include the major employment centers of the Silver Spring Central Business District, the consolidated campus of the Food and Drug Administration, and the evolving Cherry Hill Road Employment Area/White Oak Science Gateway Center. The major highways of MD 198 and US 29 along with the nearby Intercounty Connector (MD 200) and the transit center (park-and-ride lot) provide regional access from Burtonsville to these employment centers.

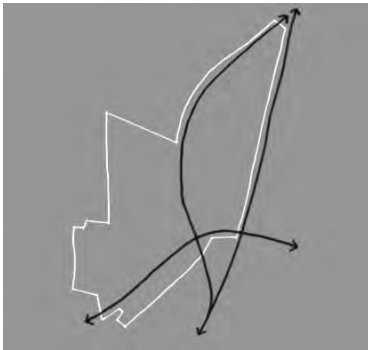






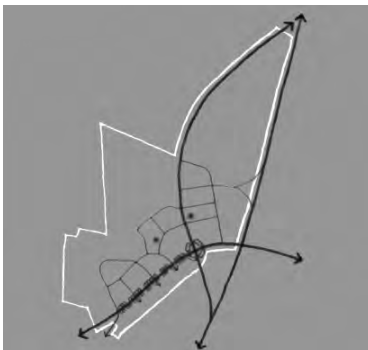
### 1. 1900 to 2004: Crossroads

Burtonsville began as a small, rural crossroads commercial area located at the intersection of US 29 and MD 198. The crossroads served the surrounding, low density agricultural area. Single-use commercial zoning and incremental road widening accommodated the local businesses. US 29 and MD 198 were designed to provide for access from the areas located north/south and east/west of Burtonsville.



### 2. 2005 to Present: Bypass

In 2005, US 29 was relocated to the east of the original intersection with MD 198 to accommodate an increased volume of through traffic. As traffic increased along MD 198, conflicts with slow moving local traffic serving local businesses and through traffic were created. This bypass of Burtonsville eliminated direct access to an existing shopping center. Additional retail development located to the west of Old US 29 created vacancies to the east and the loss of a major tenant. Development pressures continued in the area north of the PEPCO line which caused environmental stress to the tributary headwaters of the Patuxent River.



### 3. 2012: Community

The Plan's vision is to transform the area from a crossroads to a complete community. The Plan supports the transformation by allowing a variety of uses including residential, creating a main street, improving local vehicular and pedestrian connections between properties, providing public spaces for recreation and gathering, and by focusing on infill and redevelopment in the village center and not in the surrounding watersheds and agricultural lands. Roads in the Plan area will serve the local community as well as through traffic.



## Themes

Burtonsville will be a complete community with a main street and public green, village center, and a rural edge. Pedestrians will be able to walk to the elementary school; ride a trail to Fairland Recreational Park; and walk to stores, restaurants, open space, and recreation opportunities.

The Plan area covers approximately 191 acres. The recommendations, taken together, form a cohesive way forward, defined by four themes that help create a complete community.

- connectivity - create an expanded network of streets, bikeways, and pedestrian routes
- design - create an identity that will help to create a sense of place
- economy - improve the local economy with a mix of uses and new implementation tools
- environment - preserve tributary headwaters and maintain rural character

These four themes are interrelated. For example, providing connections that allow pedestrians to walk from place to place will link customers to shopping opportunities and support economic vitality. Reducing conflicts between through traffic and local traffic on MD 198 will provide the opportunity to improve the design of MD 198.

Transforming existing surface parking lots into a more compact development pattern with green areas will reduce imperviousness and support an environmentally sensitive design pattern that protects the tributary headwaters of the Patuxent River.

The approach is a means to coordinate government investment in infrastructure and programs with private investment. This Plan sets a framework so that near- and long-term public and private decisions can occur in a coordinated manner where each action is another piece of the puzzle.



connectivity



design



economy



environment

## Community Outreach

Community involvement is a hallmark of the planning effort in Burtonsville. At the 2010 Burtonsville Day celebration, staff met with participants and identified the challenges and opportunities in Burtonsville. The East County Citizens Advisory Board (ECCAB), a group of representatives appointed by the County Executive, played a critical role throughout the planning process. The ECCAB, residents, property owners and government agencies were provided briefings from the beginning of the Plan.

During the first workshop with the ECCAB, participants identified the challenges and opportunities along MD 198 in the commercial area—a lack of trees and landscaping, the abundance of curb cuts, and an absence of sidewalks, bikeways, and trails. Additional workshops and open houses were held for the general public. Area residents, ECCAB members, property owners, and business owners developed a vision and identified community assets as follows.



- access to regional employment centers (Silver Spring, FDA, Rockville, and Ft. Meade) and major highways (US 29, MD 198, MD 200/ICC and I-95)
- commercial core with a diversity of local services and retail, including the existing “restaurant row”
- small business ownership
- the elementary school
- the lot
- two strip shopping centers
- fire tower built in the 1930s
- forested areas and streams

The Plan recognizes that these community assets can be the building blocks for change. As the market expands and owners find the incentive to take on new risk, the County can play its part through strategic actions and infrastructure improvements.

## Plan Context:

- **1993: Functional Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed** established environmental guidelines to protect drinking water resources.
- **1997: Fairland Master Plan** encouraged cohesive development and redevelopment.
- **1999-2009: Conservation Land Purchases** placed over 185 acres in the Patuxent River Watershed adjacent to the Plan area into forest conservation easements by private property owners or have been purchased by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission and State Highway Administration for environmental mitigation.
- **2002: MD 28/MD 198 Corridor Improvement Study, Purpose and Need Statement** outlines the State Highway Administration's proposed changes to the MD 198 corridor through Burtonsville.
- **2005: US 29 Realignment** separated local and through traffic and removed direct access to the commercial area.
- **2005: park-and-ride lot** brought in more through traffic, but with limited access to local businesses.
- **2008: DHCA's Burtonsville Community Legacy Plan** was completed with community involvement.
- **2009: Dutch Market and US Post Office** relocated outside of the Plan area.
- **2010: Burtonsville Crossroads Shopping Center** lost supermarket anchor (Giant).
- **2010: Burtonsville Town Square Shopping Center** opened with a Giant Foods, relocated from the Burtonsville Crossing Shopping Center (across Business 29).
- **2011: MD 200/ICC** opened a new cross-County east-west route, which supports redesigning MD 198 to focus on local traffic.





# challenges and opportunities

Attendees at each community workshop identified the vision, characteristics, and actions needed to transform Burtonsville into a complete community. The following challenges and opportunities were identified at the community workshops.

## Challenges

### economy

- regional competition
- high vacancy rates
- single-use zoning

### connectivity

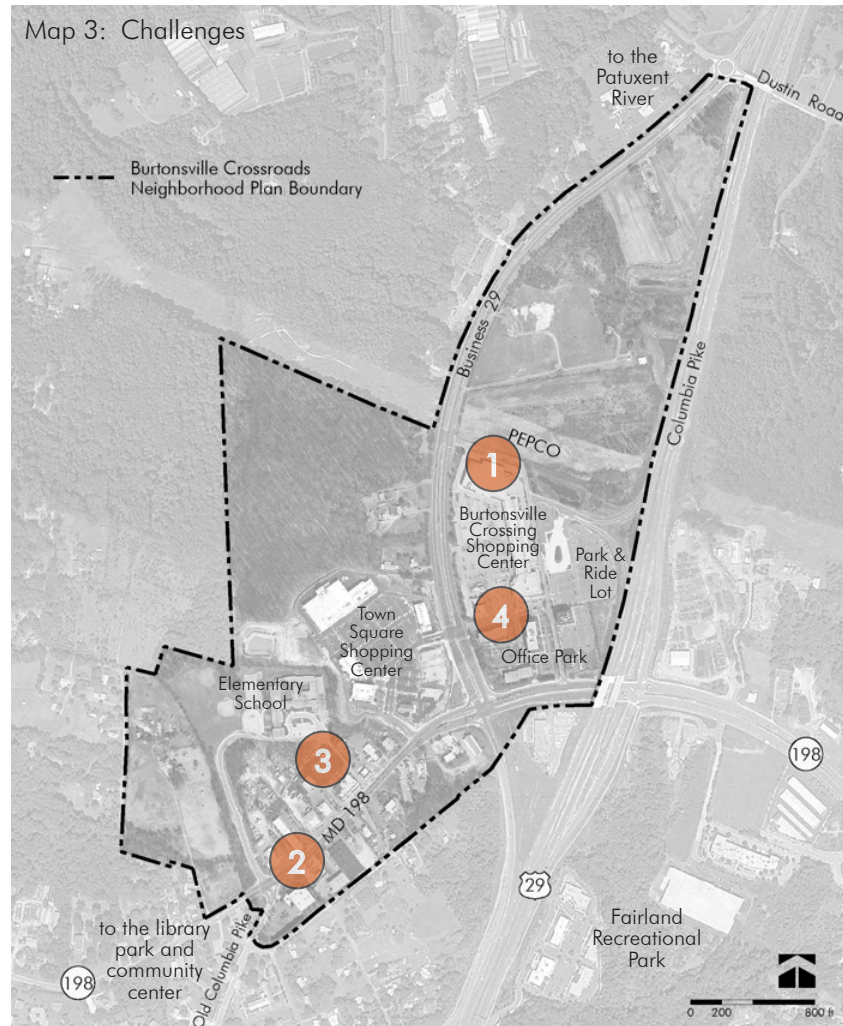
- conflicts between through and local traffic on MD 198
- limited local street network
- inadequate pedestrian infrastructure

### design

- auto-oriented development pattern
- inadequate pedestrian environment
- absence of public spaces

### environment

- declining water quality
- sensitive tributary headwaters
- high impervious levels
- appropriate sewer and water service



Vacant stores at Burtonsville Crossing



Lack of sidewalks



Under-used open space



Parking lots with high imperviousness

## Opportunities

The following opportunities can create a foundation for the transforming Burtonsville into a complete community.

### economy

- create safe highway and transit access
- provide local services for nearby employment centers
- support small businesses

### connectivity

- provide regional access
- create a “main street” on MD 198
- connect to the lot and regional transit
- provide a local grid of streets and access road
- improve street character
- provide bikeways and trails

### design

- provide a safe and attractive local street system
- improve building character
- provide a public green and open space
- support infill and adaptive reuse
- continue the façade improvement program
- provide adequate transition areas
- provide a better location and design of parking

### environment

- reduce imperviousness
- provide additional tree canopy and forest cover
- continue low-density zoning

Map 4: Opportunities



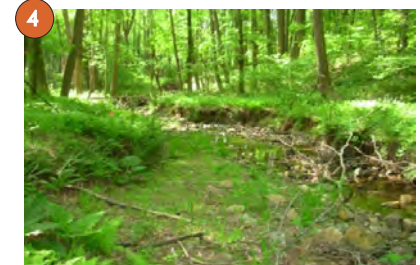
Support small businesses along MD 198



Create a main street along MD 198



Provide a public green area and recreation



Retain and enhance forest cover



## Economy

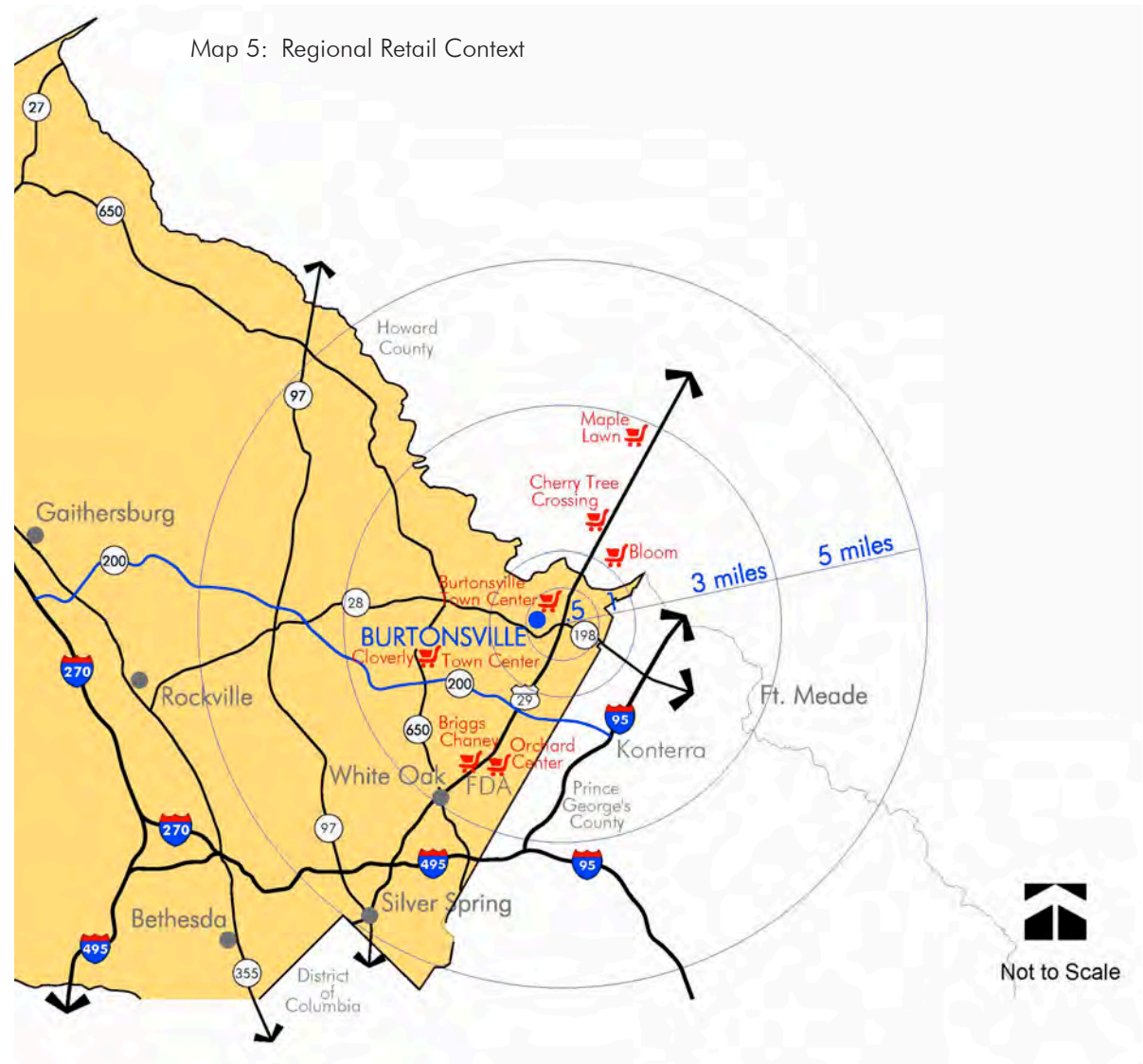
As a result of the relocation of US 29 and the creation of a raised bypass, both large and small businesses in Burtonsville have suffered from the loss of direct access by through traffic. But Burtonsville's regional accessibility can extend its market area. This concept is critical because the local market is not strong enough to support the existing and planned businesses. The challenge is to broaden the reach of the community and build on its major assets of accessibility and special stores and restaurants.

Burtonsville's regional accessibility opens the opportunity for a "trail head" economy to capture the significant number of vehicles that pass by each day. Capturing commuters at Burtonsville's park-and-ride lot by providing direct access to the retail can also sustain local businesses. This accessibility, coupled with the large land parcels, creates the potential for coordinated development that supports local businesses and attracts new customers over time.

## Challenges

- regional competition
- high vacancy rates
- single-use zoning

Map 5: Regional Retail Context



### regional competition

Burtonsville faces current and future competition with other retail centers both within and beyond Montgomery County. Seventeen-thousand households have a choice of six grocery stores within a three-mile drive including one grocery store within the Plan area boundary. Because data indicates that the threshold for maintaining a grocery store is approximately 4,000 households, the opportunity for establishing another shopping area anchored by a grocery store in the Plan area is limited.

Table 1: Burtonsville Area Housing Units and Population

distance	housing units	population
0.5 mile	361	1,019
1 mile	2,023	5,951
3 miles	17,394	47,121
5 miles	61,375	161,514

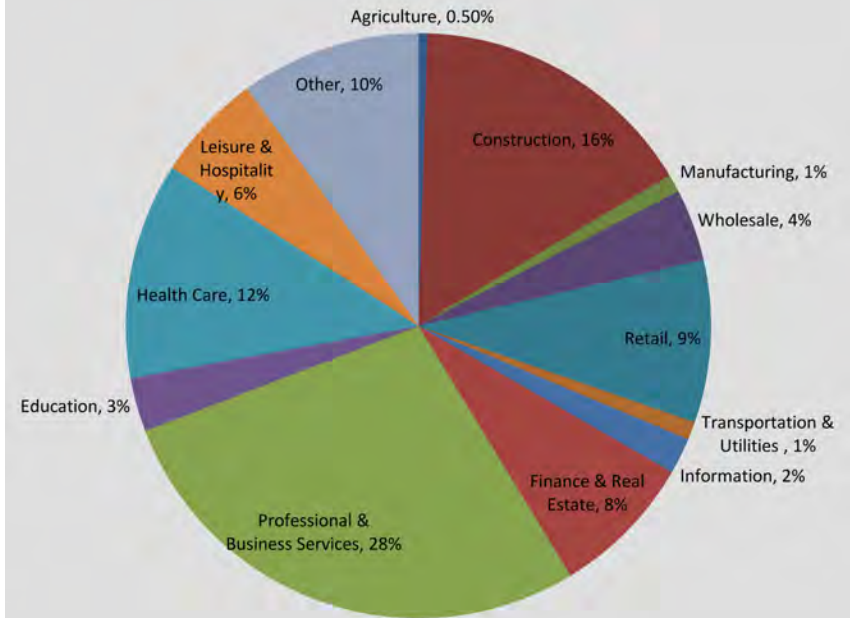
Within a three-mile radius, Burtonsville competes with the following retail centers:

- Burtonsville Town Square (130,000 retail square feet, anchored by a Giant)
- Burtonsville Crossing Shopping Center (129,726 retail square feet, empty anchor)
- Briggs-Chaney Market Place (192,000 retail square feet, anchored by a Safeway)
- Cloverly Town Center (28,500 office square feet, 17,500 retail square feet, and a 45,400 square foot Safeway)
- Orchard Center, Cherry Hill Road (425,000 retail square feet, anchored by a Target and Super Fresh)
- Bloom Scaggsville, Howard County (70,000 retail square feet, anchored by a Food Lion/Bloom)
- Cherry Tree Crossing, Scaggsville, Howard County (40,000 retail square feet, no grocery anchor)
- Maple Lawn, Howard County (180,000 retail square feet, 1,340 housing units, and 1.6 million office square feet, anchored by a future Harris Teeter)

### Illustration 1: Business Establishments by Major Industry Group

There are 96 business establishments in the Plan area:

- \$10.2 million payroll
- 1,155 jobs
- \$2,197 average monthly wage



Source:

Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, ES-202 establishment records. Data is aggregated when the number of establishment records does not meet disclosure requirement



### *high vacancy rates*

Burtonsville has 730,000 square feet of leasable space. The office and retail space at Burtonsville Crossing has significant vacancies (over 30 percent). In addition, the County's 2007 Burtonsville Market Study found approximately 1.0 million square feet of retail space in the primary market area, and an additional 1.5 - 2.0 million square feet are under construction, planned or approved (page 6). The study also found that "most of the retail gap will be filled by new and proposed development, particularly Konterra's retail" (page 7). Additional retail is also planned in White Oak/Cherry Hill with the White Oak Science Gateway Plan.

### *single-use zoning*

Single-use zoning dominates the crossroads area. This zoning does not allow a flexible response to the market. The allowed office, commercial, and industrial zones don't provide a mix of uses or any public space, nor do they support infill redevelopment. The standards in the existing nonresidential zones provide significant limitations to the existing local businesses and future commercial development in Burtonsville as follows:

- C-1 zone, Convenience commercial - The narrow range of retail land uses and low building heights limit the ability of the Burtonsville Crossing Shopping Center to respond to market changes and changed regional access.
- C-2 zone, General commercial - This commercial zone does not permit housing, does not foster the creation of the open spaces needed to serve the community, does not promote infill development critical to existing small businesses, and does not provide a transition to the adjacent neighborhoods.
- O-M zone, Office building, moderate intensity - The properties in this office zone have substantial vacancies. Widening the range of permitted uses and providing the opportunity for street-oriented retail would improve the potential to lease these existing properties.
- I-1 zone, Light industrial - This industrial zone allows for unlimited FAR (floor area ratio) with building heights of 100 feet that are not in scale with the community.

Table 2: Existing Zoning

Zone	Description	Acres	Limitations	Single-Use Zoning	Residential Allowed
C-2	General Commercial	47.39	Limited mix of uses yields shopping centers, 1.5 FAR, high impervious levels	Yes	No
C-1	Neighborhood Commercial	13.34	Limited commercial uses (no office, department stores, automobile services) has created acres of parking/imperviousness	Yes	No
O-M	Office Building (Moderate Intensity)	10.46	Limited retail uses, height limited to 60', 1.5 FAR, high impervious levels	Yes	No
I-1	Light Industrial	1.44	Limited office uses, parking requirements restrict floor area	Yes	No
RC	Rural Cluster	101.06	One house per 5 acres, 18 of 24 properties are non-conforming (i.e., >5 acres)	Yes	Yes
RE-1	Residential, one family	16.77	One-family detached on 40,000 sq. ft. lots, no mix of uses	Yes	Yes

### Isaac Burton's Store

Historically, Burtonsville was called Burton's, taking its name from Isaac Burton, who in 1825 became the area's major landowner. The area grew around the intersection of Old Columbia Pike and Sandy Spring Road (MD 198).



In the 1850s, Isaac Burton became the area's first postmaster and operated out of his store at the intersection. Today, Burtonsville continues to center around the intersection of MD 198 and US 29.

### Market for Small Businesses

The Dutch Country Farmers Market was a regional destination integral to the cultural, business, and community image of Burtonsville. The numerous and varied restaurants in Burtonsville suggest a potential for specialized or destination retail combined with neighborhood shopping. According to the Department of Housing and Community Development's 2002 Market Study, Burtonsville can accommodate restaurants and specialty stores that don't require a mall location.

## Opportunities

- create safe highway and transit access
- provide local services for nearby employment centers
- support small businesses

Burtonsville has the potential to serve local and regional markets. A Planning Department analysis indicates a significant outflow of retail sales (shoppers going elsewhere to purchase goods and services). Retail data shows a significant opportunity for additional sales, up to \$6.9 million in 2010 in a three-mile radius. This retail gap reflects demand across all retail categories except automotive and hardware uses.

#### *create safe highway and transit access*

Burtonsville is located on the major north-south highway of US 29 and the east-west highway of MD 198. In addition, Burtonsville includes a large park-and-ride lot and transit center. Old US 29/Old Columbia Pike is illustrated in the Plan as Business 29 (not the official road name). This off-ramp for southbound US 29 is an important entry point for vehicles coming into Plan area. These transportation facilities represent a significant asset for the area.

#### *provide local services for nearby employment centers*

Three large employment centers are planned within a five-mile radius of Burtonsville. These centers will provide a nearby market to support the economy in Burtonsville.

- Konterra, Laurel, Prince George's County (1.5 million retail square feet, 3.8 million office square feet, 4,500 housing units, and 600-room hotel)
- US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Campus, White Oak (over 10,000 employees and six million square feet of Federal laboratory and office space)
- Ft. Meade, Anne Arundel County (1.8 million square feet military office space)

#### *support small businesses*

The local businesses in the area create a unique resource of family-owned businesses including "restaurant row" for Burtonsville. The small businesses on MD 198 should be retained and expanded to serve local demand. The large shopping centers along Business 29 have the opportunity to redevelop to serve the local and future regional demand. The opportunity exists to make zoning changes that allow a greater mix of uses, including housing.



## Connectivity

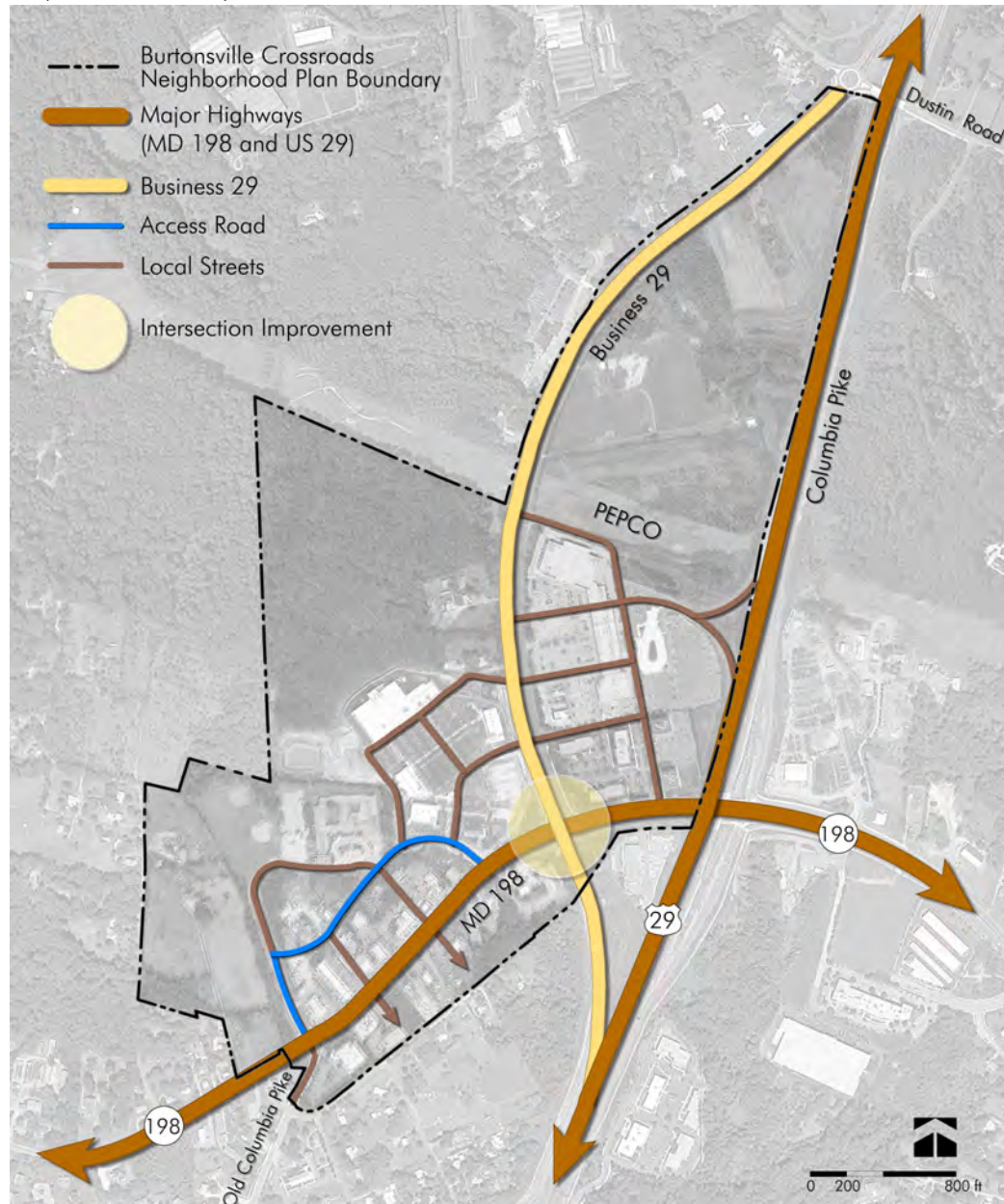
Existing highways and arterials connect Burtonsville to the region. A system of local streets, sidewalks, and trails could improve the connectivity between parcels, essential to creating a cohesive community. The safe and attractive design of the highways, arterials, local streets, sidewalks, and trails often provide a positive first impression of a community and invite people to use the businesses, open spaces, and planned activities.

The relocation of US 29 created an elevated bypass and eliminated direct access into the commercial core. With plans by the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) to follow-up with the widening of MD 198 through Burtonsville, property owners are concerned about how the widening will impact their parking, business operations, pedestrian access, and circulation. The result of these transportation changes is a focus on highways for through traffic and a loss of a sense of community.

## Challenges

- conflicts between through and local traffic on MD 198
- limited local street network
- inadequate pedestrian infrastructure

Map 6: Connectivity





### *conflicts between through and local traffic*

Burtonsville is dominated by through traffic on MD 198 and Business 29. Numerous curb cuts and left turns for local traffic along MD 198 create conflicts with through traffic. Reducing the conflict is significant challenge.

### *limited local street network*

The focus on through traffic has overlooked local traffic. Burtonsville lacks a system of local streets essential to creating a safe and efficient circulation pattern. A system of local streets should accommodate vehicles, but also provide a safe and attractive pedestrian environment that links local businesses.

### *inadequate pedestrian infrastructure*

Burtonsville's current street pattern has created a difficult and unpleasant place to walk and ride a bicycle. The area does not have a system of continuous sidewalks, bikeways or trails. This lack of sidewalks and bike routes along and across MD 198 and Business 29 leaves the businesses and services disconnected. The park-and-ride lot and the nearby Fairland Recreational Park are also not connected to the commercial area.

## Opportunities

- provide regional access
- create a "main street" on MD 198 and improve Business 29
- connect to the park-and-ride lot and regional transit
- provide a local grid of streets and an access road
- improve street character
- provide bikeways and trails

### *provide regional access*

The Intercounty Connector (MD 200) provides a new east-west traffic connection between I-270 and I-95. The ICC provides the opportunity for MD 198 to be reclaimed as a street to serve local traffic and businesses.

### *create a "main street" on MD 198 and improve Business 29*

MD 198 has the opportunity to serve as the main street for Burtonsville. The existing conditions along this State road include two eastbound and two westbound traffic lanes (see Illustration 3). The transition of the area from a crossroads to a community would be supported by recasting MD 198 as a main street that can anchor a grid of perpendicular local streets that provide access to development. MD 198 could be designed to form a positive first impression of the community by including a landscaped median, sidewalks, and a bikeway. A continuous sidewalk and bikeway along MD 198 through the Plan area is proposed by SHA.



### **MD 198 Improvement Project**

In 2002, the State's MD 28/MD 198 Corridor Improvement Study had the stated goals of relieving local congestion while managing access; improving safety and operations for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians; and preserving quality of life while realizing local planning visions (page 3).

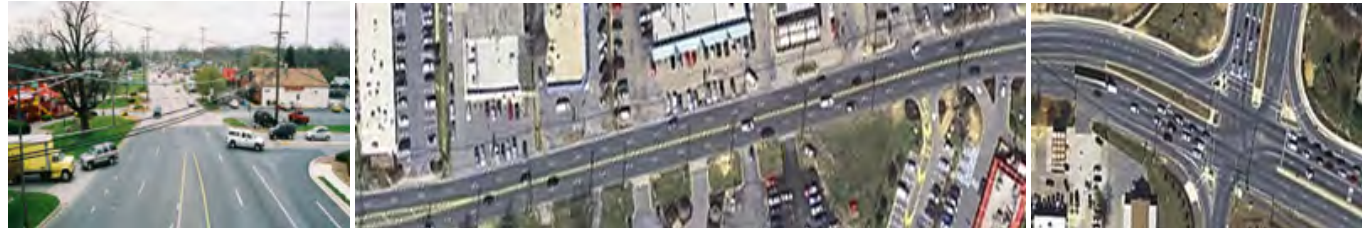
Residents have noted that left turns from MD 198 into local businesses are extremely difficult and bicycling is hazardous. The improvement project has the potential to recast MD 198 through Burtonsville as a local main street.

Illustration 2: Main Street MD 198 - Challenges

## Major Highway (M-76)

### Plan

Min. right-of-way: 120 feet  
Lanes: 4 lanes, divided



Challenges: high-speed through traffic, multiple curb cuts, no turn lanes, no local streets, no sidewalks or streetscape

## Main Street MD 198-Challenges



### Western Gateway:

- no formal gateway
- short transition from rural area to commercial area
- safety at the primary intersection
- no street character

### Main Street MD 198:

- high-speed through traffic
- multiple curb cuts
- limited crosswalks
- no connections between parcels
- left turn conflicts
- no street character
- no median

### Eastern Gateway:

- no formal gateway
- limited transition from major highway, US 29 to Main Street MD 198 and Business 29
- limited access to the office core from MD 198
- concrete median



### Illustration 3: Main Street MD 198 - Opportunities

#### Major Highway (M-76)



Opportunities: new grid of streets, enhanced crosswalks, streetscape



#### Western Gateway:

- four-way intersection to transition from rural area to Main Street
- striped crosswalks to improve safety
- streetscape along both sides of MD 198
- formal gateway

#### Main Street MD 198:

- connect parcels with sidewalks
- provide crosswalks at intersections
- provide a landscaped median with consolidated left turn lanes and curb cuts, and new local streets
- improve the character of Main Street MD 198:
  - establish a variety of building heights
  - provide for infill and adaptive reuse of buildings and continue to improve building facades
  - front retail buildings on Main Street MD 198
- create a streetscape pattern that avoids conflicts with retail signage

#### Eastern Gateway:

- enhance the median and orient buildings to MD 198 to provide a transition from the Major Highway of US 29 to Main Street MD 198 and Business 29
- provide streetscape along the entrance driveway to the office core
- extend streetscape along both sides of MD 198

Note: The proposed local streets show the general location of streets, not the actual alignments.

***connect to the park-and-ride lot and regional transit***

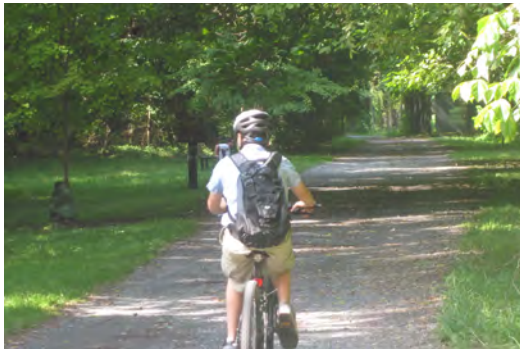
This transit facility provides an opportunity to link the local businesses in Burtonsville to the region. The park-and-ride lot is located behind the existing Burtonsville Crossing Shopping Center with access from US 29, Business 29, and MD 198. The 500 parking spaces are served by Metrobus, Maryland Transit Authority (MTA) Commuter Bus, University of Maryland Shuttle, and ICC Bus to the nearby airport. The park-and-ride lot is also included in a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network under study by Montgomery County. The Metro bus connects to Silver Spring and the Metro stations. The commuter bus provides daily, rush hour service to Washington D.C. and Baltimore, with stops at the Silver Spring Metro Station and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Dupont Circle, Federal Triangle, Capitol Hill, and the Washington Navy Yard. The ICC bus travels from Gaithersburg with stops at the Shady Grove Metro Station, the Norbeck park-and-ride, and the Burtonsville park-and-ride before taking I-95 to the BWI Amtrak Station.

***provide a local grid of streets and an access road***

A new system of local streets could provide the opportunity to connect the area with sidewalks, bikeways, trails, and new streets to provide access to retail and residential development. Improved intersections, park-and-ride lot connections, and improved crosswalks could also be included. A completed segment of the access road should be extended to provide local circulation and a secondary access to Burtonsville Elementary School.







### *improve street character*

Streets are one of the major opportunities to create a positive first impression of a community. The opportunities to improve pedestrian circulation and vehicular access in Burtonsville include:

- creating “main street” MD 198 - new median, wide sidewalks, street trees, lighting, and street furniture would significantly enhance the design character of MD 198. Access points along MD 198 should be consolidated
- improving business 29 - bikeway along the east side, and street trees in the median and along both sides
- providing the access road - new street with a narrow right-of-way, on-street parking, and streetscape compatible with the existing elementary school would link the areas north of MD 198
- creating a grid pattern of local streets - new system of narrow public or private streets could expand access between parcels, create a system of short blocks, and improve pedestrian access. Many existing buildings along MD 198 are oriented to the future local street grid.

### *provide bikeways and trails*

A new system of local streets could provide the opportunity to connect the area with sidewalks, bikeways, trails, and new streets to provide access to retail and residential development. Improved intersections, park-and-ride lot connections, and improved crosswalks could also be included. A completed segment of the access road should be extended to provide local circulation and a secondary access to Burtonsville Elementary School.

## Design

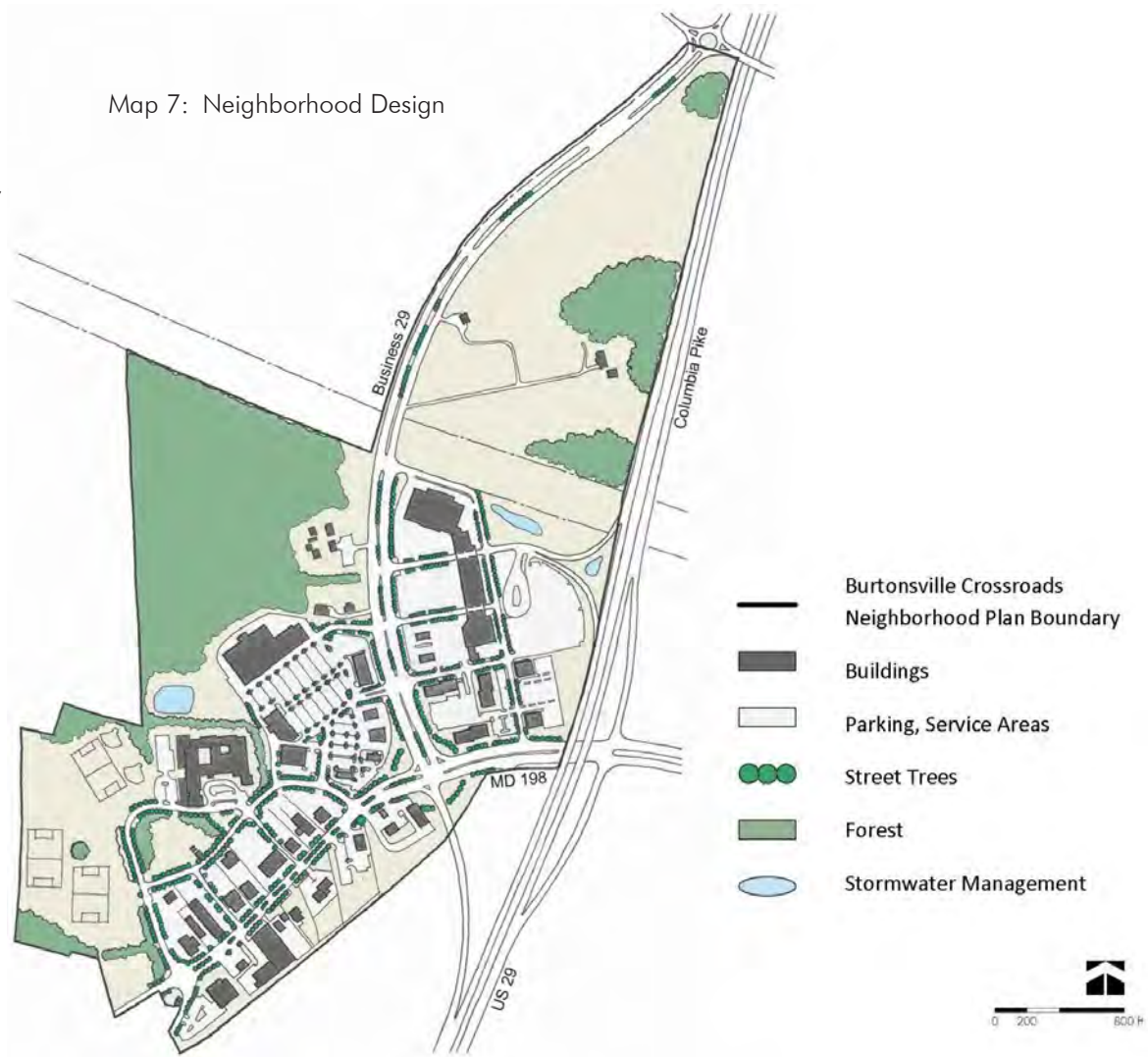
Improving the visual character and perception of Burtonsville is critical to the success of the neighborhood commercial activity. Improving the design of pedestrian infrastructure, public spaces, signage, facades, automobile access, and gateways will favorably change the perception of Burtonsville as it transforms into a complete community.

## Challenges

- automobile-oriented development pattern
- inadequate pedestrian environment
- absence of public spaces

### ***automobile-oriented development pattern***

Burtonsville is an automobile-oriented place. The development pattern along MD 198, for example, provides few connections between properties. Customers generally need to exit and enter onto busy, fast moving MD 198 each time they go to another nearby business. Conflicts occur between local and through traffic because of left turns and random right turns into properties along MD 198. A result of the automobile orientation is the lack of a defined center.



### ***inadequate pedestrian environment***

Sidewalks are limited and they don't provide functional, safe, and attractive places for pedestrians. Bikeways are disconnected.

### ***absence of public spaces***

Within the commercial area, there are no public open spaces for recreation and gathering. In the past decade, informal local gathering places like the Dutch Country Farmers Market, fire station, and post office were relocated outside the Plan area. The only remaining public gathering space is the elementary school. The larger Burtonsville area has a number of community facilities, including a community center, local and regional parks, and a library. Events like Burtonsville Day celebrations are held outside the crossroads area.

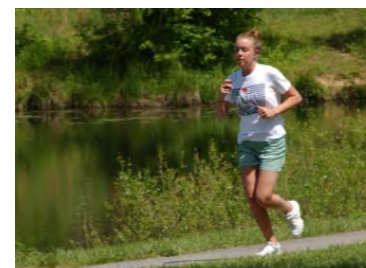
#### **Burtonsville Day**

Burtonsville holds an annual Burtonsville Day in September, celebrating Isaac Burton's life.

This community-wide social event has included activities such as live musical entertainment, a health fair, a celebrity basketball game, a parade with high school bands, fire and rescue apparatus, local scout troops, and local business floats. The parade begins at Paint Branch High School and ends at the Praisner Community Center along Old Columbia Pike.

The fair, held on the grounds of the community center, includes crafters and vendors, a pet show, a moon bounce, an auto show with classic and custom cars and trucks, and a library fair.

The Knights of Columbus and the Burtonsville Lions Club offer a variety of food and local groups provide the entertainment including children's dance companies, tae kwon-do and karate groups, and music bands.



The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (PROS) and the Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) identify the need for three recreation fields in the Eastern County. PROS and LPPRP estimate recreational needs by broad planning areas to the year 2020, rather than for small neighborhood planning areas such as Burtonsville.



## Opportunities

- *provide a safe local street system*
- *improve building character*
- *provide a public green and open space*
- *support infill and adaptive reuse*
- *continue the façade improvement program*
- *provide adequate transition areas*
- *provide a better location and design of parking*

### ***provide a safe local street system***

New local streets, including an access road, will contribute to recreating Burtonsville as a complete and cohesive place. An interconnected grid of local streets between MD 198 and the planned access road could provide a pedestrian environment, enable on-street parking, and create options for street-oriented development. These streets should include street trees and adequate sidewalks to provide an important resource for the Burtonsville Crossroads Neighborhood. The high quality design of these streets will be an important resource for the area.

### ***improve building character***

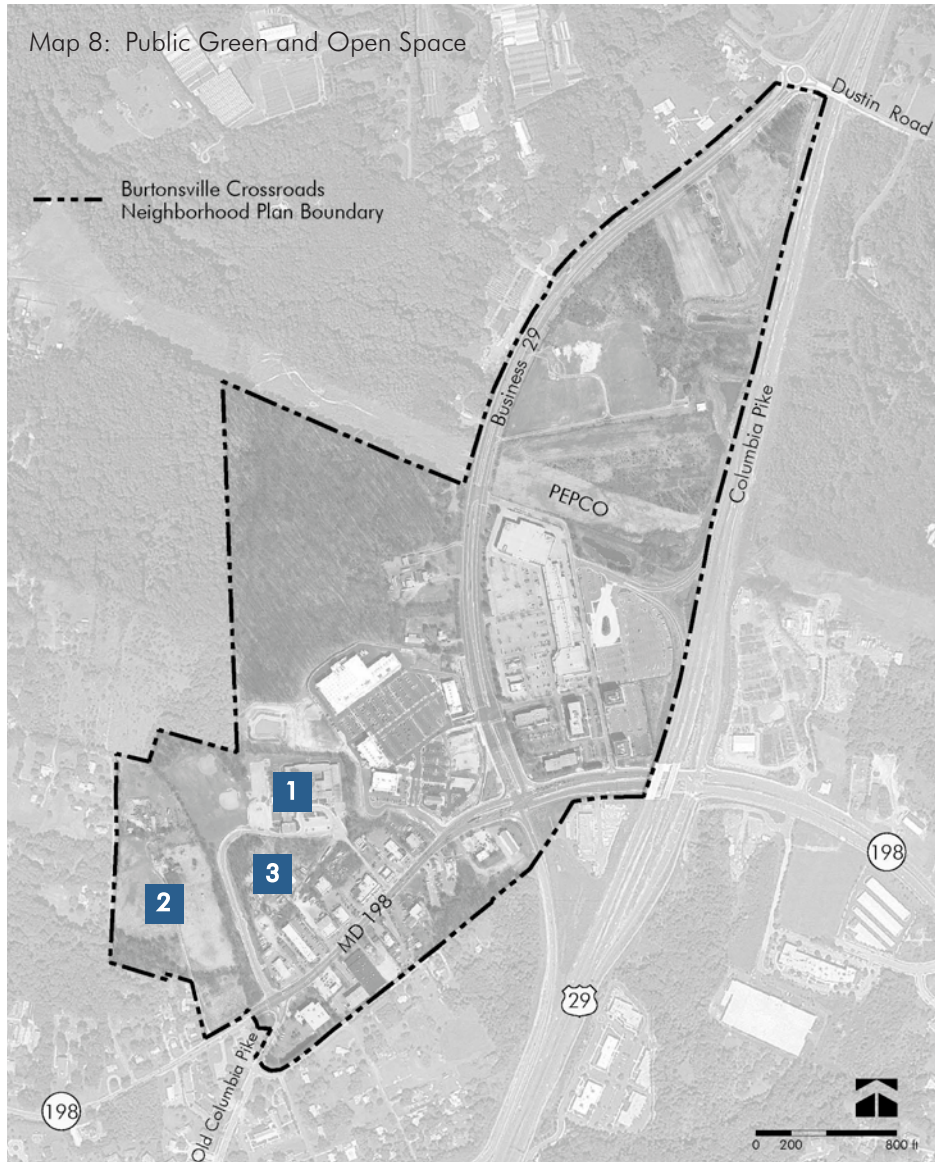
Buildings of varying heights within the maximum allowed limits provide an opportunity to give Burtonsville a more distinct character different from other commercial areas in Montgomery County. South of MD 198, buildings should be compatible and make an appropriate transition to the adjacent single-family detached neighborhood. North of MD 198, building heights and locations should define streets and fill gaps in a new grid of streets. Adjacent to US 29 and the existing four-story office buildings, taller building heights are compatible and will help identify Burtonsville to through traffic.

### ***provide a public green and open space***

Situated one block away from MD 198, between the elementary school and proposed access road, the Burtonsville Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) property could create a central public green that is notably lacking in Burtonsville. This public space could be used for events such as Burtonsville Day. In addition, public spaces should be located on the two shopping center sites to provide high quality private or public open space as a part of their redevelopment. Opportunities to provide public space are along Main Street MD 198, in the rural open space north of the PEPCO lines, and at the public green.

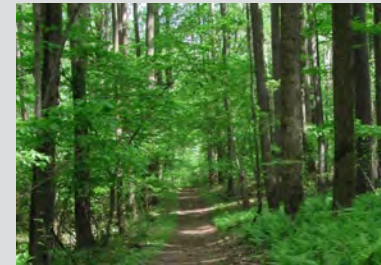


Map 8: Public Green and Open Space



#### Public space along main street

Along MD 198, additional public space is needed to accommodate streetscape, a lawn panel, and spaces for trees.



#### Rural open space

The sensitive design and preservation of the stream buffer areas will limit development and expand tree canopy.



#### Public Green

The public green will be the most visible gathering space in Burtonsville. The space will be flexible to serve a variety of community functions, will include additional tree canopy, and should create only a limited increase in imperviousness above existing levels with shared parking of facilities.

The design of the village green will include three areas:

- 1** elementary school with space for future expansion
- 2** future local park for active recreation on the Athey property
- 3** open space designed for a variety of public events on Volunteer Fire Department property.

### *support infill and adaptive reuse*

Infill with new development and reuse of existing structures can bring a vibrant mix of uses and architectural styles to the Burtonsville streetscape. Infill and reuse will support expansion and allow existing businesses to grow without moving from Burtonsville. Infill and reuse also will also provide continuity along the streetscape and enhance the pedestrian experience along MD 198.

- Existing buildings should continue to be reused and expanded.
- Significant new development will occur primarily between Business 29 and US 29, infill development will occur primarily along Main Street MD 198.



#### **Adaptive Reuse:**

From a residence to a commercial use



#### **Adaptive Reuse:**

From a fire station to a restaurant



#### **Infill:**

Example of small infill, Bethesda



#### **Existing Infill:**

Newer buildings on each side of an older building



#### **Potential Infill:**

Site for potential infill development



### *continue the façade improvement program*

Two buildings have received façade improvements, with two more to follow in the second phase as part of the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) program designed to improve the existing retail facades on Main Street MD 198. The Burtonsville Community Legacy Plan was completed in 2008, and the Burtonsville Street Face Analysis and Recommendations was completed in 2010. These plans were followed by the Façade Easement Program that has begun to transform a portion of Main Street MD 198. This program along with the associated Signage Easement Program provides changes to an existing building exterior, signage, lighting, landscaping, and maintenance.



#### **Examples of Existing Facades:**

Unimproved facades along Main Street MD 198



#### **Examples of Recent Façade Improvements by DHCA:**

Façade improvements along proposed Main Street MD 198

Source: DHCA



#### **DHCA Programs:**

The DHCA programs encourage other property owners along MD 198 to participate in the façade improvement program. They also support a signage and gateway program for the Burtonsville Main Street.

Source: DHCA Burtonsville Community Legacy Plan, Basile Baumann Prost Cole & Associates, Inc. and Rhodeside & Harwell.



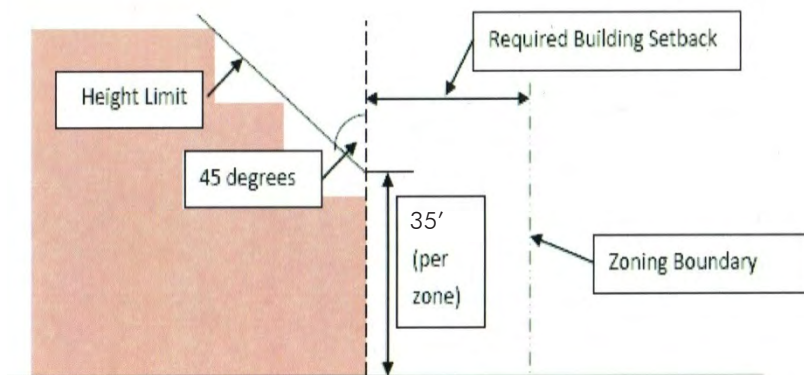
**provide adequate transition areas**

Appropriate building heights and landscaped setbacks are necessary to achieve compatibility between redevelopment and the adjacent, existing and proposed neighborhoods. One of the CRN Zone requirements is to establish building heights and setbacks that ensure compatible relationships with adjoining, single-family neighborhoods.

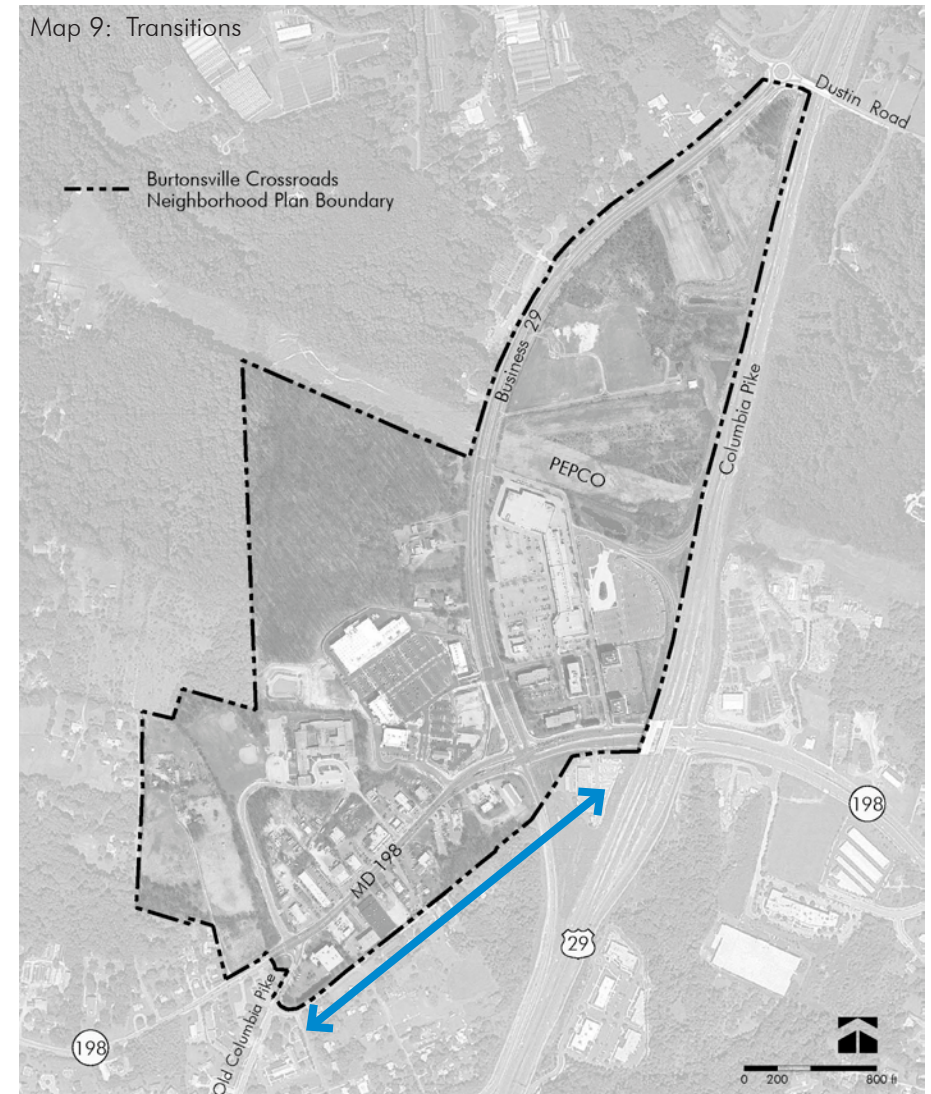
- Appropriate building heights and landscaped setbacks are necessary to achieve compatibility between redevelopment and the adjacent, existing and proposed neighborhoods. One of the CRN Zone requirements is to establish building heights and setbacks that ensure compatible relationships with adjoining, single-family neighborhoods.



Green space along Tolson Place will provide a transition from future buildings in the CRN Zone to single-family detached neighborhoods in the R-200 Zone.



Building heights and setbacks in the CRN-Zone adjacent to a single-family residential zone (R-200).



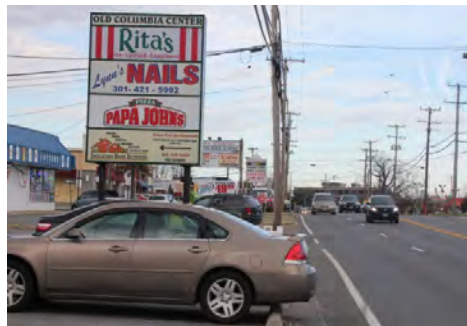
Setback area for buildings to match the requirement in the adjacent R-200 Zone.

*provide a better location and design of parking*

Along MD 198, shopfront parking and pavement extends up to the street edge, creating hazards for pedestrians and motorists, and an unattractive view from the street. As significant redevelopment occurs, existing parking within the public right-of-way will be relocated. A better solution is to screen the parking from MD 198, and the best solution is to locate the parking spaces to the side or back of buildings.

Sidewalks should be continuous along streets to improve the connection between properties. Structured parking should be well designed with retail or other uses on the street level without long large expanses of blank walls.

**Parking locations along MD 198**



Existing: Parking within the right-of-way



Better: Parking screened from sidewalk and highway



Best: Parking located behind or to the side

Large surface parking areas are suitable for temporary uses such as a farmers market and seasonal sales. These surface parking areas could also be used for special community events such as the Burtonsville Day celebrations.

**Temporary use of parking lots**





## Environment

Three tributary headwaters of the Patuxent River originate in Burtonsville. The Plan's recommendations should enhance protection of this drinking water resource and major open space feature of the Maryland landscape.

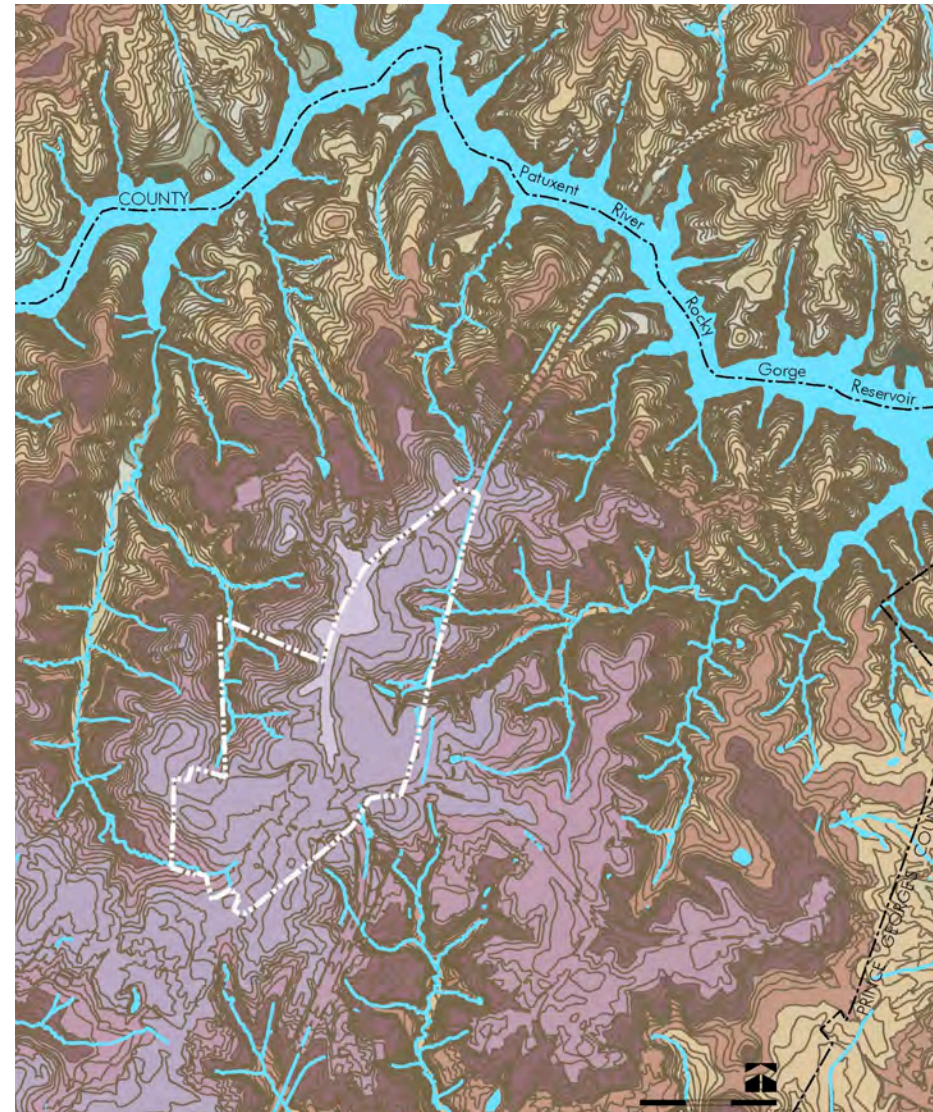
The Burtonsville commercial area is located along a ridge separating the Patuxent River and the Anacostia River Watersheds. The topography north of MD 198 descends about 225 feet from the ridge to the Rocky Gorge Reservoir in the Patuxent River.

Development constraints in the northern areas include the presence of three tributaries (with declining water quality), the Patuxent River Primary Management Area (PMA) restrictions, the imperviousness limit, and a sewer extension limitation. These constraints will limit the size and placement of development.

## Challenges

- declining water quality
- sensitive tributary headwaters
- high impervious levels
- sewer and water service

Map 10: Sensitive Headwaters and Topography



### Patuxent River Primary Management Area

The goals for the primary management areas along the Patuxent River and its tributaries is to maintain low-density, low-intensity land uses within 1/4 mile of the mainstem and within 1/8 mile of tributaries, as well as to actively establish a forested buffer along all streams. The PMA guidelines are applied to development projects that are submitted to M-NCPPC for subdivision and site plan review, and are otherwise voluntarily implemented and strongly encouraged on remaining parcels throughout the watershed.





### ***declining water quality***

The low-density zoning, acquisition of sensitive environmental resources, and the limit of 10 percent imperviousness have been established to preserve the quality of the drinking water in the Patuxent River Watershed. The data collected on water quality indicates that these existing policies protecting the Patuxent River, including the 10 percent imperviousness limit, have not been enough to protect the quality of the drinking water. As a result, the water quality in the Patuxent River Watershed continues to decline.

Development impacts that contribute to declining water quality include:

- significant clearing of natural vegetation
- grading and altering natural drainage
- impervious surfaces that prevent or reduce infiltration

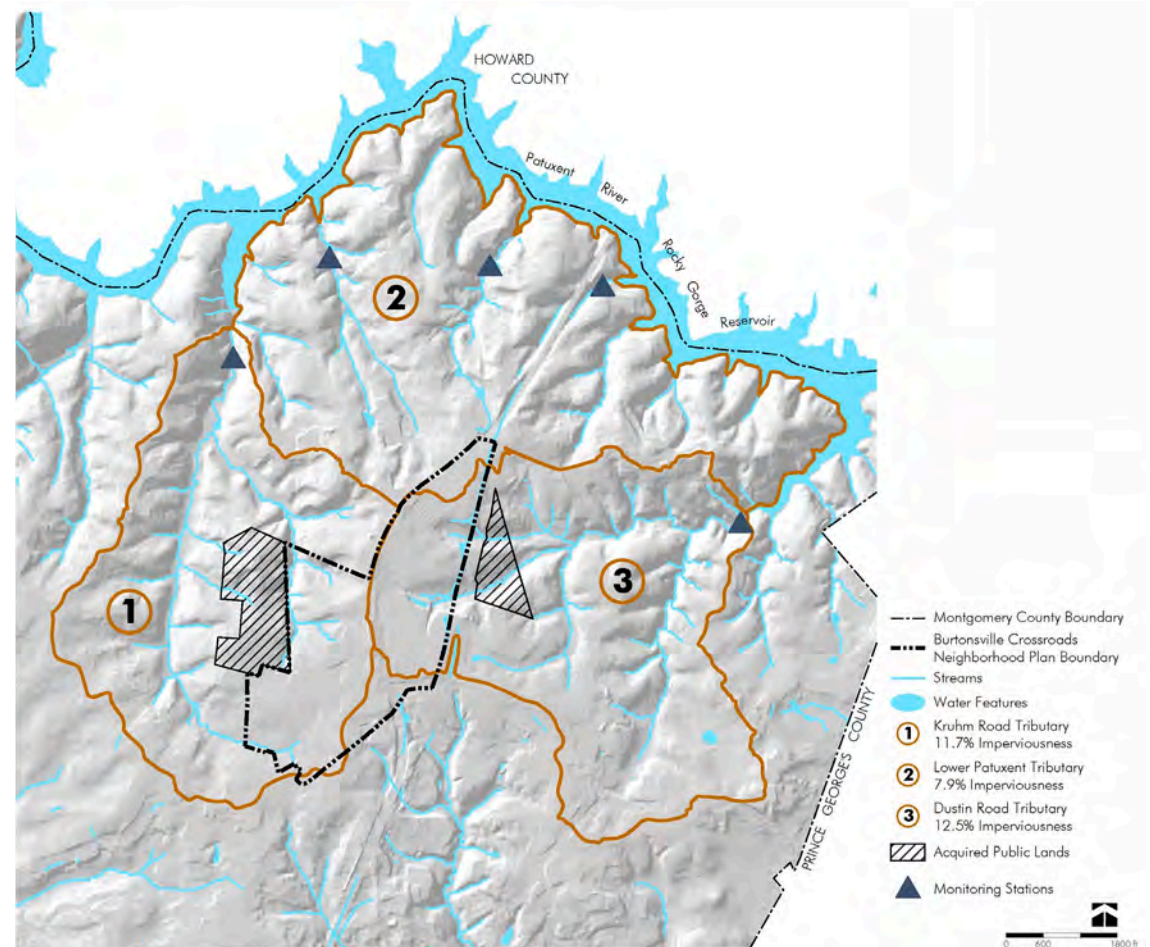
### ***sensitive tributary headwaters***

Protecting the sensitive subwatersheds and tributary headwaters of the Patuxent River is essential to maintaining the water quality of the County's water supply. The majority of the drainage area of the Plan is in the Patuxent River Watershed and three of its subwatersheds:

- Kruhm Road
- Lower Patuxent-Rocky Gorge
- Dustin Road

The headwaters of the three tributaries to the Patuxent River begin in the Plan area. Monitoring wells in the vicinity of Burtonsville indicate that the water quality has declined. The Rocky Gorge Reservoir is under stress and has been designated by the Maryland Department of the Environment as impaired. WSSC has noted that "Currently, water quality is adversely affected by excess nutrients entering the Reservoir so that the lower depths of water lack oxygen during several summer months each year and sediments carried into the Reservoirs are reducing their storage capacity. Both water quality and quantity issues are of concern. Development and other land disturbing activities have the potential to continue to decrease water quality by adding sediments, nutrients and other pollutants that are carried from construction activity, paved areas and lawns to the reservoirs through runoff."

Map 11: Patuxent River Subwatersheds and Tributaries



### ***high impervious levels***

Most of the existing development in the crossroads area was built before there were County requirements for stormwater management. New development should limit impervious surfaces and be subject to current stormwater management regulations, both of which are intended to provide much needed protection for the tributary headwaters.

### ***sewer and water service***

The properties in Burtonsville's commercial neighborhood are served by community water and sewer service. The challenge is to focus development to the commercial neighborhood and limit sewer service in the rural areas to protect the sensitive tributary headwaters.

### **Opportunities**

- reduce imperviousness
- provide additional tree canopy and forest cover
- continue low-density zoning

### ***reduce imperviousness***

Reducing imperviousness has been established as the appropriate method to protect environmentally sensitive areas. For example, the Paint Branch and Upper Rock Creek Special Protection Areas (SPA) have an eight percent limit on imperviousness.

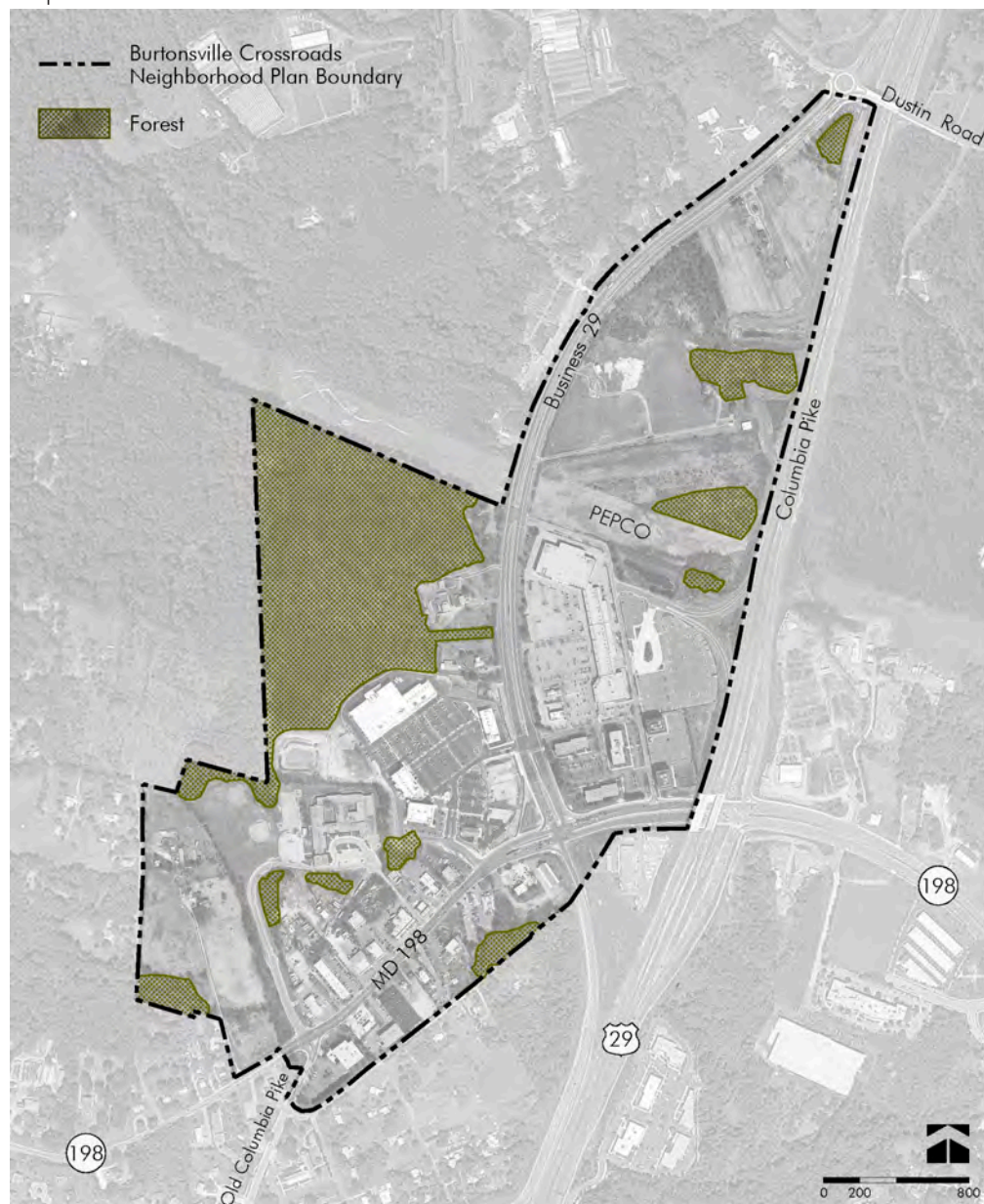
### ***provide additional tree canopy and forest cover***

Approximately 20 percent of the Plan area is forested. Some of this forest area is protected with conservation easements. An additional 10 percent of the Plan area has canopy cover from individual trees and landscaped areas. Parking lots and major roads could also include tree cover either as a part of landscaping or from street trees.

### ***continue low-density zoning***

The RC Zone has a cluster option and averages less than eight percent imperviousness countywide.

Map 12: Forest Cover

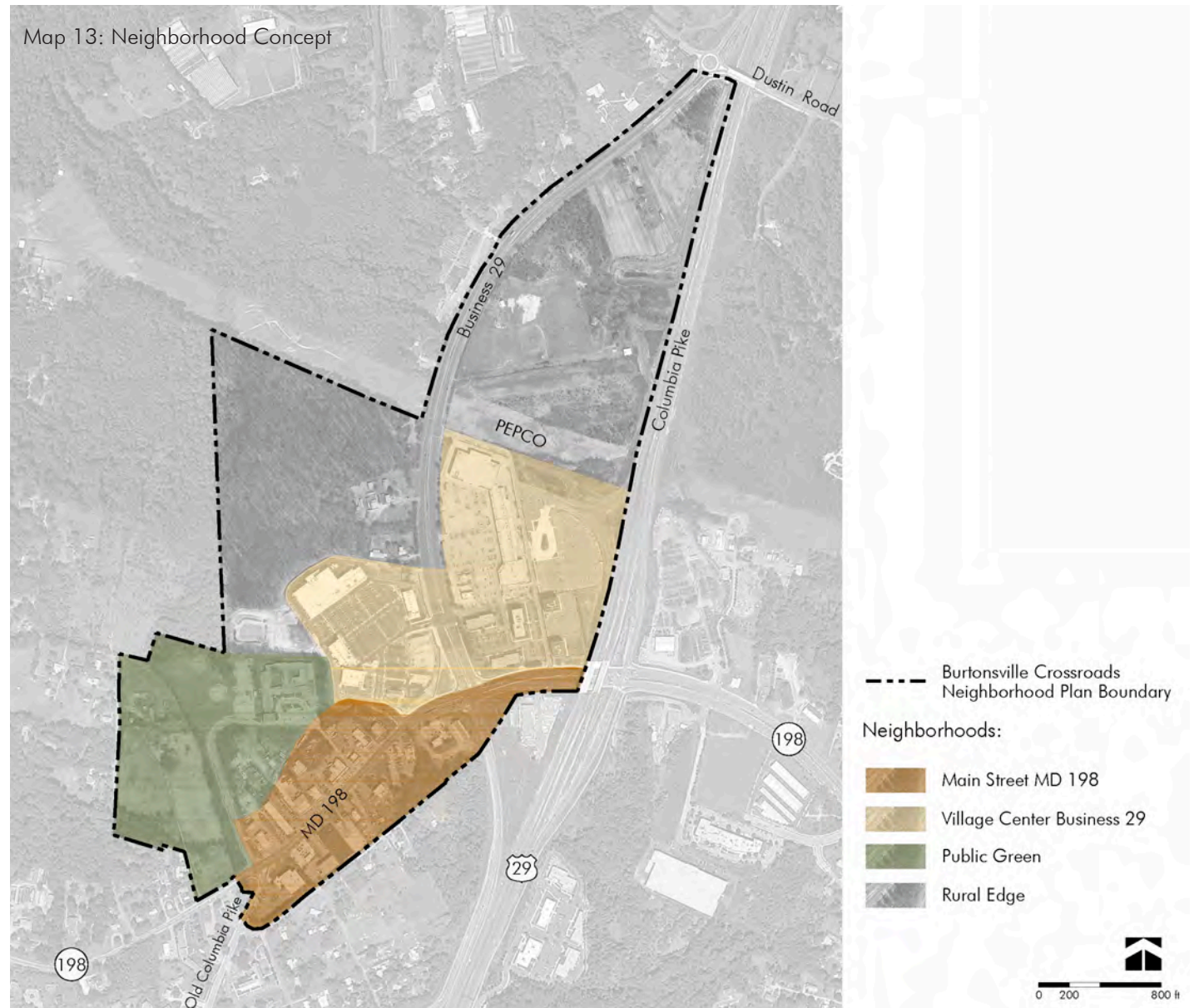




# neighborhood plan recommendations

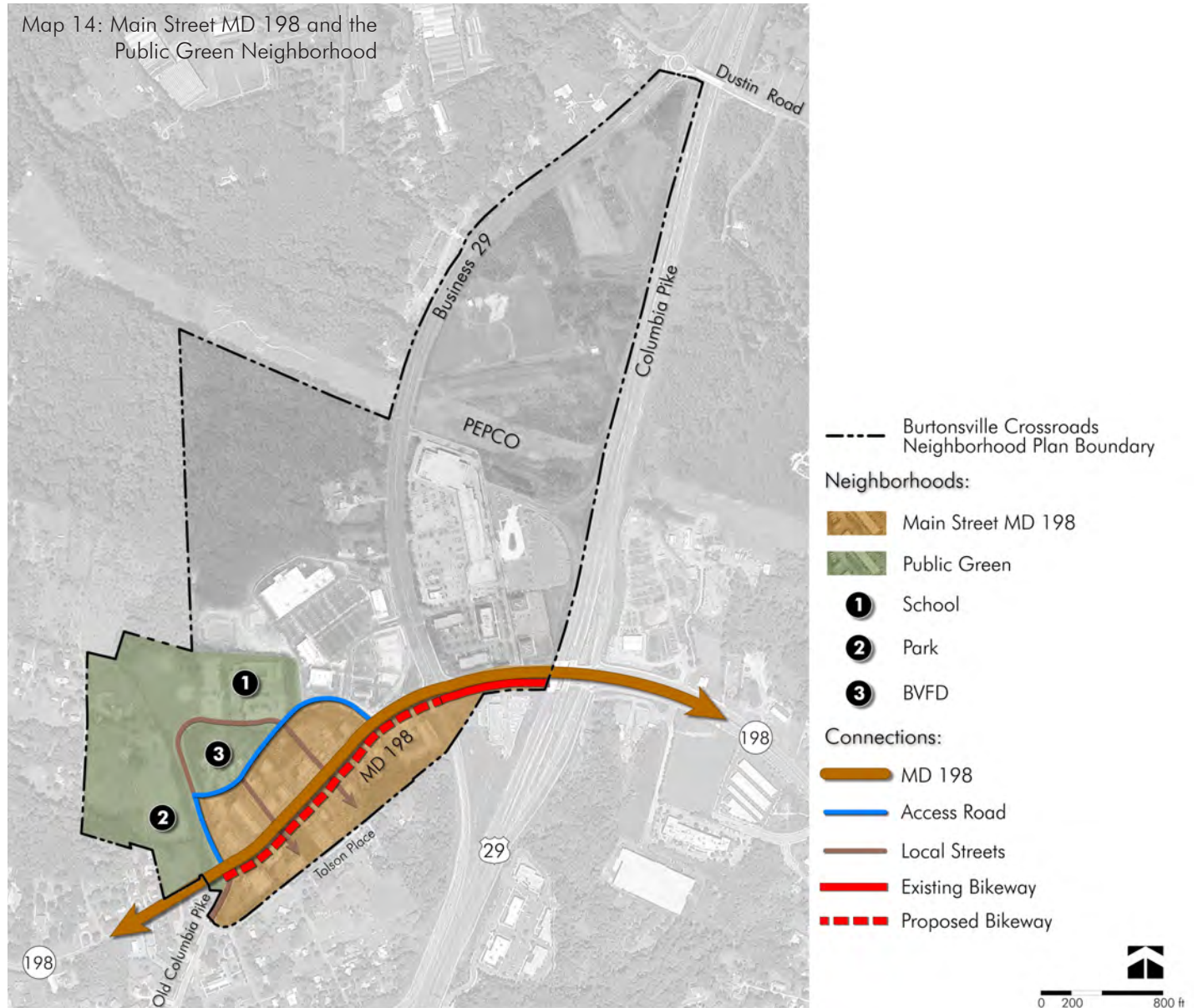
Burtonsville is envisioned as a complete community with three distinct neighborhoods:

- Main Street MD 198 and Public Green
- Village Center Business 29
- Rural Edge



## Main Street MD 198 and the Public Green

Main Street MD 198 and the proposed Public Green will be the most visible places in Burtonsville. MD 198 will become the main street of Burtonsville—a pedestrian-oriented place with local retail businesses, housing, services, a new grid of streets, and a public place for recreation and gathering. While existing commercial uses may predominate, some infill and new residential redevelopment will enliven the neighborhood. Redevelopment should retain local businesses, reuse existing buildings, and provide adequate transitions that protect the adjacent single-family neighborhood along Tolson Place.





### main street MD 198 neighborhood

The Plan recommends rezoning from C-2 and I-1 to the Commercial Residential Town (CRT) and Commercial Residential Neighborhood (CRN) Zones to support infill projects and small business expansions. The neighborhood will include:

- a varied mix of convenience retail and service uses that support the local market
- affordable housing for all ages
- street-oriented retail
- varied building sizes and heights along a new grid of streets
- public green and gathering spaces

New development should be oriented to MD 198 and along the new grid of streets. Residential development should be located near the elementary school and along a new access road. The proposed access road will improve the connection between local business properties and provide an important second access to the elementary school for fire safety, and efficient drop-off and pickup. The businesses should continue to take advantage of the easement program to improve the building facades and signage along Main Street MD 198. Efforts to provide adequately screened parking on the side or rear of the properties are recommended.

On the north side of MD 198, the recommended CRT Zone permits eating and drinking establishments along “restaurant row” and provides incentives to retain the local businesses. On the south side of MD 198, the recommended CRN Zone includes limitations on uses and introduces requirements for appropriate transitions to protect the adjacent residential neighborhoods along Tolson Place. Special exceptions may continue if lawfully existing before the new zoning. Buildings may expand up to 10 percent above the total existing floor area if less than 10,000 square feet of area is disturbed.

### the public green neighborhood

The Public Green located north of MD 198 will combine the existing 12-acre elementary school parcels, the three-acre Burtonsville Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) site, and the 16-acre Athey property. This 31-acre area would provide recreation fields and courts (Athey property), expansion of the local elementary school, and spaces for public gathering (BVFD site). The Public Green will provide a large civic space for the Burtonsville area. Access to the Public Green will be from the existing school access driveway and the future access road. The Plan recommends:

- retaining RE-1 and RC Zones
- acquiring the Athey property for recreation fields to complete public ownership of the Public Green
- safe trails to connect all public properties
- future community events such as Burtonsville Day celebrations, musical performance areas, art exhibits, craft shows, and classic car shows

### ***economy***

Main street retail and a mix of uses will include:

- affordable housing for all ages
- adaptive reuse of buildings
- small business expansions including infill and adaptive reuse
- public benefit points for providing tenant space for small businesses
- open space for public celebrations such as Burtonsville Day and other community events
- chamber of commerce or business group

### ***connectivity***

The Plan recommends establishing an improved MD 198, a new system of local streets, new sidewalks, new bikeways, and trails to provide more links within the Plan area. The majority of new roads should serve local traffic. A new access road will provide new connections to the existing properties along MD 198. Connections will include:

- enhanced medians, sidewalks, crosswalks, hiker/biker trail, continuous row of trees, pedestrian refuge areas, and safe left turn areas along MD 198
- planned classification of streets, designed to Road Code standards
- non-master planned system of public and private streets that provide flexibility for operational functions including property access, loading, and parking
- on-street bikeway along the planned access road

### ***design***

This Plan will improve the character of Main Street MD 198 and provide a Public Green including:

- streets that improve traffic function and community character, reduce curb cuts, left turns, and provide enhanced streetscape elements
- infill and adaptive reuse of buildings
- parking located at the back and side of buildings
- buildings that define streets
- transition to residential properties south of MD 198
- façade and signage improvements to extend a consistent character throughout the neighborhood
- public green for recreation and public gathering

### ***environment***

Infill or redevelopment will meet the most current environmental site design requirements including:

- buildings of the highest caliber of energy efficiency that may include:
  - renewable energy systems
  - site and building design and orientation for passive solar heating
  - daylighting of the interior spaces including outside shading of glass
  - use of local materials
  - green roof technology
  - integrated solar panels
- green and complete streets to reduce imperviousness and increase tree canopy
- stormwater improvements

## specific property recommendations

### 1. Main Street MD 198 North: from I-1 and C-2 to CRT 1.5: C 1.0, R 1.25, H 65



Eleven small properties are located along the north side of MD 198. Six are owned by a single owner and the remaining by individual owners. By combining the six properties, the owner could subdivide and assemble the properties. Once platted, the combined site could provide a mixed-use project on 4.25 acres. A residential project could complement the local retail and adjacent school. The CRT Zone is recommended to provide the necessary street system, sidewalks, and open spaces to create a community. Residential development is encouraged to support the retail for the neighborhood.

The properties are adjacent to the planned access road, two vacant low-density residential properties, and a shopping center. The properties will need to meet the height, density, and setback requirements. The Plan recommends:

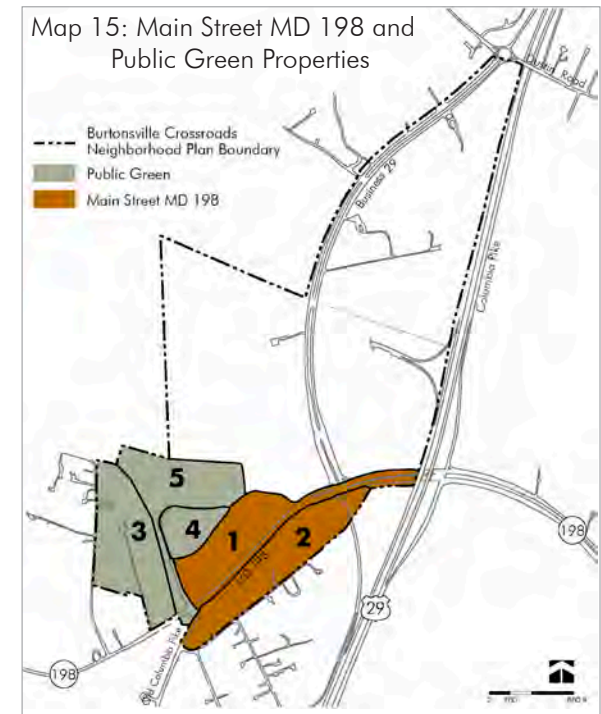
- dedication for the access road in advance of a preliminary or site plan application
- street-activating uses along MD 198 and new local streets
- maximum building heights of 65 feet to accommodate residential development
- streetscape along MD 198, with parking located behind or to the side of buildings
- continuous sidewalk along MD 198
- grid of local streets that connect to the access road and MD 198

### 2. Main Street MD 198 South: from C-2 to CRN 1.5: C 1.0, R 0.5, H 45



These independently owned commercial properties are located in the Main Street MD 198 South neighborhood. Access to the properties is from MD 198. The proposed CRN Zone is recommended to ensure uses with ample transitions to adjacent residential properties along Tolson Place. The properties are adjacent to single-family residential neighborhoods with height, density, and setback limits. The Plan recommends:

- adaptive reuse of buildings
- opportunities for small businesses
- live-work units
- street-activating uses such as retail along MD 198
- building heights of a maximum of 45 feet that step down to 35 feet with significant setbacks along the southern edge, adjacent to the existing residential neighborhood. This height is compatible with the adjacent R-200 Zone.
- streetscape along MD 198 within the setbacks
- bikeway along the south side MD 198
- streets that don't connect to Tolson Place



### 3. Athey Property and Parcel P879: Confirm RE-1 and RC Zones for public park use



This property comprises three parcels that total over 16 acres. The site is adjacent to the elementary school and its recreation fields. The property has approved preliminary plans for clustered residential uses with a developable area of 12.7 acres. It could accommodate public recreation fields or single-family detached homes. The Plan recommends:

- park acquisition for recreation use
- stream buffer preservation
- hard surface trail connections to the school
- future development located outside the stream valley areas
- specimen trees retained

### 4. Burtonsville Volunteer Fire Department: Confirm RC Zone



Located between the elementary school and the planned access road, this more than three-acre parcel is owned by the Burtonsville Volunteer Fire Department who constructed a cell tower on the site a few years ago, but have no further plans to develop. This parcel will be acquired for the right-of-way for the access road and a stormwater management facility. This site will remain RC to preserve the existing forest and wetlands. Access to the site will be from the planned access road.

The Plan recommends:

- adaptive reuse of buildings
- opportunities for small businesses
- public uses on-site
- County acquisition for the access road
- stormwater management facility and wetland preservation
- forested areas to be retained
- a public gathering space

### 5. Burtonsville Elementary School: Confirm the RC Zone



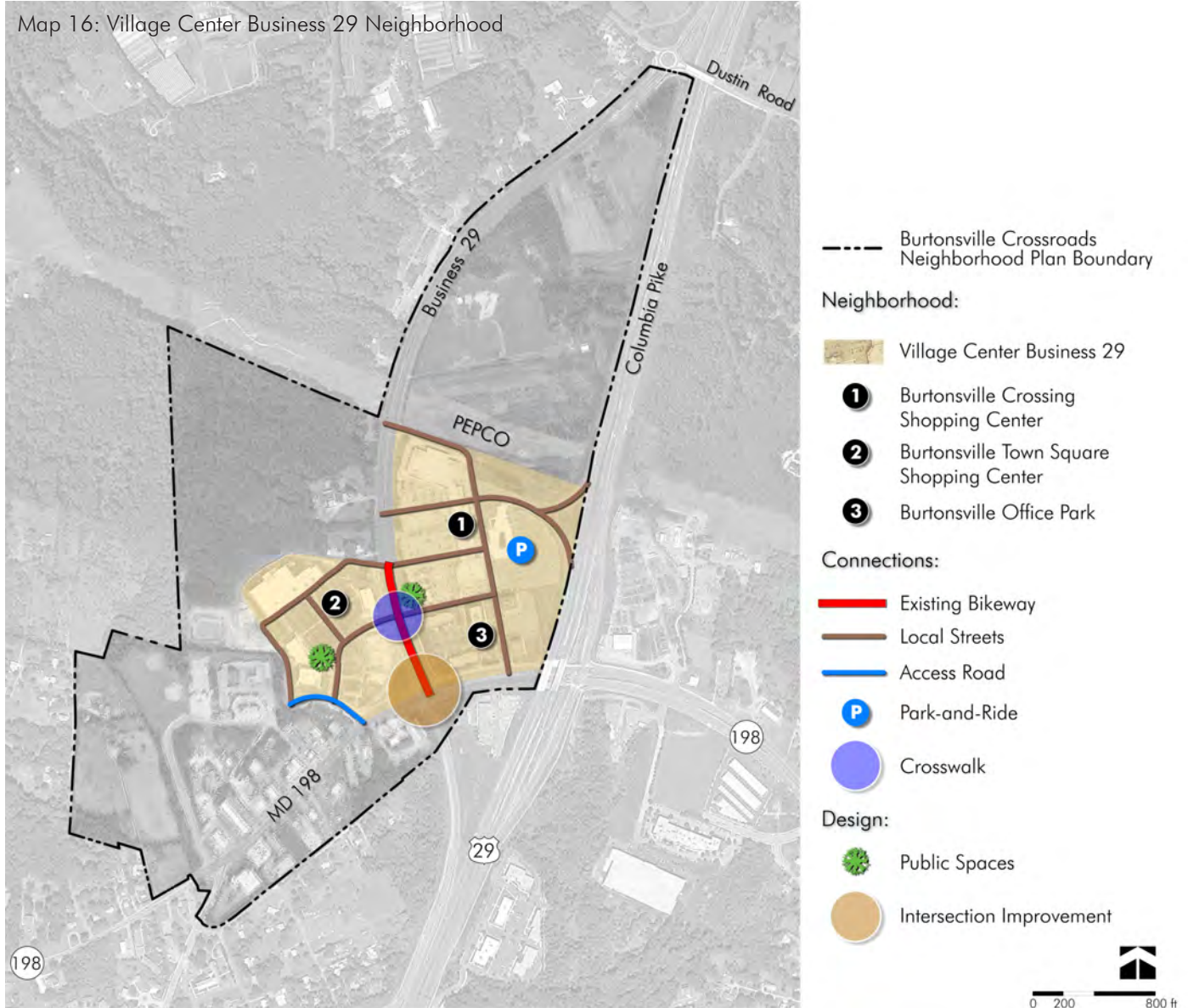
An expansion of the elementary school is needed to accommodate growth in the school population in the Fairland area. The adjacent Athey and BVFD sites could complement this expansion. The Plan recommends:

- limited expansion above the existing level of imperviousness for the elementary school
- energy efficient standards for the building expansion with the potential for a vegetated or cool (solar) roof
- connections to the commercial neighborhood, parks, and trails



## Village Center Business 29 Neighborhood

This neighborhood consists of larger properties that can be enhanced to create mixed-use residential and commercial uses with a new grid of streets, pedestrian and bicycle connections, and a more integrated park-and-ride facility. New residents would have access to jobs, housing, services, and amenities while reducing their reliance on the automobile. While commercial uses may predominate on the west side, residential uses on the east side would enliven the crossroads area. The CRT Zone is recommended to allow the existing single-use shopping center and associated surface lots to be redeveloped into a mixed-use neighborhood. In the Village Center Business 29 Neighborhood with the CRT Zone will provide the opportunity to expand the range of land uses, including housing, and provide public use spaces.



### **economy**

Support local and regional retail and mixed uses including:

- affordable housing for all ages, including senior housing
- mix of residential unit types
- opportunities for small businesses
- mix of uses with the highest densities at the crossroads
- large parking lots to be used for weekend and seasonal outdoor markets during off-peak hours
- retail visibility from US 29 and Business 29

### **connectivity**

Redevelopment will create a local street network that connects both sides of Business 29. The local streets improve circulation between sites for vehicles, bicycles, transit users, and pedestrians. The Plan recommendations provide:

- signed, shared use bikeway along Business 29 as recommended in the Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan
- transit access improvements
- transit proximity points
- clearly identified crosswalks
- pedestrian connections to the park-and-ride lot and future BRT station (under study)

### **design**

Compared with Main Street MD 198, development in the Village Center Business 29 will be larger with more varied land uses. Development will create a street-oriented pattern. Design elements will include:

- grid of streets with sidewalks, on-street parking, and crosswalks across Business 29
- buildings oriented to new streets
- public gathering space provided through the optional method redevelopment
- building heights that vary from 65 feet west of Business 29 to 75 feet east of Business 29 and near US 29

### **environment**

Infill or redevelopment will meet the most current environmental site design requirements including:

- buildings of the highest caliber of energy efficiency that may include:
  - potential for renewable energy systems
  - site and building design and orientation for passive solar heating and daylighting of interior spaces
  - local materials
  - green roof technology
  - integrated solar panels
  - outside shades that provide shading for glass and direct sunlight deep into interior spaces
- green and complete streets that limit imperviousness and increase tree canopy

## specific property recommendations

### 1. *Burtonsville Crossing Shopping Center Site: from C-1 to CRT 1.5, C 1.0, R 1.25, H 75*

This approximately 13-acre property located east of Business 29 has significant redevelopment potential. Building heights of 75 feet are appropriate on properties between Business 29 and adjacent to US 29. The tallest buildings should be located along National Drive, adjacent to the Burtonsville Office Park and the park-and-ride lot. The Plan recommends:

- additional access to Business 29
- transit access improvements to the park-and-ride lot
- optional method development should include a public gathering space
- landscaped area along Business 29 between the road and the sidewalk

### 2. *Burtonsville Office Park: from O-M to CRT 1.5: C 1.0, R 1.25, H 75*

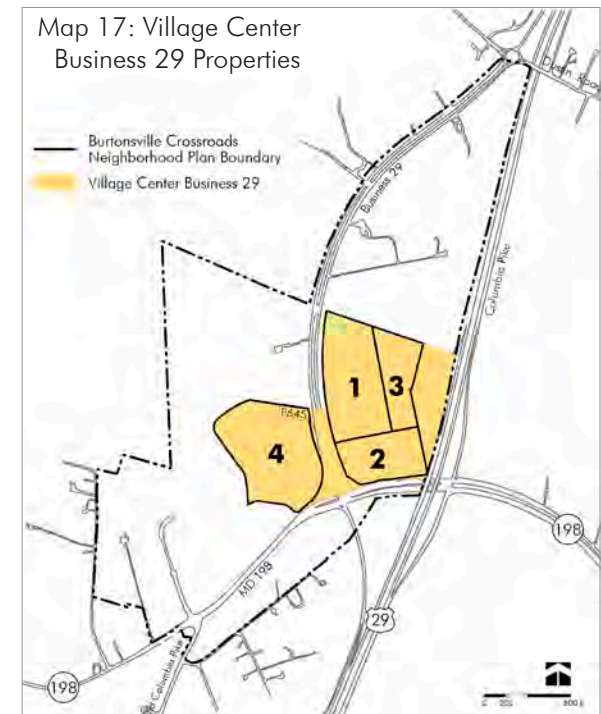
The CRT Zone will provide for a wider range of uses at the same density as the O-M Zone, and the zone will allow for the adaptive reuse of the single-use office buildings. Redevelopment should provide safe vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle connections. The Plan recommends:

- retail uses oriented to the street
- landscaped areas along Business 29 and MD 198
- adaptive reuse of buildings

### 3. *Park-and-ride lot: from O-M to CRT 1.5: C 1.0, R 1.25, H 75*

Montgomery County and the State of Maryland own the park-and-ride lot. The CRT Zone allows for redevelopment with more flexibility in land uses and development standards, as well as shared parking with adjacent properties. Neither the County nor State has plans to redevelop this four-acre, 500-space surface lot. The Plan supports a future BRT station on this site. The possible BRT station combined with the proposed CRT Zone would allow the site to become part of a larger redevelopment project. Redevelopment should include:

- access improvements
- landscaping including tree canopy
- shared parking
- locating the station closer to the crossroads



#### 4. Burtonsville Town Square Shopping Center and Parcel P645: from C-2 and RC to CRT 1.5: C 1.0, R 1.25 H 65

These combined parcels represent the largest property in Burtonsville (27.15 acres), with approximately 14.37 acres in forest conservation. The Plan recommends that small adjacent lot (parcel P645) be rezoned from RC to CRT to provide a separated service access for the shopping center. The site includes a small public space in the middle of the parking lot of the shopping center. This shopping center is unlikely to be redeveloped during the life of the Plan. Redevelopment should include:

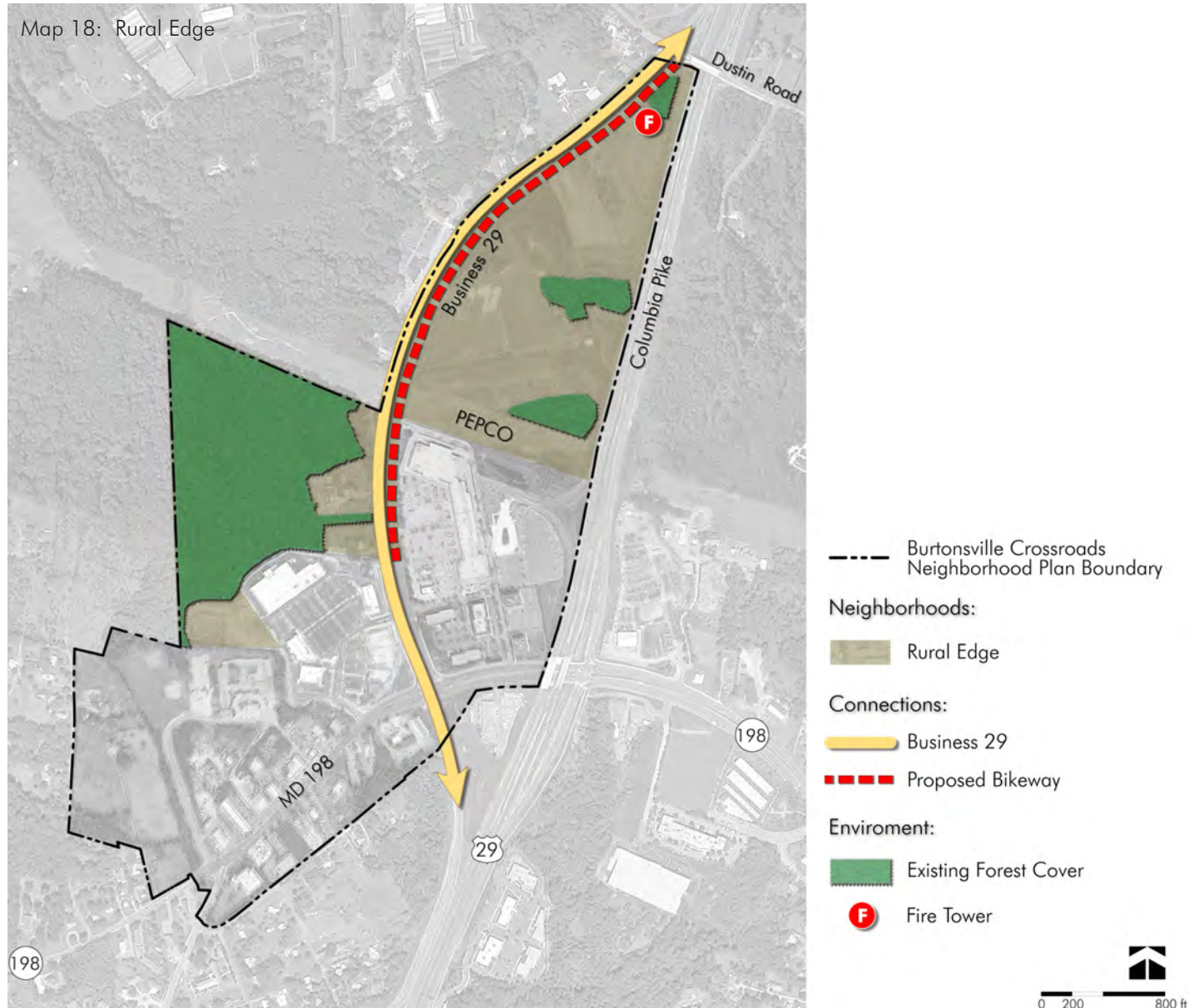
- building heights at the intersection of Business 29 and MD 198 up to 65 feet, compatible with the established office park
- landscaped buffer on the north side, adjacent to the existing residential uses
- bikeway along Business 29 between the road and the sidewalk
- enhanced and shaded public use space as part of an optional method of development
- landscape around any future parking structure or consider wrapping the parking with retail or other uses





## Rural Edge Neighborhood

Located in the General Plan-defined wedge of agricultural and rural open space, the Rural Edge properties should retain their low-density zoning to protect the tributary headwaters of Patuxent River Watershed. The existing 10 percent imperviousness limit has not adequately protected the drinking water supply and other environmental resources in the watershed. New development in the Burtonsville Plan area will be limited to eight percent imperviousness without development in the stream buffers and without public sewer. Retaining the Rural Cluster (RC) Zone is recommended to support the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas and scenic resources. Some Rural Edge properties are appropriate for acquisition to meet the County's recreation needs and conservation goals.



### **economy**

Support clustered residential development, small-scale farming, farm sales, and other uses as allowed in the RC Zone.

### **connectivity**

Roadways should maintain their rural character, including:

- retaining the existing right-of-way of Business 29
- signed, shared bikeway along Business 29

### **design**

Roadways should maintain their rural character, including:

- landscaped spaces that maintain the area's rural character and preserve natural resources
- rehabilitation of the fire tower
- designation of the fire tower on the National Register of Historic Places



#### **The Burtonsville Fire Tower**

The Burtonsville Fire Tower is a 120-foot tall steel frame structure built in the 1930s by the Maryland Forest, Park and Wildlife Service and may have been constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps. It was one of 12 towers built in the state. Observation towers were replaced with aerial surveillance and by the early 1970s, the tower was converted to use as an antenna tower. Other towers in Maryland included "Welcome" in Charles County, "Town Hill" in Allegheny County, "Backbone Mountain" in Garrett County, and "Brandywine and Great Mills" in St Mary's County.

In 1996, the Maryland Historical Trust evaluated the Burtonsville Fire Tower and found it to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. It was found eligible "for its association with the governmental response to the problem of forest fires and coordination of firefighting efforts"

### **environment**

The sensitive environmental resources that surround Burtonsville are critical to maintaining the quality of the drinking water. Development in the Patuxent River Watershed should limit imperviousness, expand and protect forest, and meet the most current environmental site design standards. The Rural Edge should include:

- low-density residential land uses, agricultural uses, conservation easements, and public acquisitions to protect the scenic and environmentally sensitive tributary headwaters
- no sewer extensions beyond the existing commercial neighborhoods
- stormwater management facilities located outside stream buffers
- increased tree canopy to protect water quality
- cluster development

For the following reasons, the Plan recommends that development in the Rural Edge be limited to eight percent imperviousness instead of the 10 percent imperviousness established in the Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed and in the Environmental Guidelines.

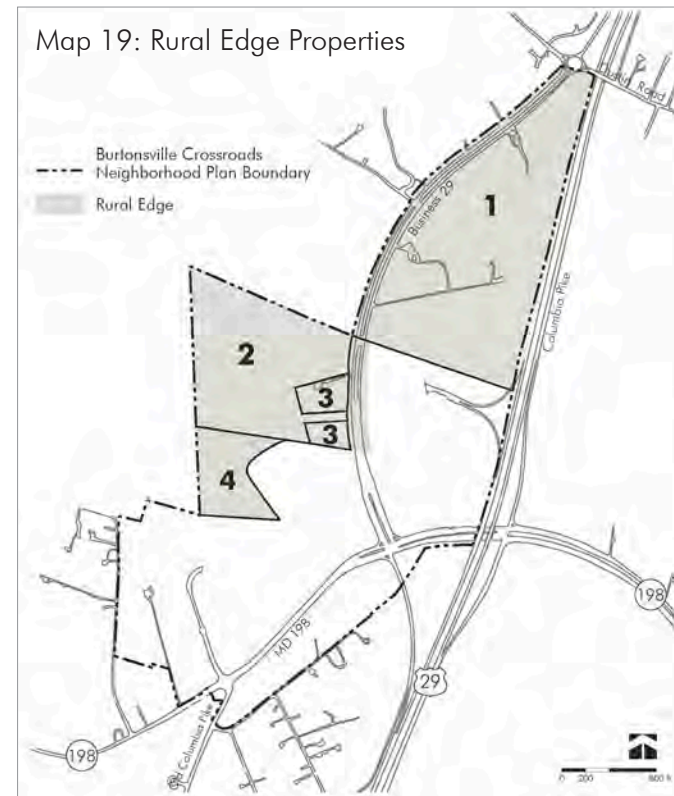
- declining water quality in the Patuxent River Watershed – The existing policies protecting the Patuxent River, including the 10 percent imperviousness limit, have not been strong enough to protect the aquatic life and drinking water resources in the Rocky Gorge Reservoir, as well as the health of tributary headwaters that drain to the reservoir
- preserving land – Public land acquisitions directly adjacent to the Plan area were strategically acquired within the three subwatersheds surrounding the Plan area to increase protection of water quality within the Rocky Gorge reservoir
- protecting sensitive tributary headwaters – These headwaters are the most environmentally sensitive areas, and they should be protected. The headwaters of three tributaries to the Patuxent River begin in the Plan area
- providing eight percent imperviousness in other environmentally sensitive areas – Eight percent imperviousness has been established as the appropriate standard to protect environmentally sensitive resources in the Paint Branch and Upper Rock Creek Special Protection Areas
- confirming the RC Zone to protect environmentally sensitive areas – The RC Zone has a cluster option that countywide, averages less than eight percent imperviousness for residential development to protect environmentally sensitive areas

## specific property recommendations

### 1. Northern Properties: confirm RC Zone, for rural cluster and open space

This area consists of seven properties located north of the Pepco right-of-way in the tributary headwaters of the Patuxent Watershed. Because of their proximity to the Rocky Gorge Reservoir, development should be limited to protect the drinking water supply by confirming low density zoning, restricting the extension of community sewer service, and reducing imperviousness. Retaining these properties in the RC Zone will focus development in the Burtonsville commercial core. Designation in the Legacy Open Space program will further protect water supply resources by supporting cluster development options and creating the option for acquisition as parkland. The Burtonsville Fire Tower is located on a small publicly owned site maintained by the University of Maryland. The larger properties south of the fire tower may also be appropriate for public acquisition for parkland. The Plan recommends:

- impervious levels limited to eight percent
- cluster development
- preserving and increasing tree canopy
- seasonal community uses that support agricultural uses such as fairs, ice-cream sales, and other events
- designation as a Water Supply Protection site in the Legacy Open Space program, to be implemented through cluster development or acquisition as parkland





## ***2. Mangum Property: confirm RC Zone***

This 30.80 acre site could develop on septic systems. Its mature forest cover, tributaries, and wetlands make it worthy of preservation under Legacy Open Space (LOS) criteria. This property is adjacent to approximately 48 acres of forested conservation land owned by the State Highway Administration, which is adjacent to the Athey property. These properties would form a ring of contiguous open space around the north and west portion of the Plan area. Access to the Mangum property would be through natural surface trails. The Plan recommends:

- designation as a Natural Resource site in the Legacy Open Space (LOS) program to be implemented through acquisition as conservation parkland
- conservation of the forest and stream buffers and provision of natural surface trails connecting to parks, schools, and other destinations
- development limited to eight percent imperviousness
- no public sewer

## ***3. Residential Lots along west side of Business 29: confirm RC Zone***

These four lots should remain zoned RC with limited redevelopment potential.

## ***4. Burtonsville Town Center Forest Conservation Easement (west of shopping center): confirm the RC Zone***

This site consists of a stormwater management pond and protected forest. Both should be retained.

# implementation

The Plan is designed to support the transformation of Burtonsville from a crossroads to a community through recommendations for economy, connectivity, design, and environment. Near-term actions in the Rural Edge will help protect the tributary headwaters in the Patuxent River Watershed by reducing imperviousness for properties in the RC Zone. In the commercial core, the CRT and CRN Zones will allow additional uses and provide more flexible development standards. Long-term actions will complete the proposed system of local vehicular and pedestrian connections, and provide public places for recreation and gathering.

## **Near-Term and Long-Term Actions**

Near-term improvements are primarily government actions that expand opportunities for infill, adaptive reuse, and redevelopment to support private investment. Public investment in parks, the expansion of the elementary school, and approval of the Sectional Map Amendment to allow a greater variety of uses will encourage private property owners to reinvest. The near-term and long-term actions are intended to transform the existing crossroads into a complete community.

**Table 3: Near-Term Actions**

Action	Agency
Approve the Sectional Map Amendment to modify the commercial zoning to allow a wide range of land uses including housing, retail, limited employment uses, and community services	Montgomery County DOT, County Council
Approve Zoning Text Amendment to limit imperviousness for Watershed Protection	County Council
Approve funding for design of the access road	Montgomery County DOT, County Council
Continue streetscape and building façade improvements along Main Street MD 198, and the Retail Center Signage Easement program for the commercial areas along Main Street MD 198	DHCA
Encourage the use and occupancy of the existing, underused Burtonsville Crossing Shopping Center and office park	Property owners
Establish a local chamber of commerce	Business owners, DED

**Table 4: Long-Term Actions**

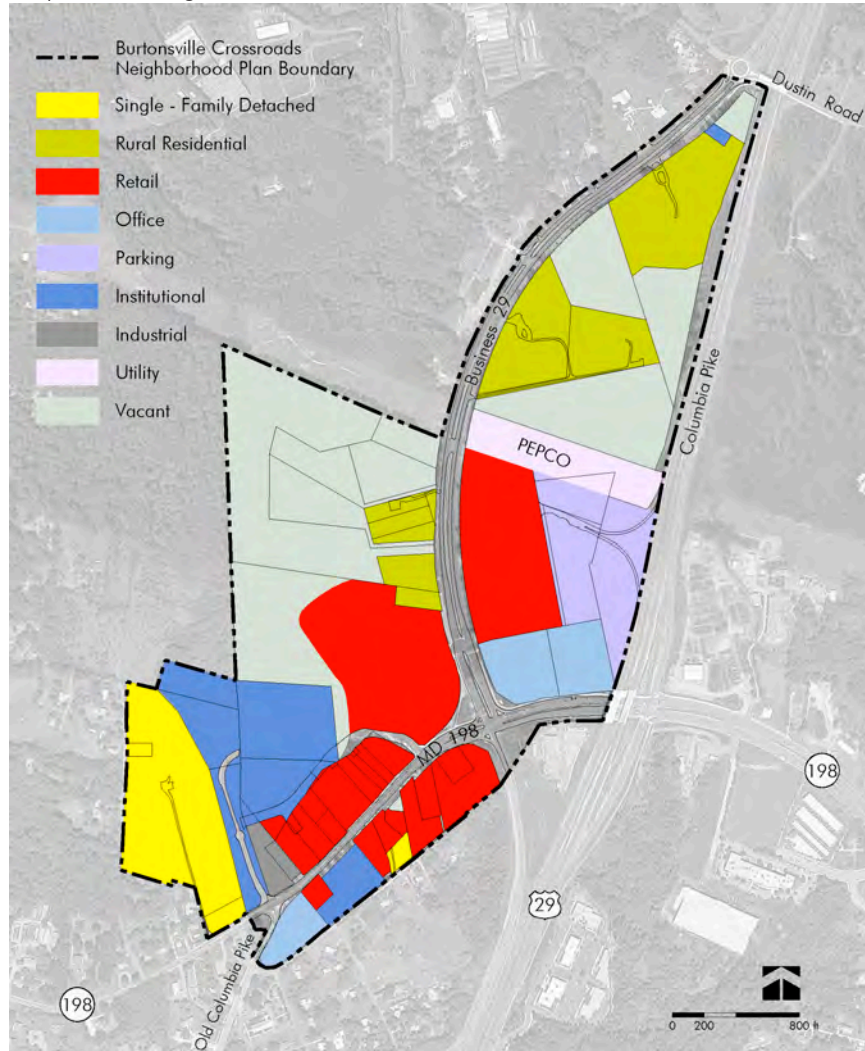
Action	Agency
Construct additional retail, office, and residential land uses, including the Burtonsville Crossing Shopping Center	Property owners
Conduct the planning study for MD 198 using the traffic counts from the fully functioning Intercounty Connector	SHA
Complete the main street improvements along MD 198	SHA, Property owners
Design and construct parks, trails, and active recreation fields	M-NCPPC, Department of Parks
Complete streetscape and building façade improvements along Main Street MD 198	DHCA, Property owners
Construct the access road with participation from adjacent property owners	MCDOT, Property owners
Complete the grid of local streets	Property owners
Complete the remaining pedestrian and bikeway connections	MCDOT, SHA, Property owners
Complete recreation facilities and final trail alignments	SHA, MCPS, M-NCPPC, Department of Parks
Complete the Public Green as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve and construct the elementary school expansion</li> <li>• Purchase land and construct recreation fields on the Athey property</li> <li>• Include the site owned by the Burtonsville Volunteer Fire Department for the access road, stormwater management, and future open space</li> </ul>	M-NCPPC, MCPS M-NCPPC, MCPS M-NCPPC, MCPS, MCDOT



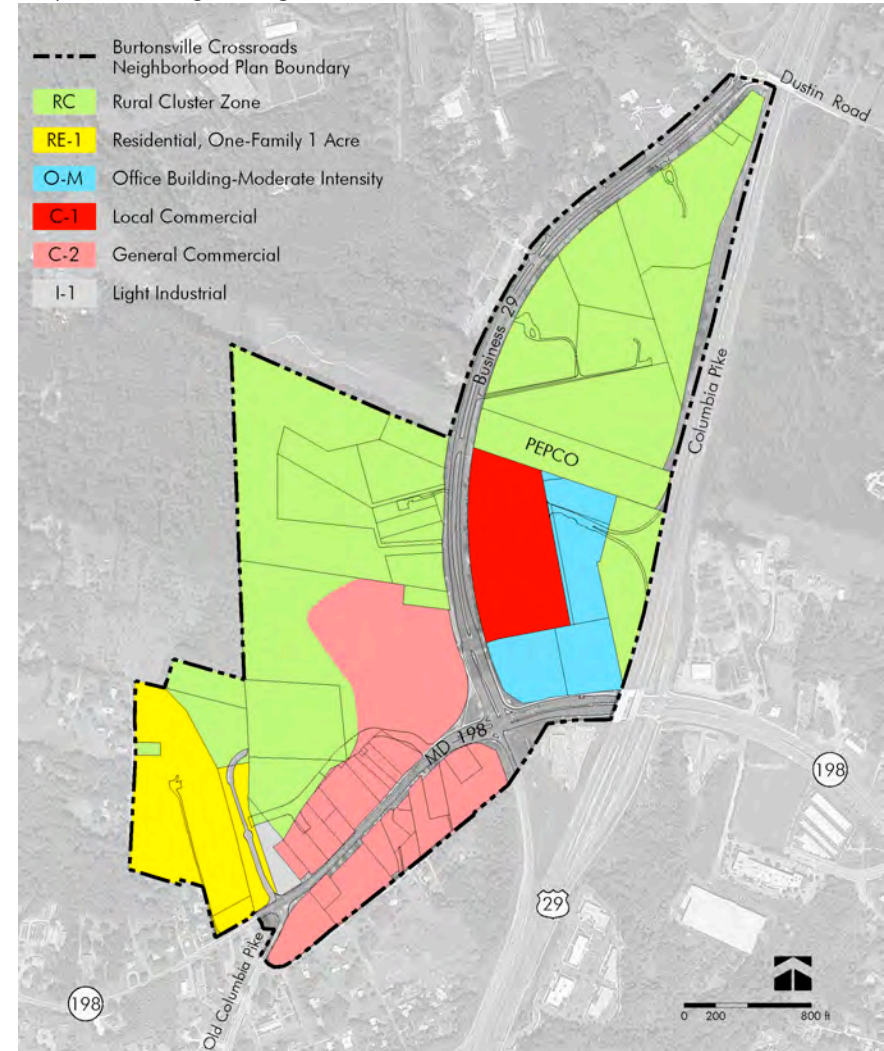
## Zoning

The Burtonsville Neighborhood Crossroads Plan includes properties that vary from 535 square feet to over 20 acres. Of the approximately 191 total acres, approximately 74 acres are zoned for office and commercial uses and 117 acres are zoned for low-density development.

Map 20: Existing Land Use

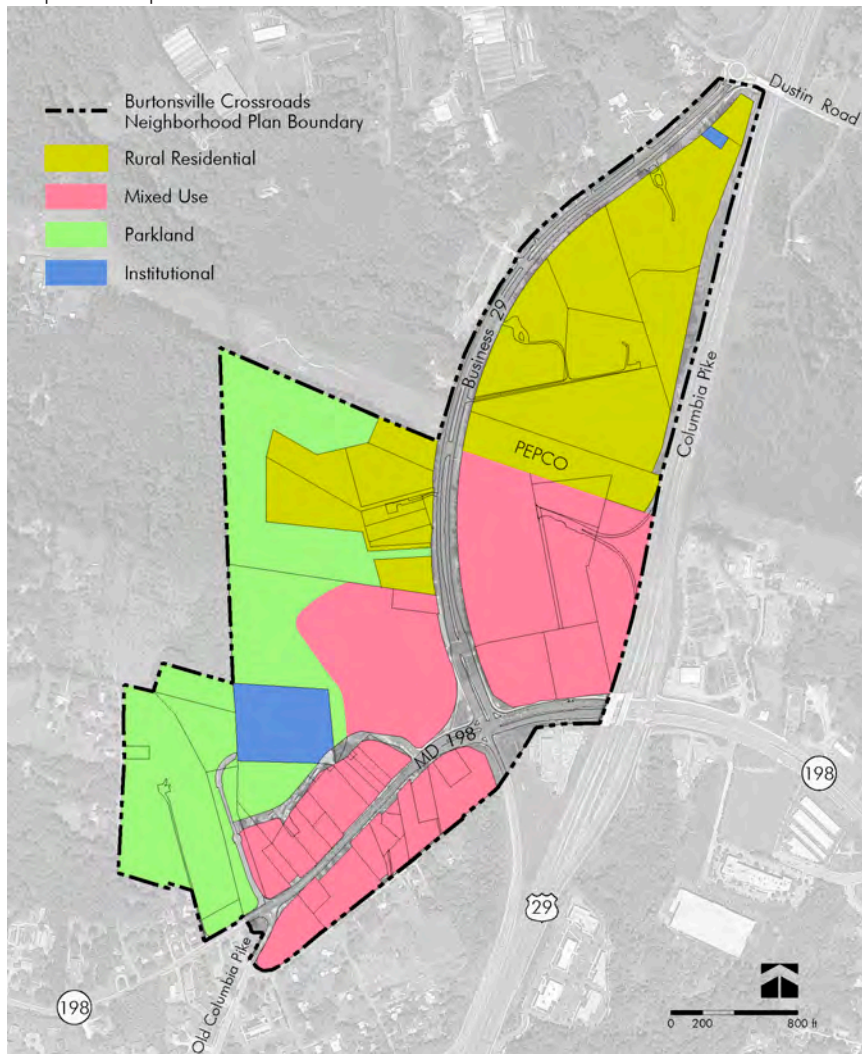


Map 21: Existing Zoning

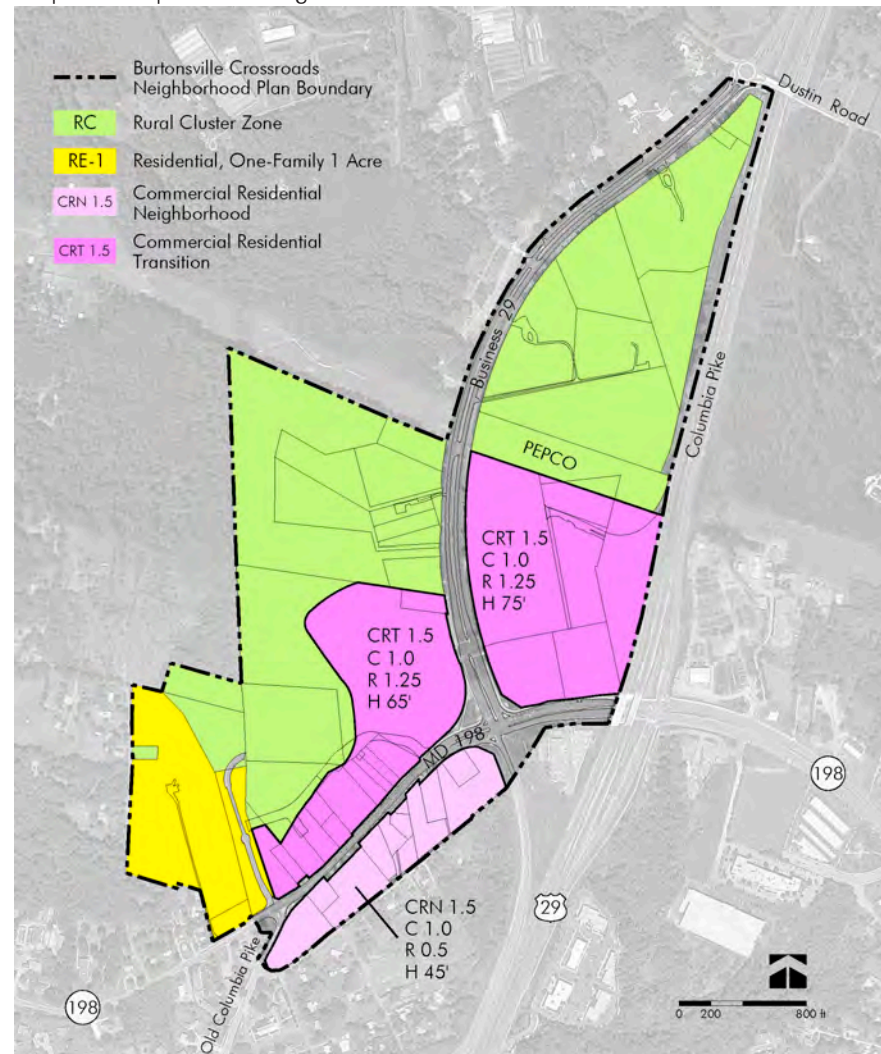




Map 22: Proposed Land Use



Map 23: Proposed Zoning



## CRT and CRN Zones

Replace the existing C-1, C-2, O-M, and I-1 Zones with the CRT Zone along both sides of Business 29 and along the north side of MD 198. The CRT Zone is designed to:

- provide flexibility to respond to current market conditions
- provide added public engagement through a review process that existing commercial zones don't require
- provide more certainty about density and building height
- provide a mix of commercial uses and housing opportunities
- require public use space that may be privately owned and must be accessible to the public
- support infill and adaptive reuse of buildings
- allow development at the scale of a smaller town or neighborhood

The CRT Zone provides both a standard and an optional method of development. The standard method limits overall density to 0.5 FAR. The optional method of development allows additional density as an incentive to provide public spaces and other public benefits that are needed to create the complete community.

The existing C-2 Zone will be replaced with the CRN Zone along the south side of MD 198. The CRN Zone is appropriate for small, low-density areas, and it is designed to provide:

- flexibility for small businesses to respond to local market conditions
- transitions to adjacent residential neighborhoods
- neighborhood protections
- infill and adaptive reuse

This Plan confirms that any lawfully existing buildings, structures, or uses that predate the application of the CRT or CRN Zones are conforming structures or uses and may be continued, renovated, repaired, or reconstructed. Any lawfully existing special exceptions approved prior to the application of the CRT or CRN Zones may continue as lawfully existing uses as long as they comply with the terms and conditions of the original approval.

## RC and RE-1 Zones

Retain the existing RC and RE-1 Zones. In Burtonsville, these zones create a strong, low-density edge to the proposed mixed-use area, limit expansion of the commercial area, and reduce the negative environmental impacts on the tributary headwaters of the Patuxent River Watershed. The Plan recommends:

- cluster development to preserve environmentally sensitive resources
- low-density development
- park acquisition for conservation and recreation



### Public Benefits Priorities for CRT Zone Projects

The CRT Zone, proposed for the Main Street MD 198 North and the Village Center Business 29 areas, provides both a standard and an optional method of development. The standard method of development limits overall density to 0.5 FAR or 10,000 gross square feet, whichever is greater. The optional method of development allows additional density as an incentive to provide public benefits. This Plan prioritizes the benefits and encourages:

- adaptive reuse of buildings and opportunities for infill to support small businesses
- access improvements to public facilities (park-and-ride lot, public green including the elementary school, other public open spaces)
- streetscape and local street connections
- advanced dedication for master-planned rights-of-way such as the access road
- affordable housing for all ages and live/work units.

### Priority Public Use Spaces

Public use space is required under the optional method of development. Public use spaces may be privately owned, but they must be accessible to the public. The priority public use spaces in Burtonsville are:

- new public use space on the site of the Burtonsville Crossing Shopping Center
- an expanded public use space on the site of the Burtonsville Town Square Shopping Center
- landscaped transition area between new development and the existing residential neighborhood located along Tolson Place
- landscape improvements to the intersection of MD 198 and Business 29.

### Proposed Zoning Text Amendment for Watershed Protection

A primary purpose of the RC Zone is to protect environmentally sensitive areas. The Plan recommends that development within designated tributary headwaters of the Patuxent River Watershed be limited to eight percent imperviousness instead of the 10 percent established in the Functional Master Plan for the Patuxent River Watershed and in the Environmental Guidelines.

The Plan area is in the sensitive tributary headwaters of the Patuxent River and the existing 10 percent limit is not adequate to preserve these sensitive areas. The Plan's recommendation for eight percent imperviousness matches the existing limit in the Upper Paint Branch Special Protection Area. A zoning text amendment to the RC Zone for areas designated in a master or sector plan is recommended to establish the eight percent imperviousness limit in the tributary headwaters of the Patuxent River Watershed.

## Transportation

The Plan reduces the maximum allowed density in the areas with the existing I-1 and C-1 Zones that allow an unlimited floor area ratio (FAR). The overall amount of potential commercial development will be reduced and residential uses have been added within the maximum limits of the existing C-2 Zone (1.5 FAR). This produces a reduction in potential local trips as compared with the 1997 Fairland Master Plan. The development potential will not exceed the acceptable congestion levels in the area intersections. The local area roadway system has a significant amount of traffic capacity based on a Critical Lane Volume (CLV) analysis. The recommended highway and local street system will provide sufficient capacity.

Table 5: Development Potential

	Existing Development	Potential
Residential Units	8 single-family units	600 multifamily units
Nonresidential square feet	730,000 square feet	880,000 - 1,400,000 square feet
Nonresidential square feet converted into jobs	2,105 jobs	2,628 - 4,200 jobs

The majority of traffic on MD 198 is through traffic, while only a small portion is for local movement. The newly opened ICC will divert some through traffic onto the new east-west connector. With four lanes, added left turn lanes, the access road, and a new grid of streets, local circulation in the Plan area will function safely and provide sufficient accessibility between properties. The recommended land uses and the transportation infrastructure are in balance.

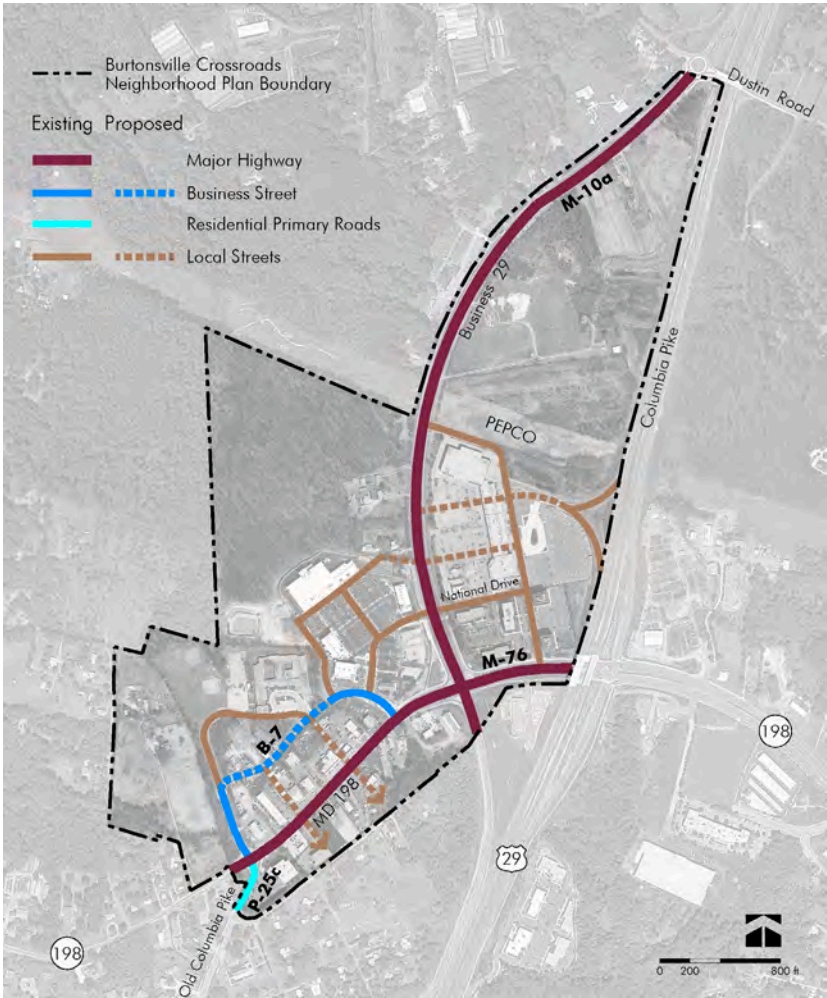
## Capacity

The proposed transportation system can accommodate 600 additional residential units. In addition, the transportation system could accommodate a significant increase in commercial square footage. Recent traffic studies indicate that the MD 198 intersections with Old Columbia Pike and US 29 are currently operating at acceptable levels of service (CLVs between 830 and 1,000). These acceptable traffic conditions include the additional traffic from nearby approved but not constructed developments (CLVs between 950 and 1,050). The traffic at local intersections is well below the applicable congestion standard for the Fairland/White Oak Policy Area (1,475 CLV) and would provide significant additional road capacity to accommodate future development in this area. Local intersections and roadway improvements will provide adequate transportation capacity to accommodate the Plan's long-term residential and nonresidential developments. Four lanes are needed for local and regional growth analyzed by SHA in the MD28/198 Corridor Study. In this study, SHA states that the projected traffic will warrant four travel lanes on MD 198 through Burtonsville. With the Army's Base Realignment and Closures (BRAC) expansions along MD 198 in Laurel, this route will get a share of future through travelers.

## Circulation

The Plan recognizes that the ICC has been recently completed, and it will divert some of the through traffic. The access road will provide local circulation and a second access to the elementary school for safety and efficient drop-off/pick-up.

Map 24: Roadway Classifications



Street and Highway Classifications

The access road, the local street grid, Business 29 (M10a), the sidewalks, the bikeways, and the trails will create a connected street system that reduces dependence on the major highways and reduces left turn conflicts along MD 198.

Table 6: Roadway Classifications

master planned streets	from	to	MPOH number	minimum right-of-way (ft)	through travel lanes	target speed (mph)	design standard
Major Highways							
MD 198 Main Street	Old Columbia Pike	Business 29	M-76	120	4 lanes, divided	30	Mod. 2004.16
MD 198	Business 29	US 29	M-76	130-170 varies	4 lanes, divided	35	Mod. 2004.16
Business 29 "Old US 29"	Dustin Road	MD 198	M-10a	100-200 varies	4-6 lanes, divided	40	Mod. 2008.04
Business Streets							
Access Road	MD 198	MD 198	B-7	60	2 lanes	25	2005.01
Primary Streets							
Old Columbia Pike	Tolson Place	MD 198	P-25c	70	2 lanes	25	2003.01



Illustration 4:  
**Business 29: M-10a Major Highway**

Min. right-of-way: 100 - 200 feet, varies  
 Lanes: 4 lanes, divided



Offices along Business 29



Streetscape along Business 29



Business 29, north of PEPCO

**Examples**

Illustration 5:  
**Access Road: B-7 Business Street**  
 (new section only)

**Plan**

Min. right-of-way: 60 feet  
 Lanes: 2 lanes



Existing retail access road at MD 198



Two-lane street, sidewalk, building setbacks



Sidewalk and building setbacks

**Examples**

Illustration 6:  
**Local Streets: Public or Private**

**Plan**

Min. right-of-way: 60 feet or less  
 Lanes: 2 lanes



Two-way street with parking (60 feet)



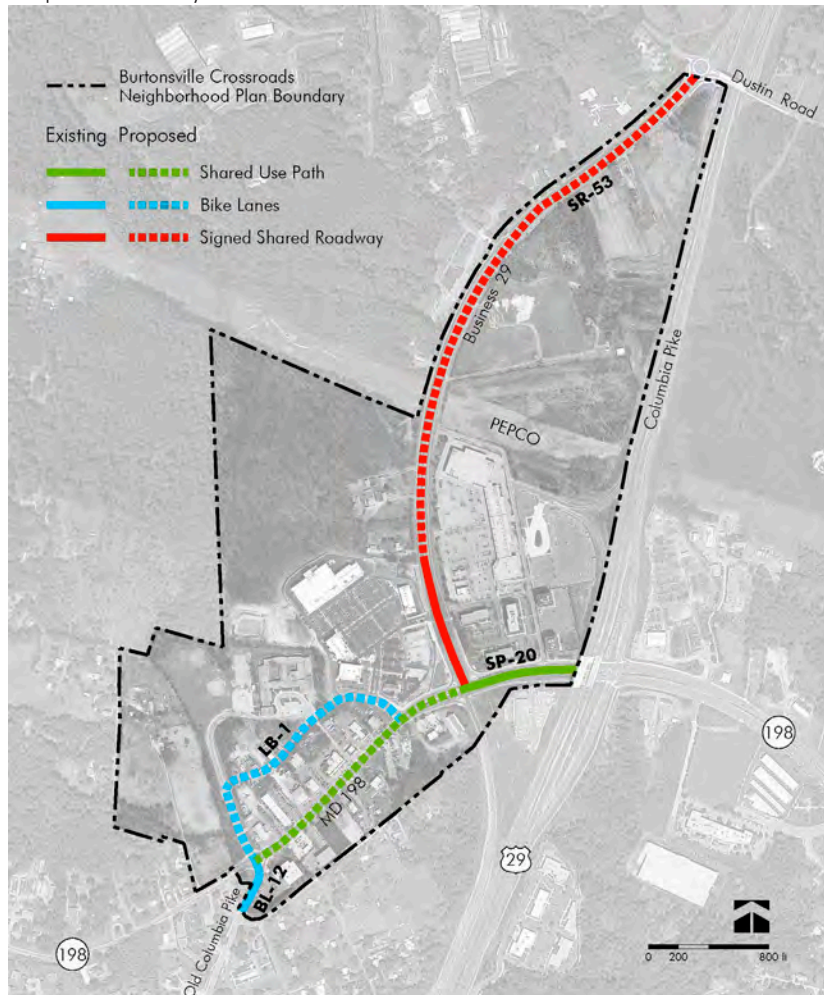
Two-way street without parking (50 feet)



Pathway with off-peak service (40 feet)

**Examples**

Map 25: Bikeway Classifications



## Bikeways

The *Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan* (CBFMP) recommends bike routes through the Plan area. This Plan confirms the recommendations and adds bike lanes along the access road. This Plan also recommends designating the Main Street MD 198 neighborhood as a Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Area, which facilitates the allocation of funds for bicycle and pedestrian improvements on State roads. This designation reflects the Plan's fundamental goal of creating a lively, pedestrian-centered atmosphere.

Table 7: Bikeway Classifications

Route	Name	Location	Bikeway Type	Status	Reference
BL-12	Old Columbia Pike	Tolson Place to MD 198	bike lanes	existing	CBFMP
SP-20	MD 198	Business 29	shared use path	existing/proposed	CBFMP
SR-53	Business 29	MD 198 to Dustin Rd	signed shared roadway	proposed	CBFMP
LB-1	Access Road	MD 198 to MD 198	bike lanes	proposed	new



## Community Facilities

### public schools

The Plan area is served by Burtonsville Elementary School, Banneker Middle School, and the Northeast High School Consortium. Paint Branch High School is the base area high school, but students may also choose to attend either Blake High School or Springbrook High School.

The Plan accommodates 600 new residential units that could generate up to 25 elementary school students (grades K-5), 23 middle school students (grades 6-8), and 20 high school students (grades 9-12). Burtonsville Elementary School is projected by the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to be over capacity in the near future. MCPS is planning for an addition at the school in FY 2013. Paint Branch High School and Banneker Middle School are projected by MCPS to be adequate to serve the area's needs



### parks and open space

Burtonsville is served by the Marilyn Praisner Library and the Praisner Community Center. These facilities serve the Burtonsville, Fairland, and adjacent communities. The Plan area has no existing parkland. The greater Burtonsville area is served by two local parks (Burtonsville and Columbia), one neighborhood park (McKnew), and one recreational park (Fairland). To achieve the Plan's goal of providing a complete community including active recreation, providing conservation sites and improving connections to parks, the park properties identified in the Plan area should be acquired.





## **Sewer and Water**

The Plan confirms the Fairland Master Plan's recommendation to provide sewer and water recommendations for the new mixed-use neighborhoods in the CRT and CRN Zones. Public sewer should not be extended to the Rural Edge to support the preservation of the sensitive tributary headwaters.

## **Capital Improvements Program**

The Capital Improvements Program should implement the following recommendations:

- complete access road (MCDOT) with participation from the adjacent property owners
- continue the DHCA Building Façade and Retail Center Signage Easement Programs along MD 198 to implement signage, streetscape, and building façade improvements in easements along MD 198. Capital improvement projects may be created to continue the focus on the main street commercial revitalization initiatives (DHCA)
- create public green
  - expand the elementary school (MCPS)
  - purchase and construct recreation fields on the Athey property and Parcel 879 (M-NCPPC/MCPS)
  - acquire the BVFD site for public use (MCDOT)

# appendix

(available online)

## **Economy**

- Appendix 1     Burtonsville Market Study and Consumer Shopping Survey, 2007
- Appendix 2     Burtonsville Community Legacy Plan, 2008
- Appendix 3     Planning Department Retail Summary

## **Environment**

- Appendix 4     Draft Patuxent Watershed Implementation Plan, 2011
- Countywide Water Resources Plan, 2010  
[http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/environment/water\\_resources\\_plan/index.shtm](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/environment/water_resources_plan/index.shtm)
- Guidelines for Environmental Management of Development in Montgomery County, 2000  
[http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/environment/forest/guidelines\\_0100/toc\\_environ\\_guide.shtm](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/environment/forest/guidelines_0100/toc_environ_guide.shtm)

## **Connections**

- Appendix 5     MD 29/MD 198 Corridor Improvement Study, Purpose and Need Statement, 2002
- Appendix 6     MD 28/MD 198 Alternates, 2002
- Appendix 7     MD 29/MD 198 Corridor Improvement Study, 2008

Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan  
[http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/transportation/bikeways/A\\_A/contents.shtm](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/transportation/bikeways/A_A/contents.shtm)

Public Facilities

- Appendix 8     Parks and Recreation Needs
- Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan  
[http://www.montgomeryparks.org/PPSD/ParkPlanning/Projects/pros\\_2012/pros\\_2012.shtm](http://www.montgomeryparks.org/PPSD/ParkPlanning/Projects/pros_2012/pros_2012.shtm)
- 2030 Strategic Plan for Parks and Recreation in Montgomery County  
<http://www.montgomeryparks.org/about/vision/>

## **Plans**

- Fairland Master Plan, 1997  
[http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/plan\\_areas/eastern\\_county/master\\_plans/fairland/fairland\\_toc.shtm](http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/plan_areas/eastern_county/master_plans/fairland/fairland_toc.shtm)





May 2012

**burtonsville crossroads  
neighborhood plan**  
turning a crossroads into a community

Public Hearing Draft

Montgomery County Planning Department

 Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

[MontgomeryPlanning.org](http://MontgomeryPlanning.org)



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