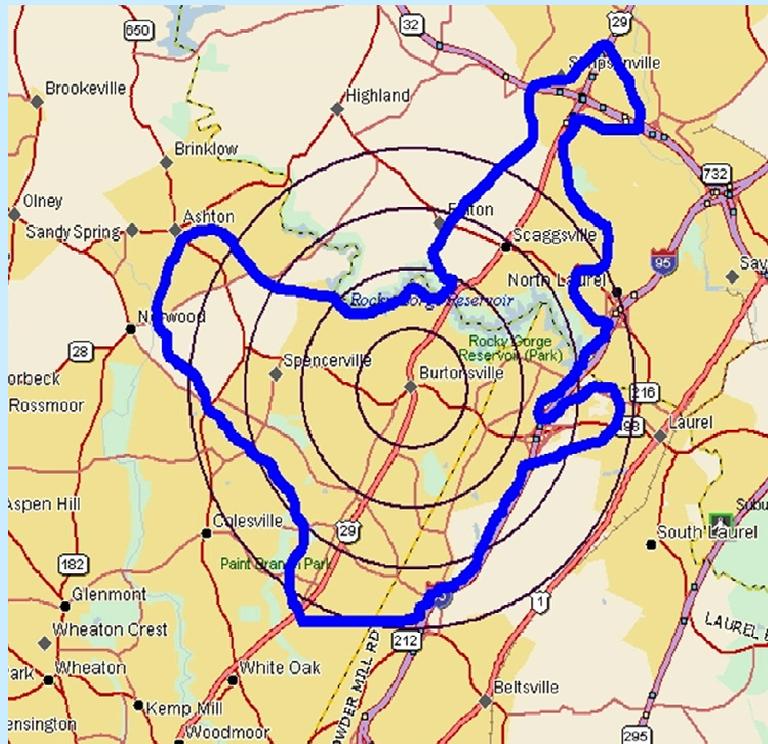


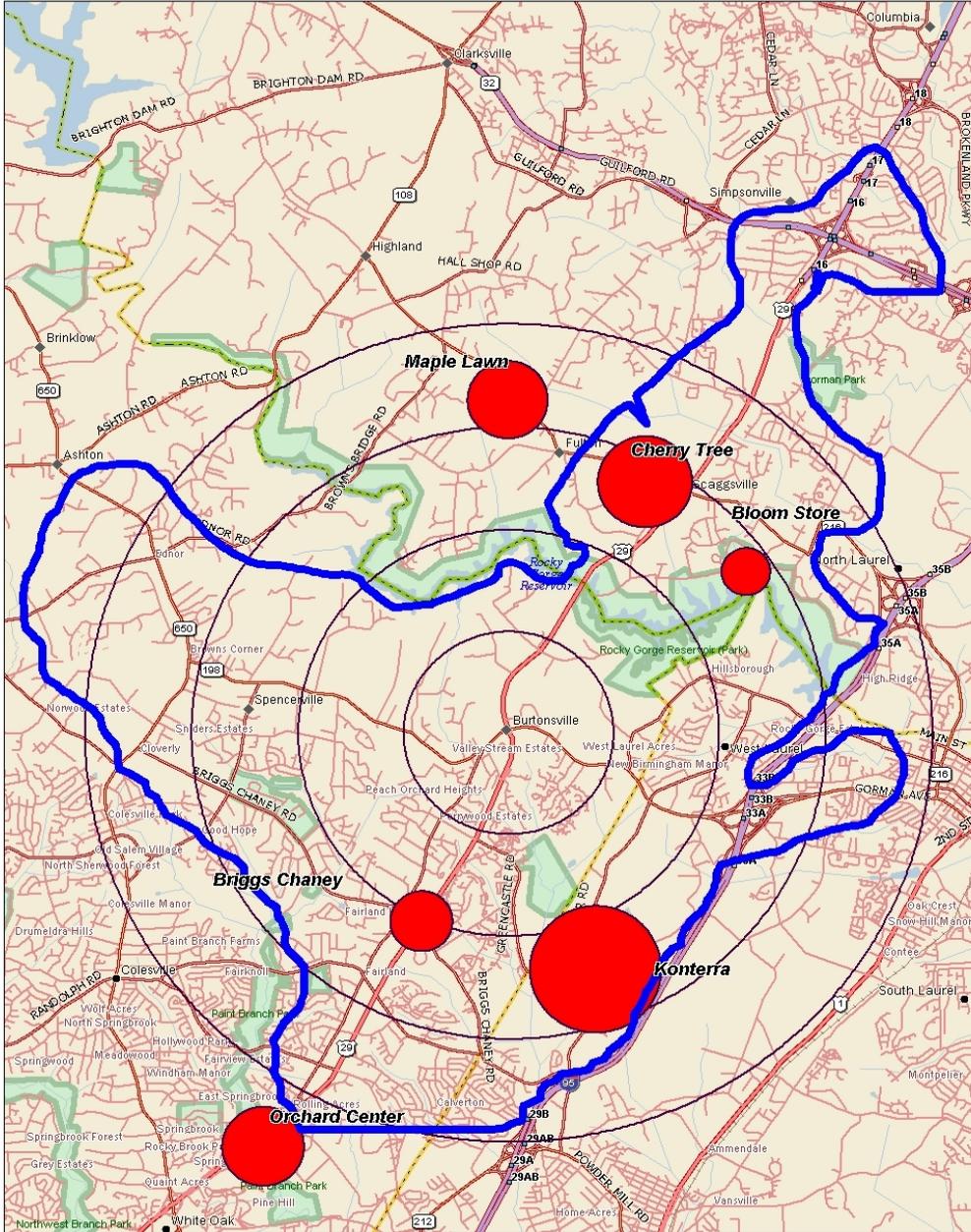
# Burtonsville Market Study and Consumer Shopping Survey

## Final Report Summary

Prepared for Montgomery County  
Department of Housing & Community Affairs



Potomac Incorporated  
October 2007



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MN (10.8° W)



Data Zoom 11-3

Figure 1 Map

## Burtonsville Market Study and Consumer Shopping Survey

The Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA), in conjunction with the Department of Economic Development (DED), undertook a three-pronged market research study with Potomac Incorporated of Bethesda to determine what the residents and business owners envision for Burtonsville, to examine the impact of US 29 and MD 198 transportation changes, and to assess future retail directions and opportunities for Burtonsville. Once a rural community, then a suburban crossroads, Burtonsville has the potential to become a vibrant village center through public/private investment and enterprise.

The elements of the combined study, in the order of completion in 2007, are:

- Detailed interviews with local community members and business owners that uncovered insightful recommendations about possible changes and improvements to the commercial core.
- A neighborhood phone survey among 500 residents living within three miles of the US 29 and MD 198 intersection that examined current shopping habits and behavior as well as preferences for future retail and service opportunities.
- A market evaluation examining retail conditions, trends, market demand, a prime trade area with pertinent demographics and both public service and retail needs important for the next planning stage.



Figure 2—Burtonsville Shopping Area

Study findings are condensed in this booklet, which offers a summarized market evaluation and community recommendations based on responses to both the interviews and to the consumer shopping survey.

## **Research and Data**

**1. The Market Area:** The primary market area (“PMA”) is the area within a ten-minute drive from Burtonsville. Because of the high-speed Route 29 corridor this ten-minute drive reaches north, just past Route 32, and south to Paint Branch Park. It extends west to New Hampshire Avenue and east to I-95. Some businesses have smaller PMAs and some larger but this is the area from which most businesses in Burtonsville derive 60-80% of their trade. The restaurants have larger PMAs but the gas station has a smaller one, for example. The map on the front cover shows the PMA in relation to distances from the Route 29/Route 198 intersection.

**2. Population:** The 10-minute drive includes a 2007 population of 77,500, which grew at a rate of 7.9% from 2000-2007 and is projected to grow by 4.4% from 2007-2012. Median household income in 2007 is estimated at \$80,792.

Average drive time to work is 39 minutes. Homeowners make up 72.9% of households; 79% of dwelling units are single-family (half the total are detached units).

**3. The Burtonsville Commercial District:** Burtonsville’s commercial district comprises two shopping centers and a neighborhood shopping area along Old Columbia Pike (Route 198). The total retail square footage is approximately 320,000, putting the commercial area taken as a whole into the range of a “super community center” (250,000 sf and higher, according to the Urban Land Institute, Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers, 2004).

Burtonsville Shopping Center (currently 49,400 sf, with plans to expand to 150,000 sf) features a Dutch Country Farmers Market (open Thursday through Saturday), a CVS Pharmacy, a US Post Office and smaller retailers (County liquor store, shoe repair shop, ice cream/donut store). The one vacant space, formerly occupied by a bank, indicates overall occupancy of 90-95%. The developer is not recruiting tenants, however, as plans proceed for redevelopment. While the Dutch Market will not be part of the new center it is expected to include a major grocery store.

Burtonsville Crossing (129,700 sf) has a Giant supermarket anchor and a range of neighborhood retailers (hair salon, mail center, liquor store, bank, dry cleaners, video rental. For example, rents in this center (going forward) are in the range of \$32-35 (plus \$6 common area maintenance charge) and occupancy is approximately 95%.

The neighborhood shopping area along Route 198 west of Route 29 is an assortment of small businesses in Pike Center, Old Columbia Center, the Shops at Burtonsville and free-standing stores, many of them residences converted to commercial use, along the south side of Route 198. These include:

- A variety of restaurants, both sit-down (Cuba de Ayer, Seibel’s, Old Hickory Grill, Maiwand Kabob, Chapalas) and fast-food/delivery/take-out (Domino’s, Papa Johns, Jerry’s Pizza and Subs, Subway, Chicken Basket, Hunan Manor).
- Auto-related: car rental, auto service, gasoline/convenience.
- Personal services: beauty salon, dry cleaners, nail care.
- Hardware, furnishings, decorations (bedding, carpeting).
- Specialty food market.
- Liquor store.



These centers are nearly full (occupancy is approximately 90-95%). Rents are in the range of \$15-25 per square foot (gross) depending on size, location and date of lease.

**4. Competitive Locations:** The competitive area includes (See Figure 1):

- Briggs-Chaney Market Place: 192,000 sf anchored by Safeway and Ross Dress for Less.
- Orchard Center, Cherry Hill Road: 425,000 sf including Super Fresh and Target.
- Cherry Tree Crossing, Scaggsville: c. 40,000 sf, a two-level center.
- Bloom Supermarket and retail center, North Laurel: c. 70,000 sf.
- Maple Lawn, Scaggsville: currently 40,000 sf to grow to 180,000 sf and to include Harris-Teeter Supermarket. The project is a “town center” that will include 1,340 housing units and 1.6 million square feet of non-retail commercial space. Projected build out is 10-12 years. The retail mix includes two large restaurants, quick service food and a coffee shop.
- Konterra, Laurel, is a new regional town center now under construction three miles southeast of Burtonsville. The development program for Konterra East includes: retail (1.5 million square feet), office (3.8



Exhibit 1								
Traffic Counts, Selected Locations, Burtonsville Area, Maryland								
2001-2006								
		Average Annual Daily Traffic						
Location		2006	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	Change 2001-2006
Route 29								
	South of 198							
	Burtonsville	51,532	52,050	53,075	53,525	52,950	51,375	0.3%
	Fairland	54,231	54,775	57,575	57,475	52,375	55,575	-2.4%
Route 29A		14,350	-	-	-	-	-	-
Route 198								
	East of Route 29	42,620	38,675	41,425	40,950	40,475	46,900	-9.1%
	Between Rte 29 and 29A	38,291	-	-	-	-	-	-
	West of Route 29							
	Burtonsville	32,251	32,575	28,325	28,050	27,675	30,025	7.4%
	Spencerville	25,421	25,675	19,625	19,450	19,175	18,025	41.0%

Source: Maryland Dept. of Transportation, State Highway Administration; Thomas Point Associates, Inc.

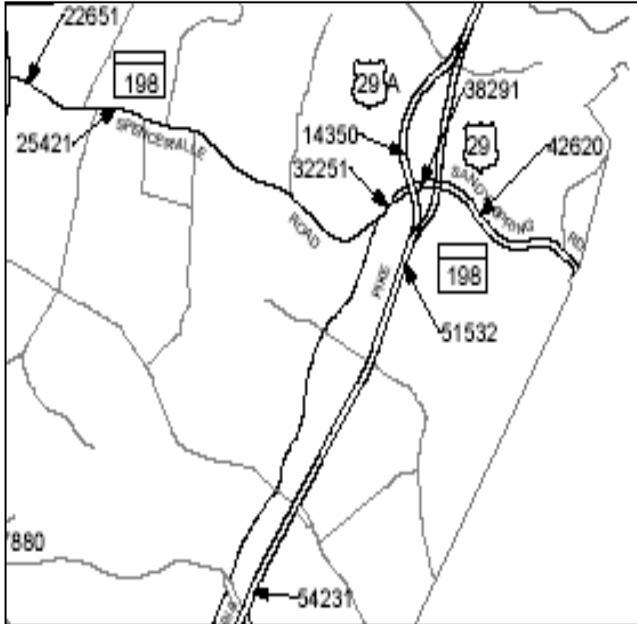
- million sf), residential (4,500 dwelling units) and hotel (600 rooms). Konterra West is an additional 253 acres, zoned C-R-C ("upscale commercial retail center," according to the web site).

In summary there is now roughly 0.8-1.0 million square feet (msf) of retail space in the PMA and an additional 1.5-2.0 msf under construction, planned or approved.

**5. Traffic:** Large volumes of traffic support businesses in Burtonsville. Exhibit 1 provides estimates of average annual daily traffic for locations in the Burtonsville area. The figures allow for comparison among stations and by year, from 2001-2006

Based on the traffic counts from Exhibit 1, we note the following:

- Route 29 is the most heavily traveled road in the immediate area of Burtonsville, (For perspective, the most heavily traveled road in the Washington-Baltimore region, the Capitol Beltway [I-495] near New Hampshire Avenue had an AADT in 2006 of 200,430 vehicles, nearly four times the traffic on Route 29).
- Traffic volumes have been steady on Route 29 in recent years. The slight difference in traffic in Fairland, south of Burtonsville, and Burtonsville suggests that most traffic originates to the north. This is not surprising since Columbia, north of Burtonsville, is a major regional population center.
- Route 198 is an important east-west road. While just a four-lane local road in Burtonsville west of Route 29, it carried over 62% of the traffic volume of Route 29. It is more heavily traveled east of Route 29 than west: 2006 vehicle counts were 32% greater on the east side of Route 29 than on the west. However, the fastest growing segment of the local road system has been on Route 198 west of Burtonsville. The stretch of Route 198 Spencerville grew by over 7,000 vehicles, or 41%, from 2001-2006.
- The realignment of Route 29 has had little impact on traffic on Route 198. Counts west of Route 29, in the heart of Burtonsville, were higher in 2006 than in 2001 (by 7.4%); while counts declined slightly from 2005 to 2006, they increased over the longer period.



**Figure 3**  
**Locations of Traffic Counts, 2006,**  
**Burtonsville Area**

### **Retail Sales and Opportunities**

A key fact about the Burtonsville PMA is that there is significant “outflow” of retail sales, meaning that shoppers are going elsewhere to purchase needed goods and services.

The data show a significant retail opportunity for additional sales amounting to \$802 million. This potential (\$802 million) reflects demand across all retail categories except automotive and hardware. The figures do not take into account the new activity at Maple Lawn and the Bloom-anchored center in North Laurel. The \$802 million represents the difference between actual sales and estimated demand based on household expenditure patterns in the area. The figure indicates demand for roughly 1.8-2.0 million square feet of additional retail space in this market area (at sales per square foot of \$400-450).

- Most of this retail gap will be filled by new and proposed development, particularly the retail component of the Konterra project (1.5 million sf).

With respect to Burtonsville’s commercial area, the sales gap is a positive factor although it is difficult to translate the opportunity into changes in the commercial district.

- The market area is downsizing quickly as a result of new retail developments to the north and east. Existing stores will face much stronger competition.
- The new alignment of Route 29 and changes in the circulation pattern limit future retail growth for Burtonsville.
- There is no undeveloped land in the Burtonsville commercial area with appropriate zoning for additional commercial development.

- The Amish Market is a regional destination and has become integral to the cultural, business and community image of Burtonsville. If the Amish Market is lost, that may weaken Burtonsville as a regional destination although some of the businesses, particularly



the restaurants, still have a regional clientele.

### **Summary and Recommendations**

Burtonsville is a good location in a strong but rapidly changing market area. In the past the market area has been a ten-minute drive but it is starting to contract in the north, east and south as a result of new commercial development. Large developments on the horizon will bring changes to the commercial environment. The leading problems associated with the commercial environment in Burtonsville are a lack of space and a wave of competition.

- The constraints on bringing in new retail development are apparent. There is limited development capacity due to constraints on land, circulation, zoning, stormwater management and public opposition. The County lacks site control and there are no new/proposed projects suitable for public-private partnerships.

- The redesign of Route 29 capped Burtonsville's commercial growth and suggests greater potential for specialized/destination retail combined with neighborhood shopping. Burtonsville can accommodate restaurants and specialty stores that do not require a mall location.
- In this situation the County - to the extent that there is space - should promote Burtonsville to small businesses that do not require mall destinations, including:
  - ◆ More and better restaurants.
  - ◆ Salons, health spas and services.
  - ◆ Furnishings, decorations.
  - ◆ Specialty personal supplies and services.
  - ◆ Gifts, novelties.

The pressures for improvements to Route 198 are strong and increasing as traffic on 198 in Burtonsville and Spencerville has grown significantly.

State planning for Route 198 is closely related to the County's planning for the proposed "Burtonsville access road" (also called the "ring road"). If the County builds the ring road first, then the State will probably want to eliminate access points to commercial properties from Route 198. The alternative, without the ring road, is to redesign Route 198 as something more like a "main street" appearance than a primary state route. There are many examples of high-traffic roads that function for better or worse as "main streets" and there is increasing experience in Maryland and around the nation in ways to redevelop in these situations.

- It is not clear from the traffic figures how the proposed ring road will address the issues and improve the situation.

The **Burtonsville Road Prospectus** (2002 study by DPWT) states:

*"Travel demand forecasts indicate that in the future, under the "no-build" conditions, traffic volumes on Md. 198 will increase by more than 50% of the current volumes, which could be somewhat alleviated by the Burtonsville Access Road... The provision of this road would ultimately allow Burtonsville to transition into a town center and satisfy the needs of the residential and business*

*communities."* (Source: **Prospectus** page I-8)

The traffic analysis in this 2002 Prospectus indicates that ring road traffic will be approximately 10% of Route 198 traffic (estimated for year 2025, Average Annual Daily Traffic [AADT] on 198 is projected at 37,700 vehicles; for the ring road, AADT in the same year is estimated at only 3,800). (Source: **Prospectus**, Appendix A-5)

The use of the term "Town Center" or "town center" has been a confusing piece in the public discussions in Burtonsville. Some have been talking about a retail place while others are discussing a public or cultural center. Residents interviewed in the consumer phone survey express their "need for more and better stores." The responses of business leaders (March 7, 2007) reflect confusion on this point. It is important that someone explain the concept of the Town Center and develop consensus on what the term means and in what ways it could apply. This would lead to a discussion of what is possible in Burtonsville given constraints on land and public investment.

- The "retail" Town Center concept (in the style of Bowie, for example) is not viable. It would have required an area planning approach with coordination between redevelopment of Burtonsville Shopping Center and commercial areas to the west, new patterns of circulation (streets, sidewalks, bikeways) and a district parking approach possibly including a parking structure.
- There is still the potential to have a public place/town center (with some of the components of a Reston-style town center, aside from the density):
  - ◆ Improvements in landscaping, circulation, pedestrian safety.
  - ◆ Location of community facilities.
  - ◆ Meeting and/or performance space.

A smart recommendation is to classify this area, for future planning and redevelopment, as its own distinctive "retail village," and avoid broader and unrealistic terms as a Town Center. A retail village concept fits comfortably with the community planning notion of shopping that is convenient for nearby

neighborhoods and perpetuates Burtonsville as the principal and historic place at an accessible crossroads designation. At the same time, the Burtonsville community will benefit from the expanding regional shopping opportunities within a reasonable distance. These regional shopping centers may be a traffic magnet requiring altered and/or increased traffic handling considerations at levels higher than could be accommodated on Burtonsville's local roads.

There are some specific tools that the County can use although most work best when there is agreement on a central concept for the area:

- Shared parking: where there is market demand, nothing supports retail development and enhancement better than parking.
- Development of a central public space: Place-making is essential to foster the unique identity of Burtonsville surrounded by established, emerging and larger mixed-use projects, such as Konterra, Laurel, Maple Lawn, Columbia, and Orchard Center.
- Streetscaping.
- Landscaping.
- Storm water drainage improvements.
- Pedestrian and bikeway improvements.
- Signage – including directional and promotional.
- Design assistance and coordination.
- Financial support for targeted businesses to stay and grow.

Park and Planning staff is working on a “simplified development procedure” for Burtonsville's small property owners so that they won't have to go through the expensive and complex subdivision process (although the procedure will probably have a property size limit of c. ½ acre, thereby excluding the one owner who has assembled a group of properties).

It is clear that the ring road with its limited street parking will not in itself divert shoppers and residents from driving on Route 198 nor is it a phase in a larger program that will “allow Burtonsville to transition into a town center.” However, plans for the ring road seem to be moving forward. There is a need to evaluate the impact and cost-benefit of this

road and to better integrate its design in terms of and place-making while considering alternatives.

There is still room for limited retail expansion in Burtonsville. The challenge will be to get more from less in terms of tenants that pay higher rents, goods and services that the community wants, and stores that make the area stand out in a market area with a growing variety of competitive locations. In this situation the “retail village” may be a better model than the “town center.”



### Physical Space

- Create village square or center with focal point like a fountain and ‘homey feel’ where local folks can gather, see neighbors, have fun, shop, eat at restaurants and cafes, and learn new things.

### Parking Possibilities

- More shops and restaurants will require additional parking.
- “Parking is the constraint on development – It affects the types of businesses that are attracted.”
- County suggested to explore suitable parking arrangements to accommodate customers’ access to stores from the front instead of the rear of the property.
- Concept for consideration: Assign business or property owners credit for parking, calculating how many spaces will be lost during redevelopment.

### Environmental Protection

- Address stormwater drainage issues.
- Improve flood plain on MD 198; other stormwater issues in commercial area.
- To protect air quality, consider installing roundabouts or circles at certain traffic lights to cut down on idling of truck, bus, auto engines.
- Enforce existing environmental ordinances, including recycling by businesses. NOTE: Montgomery County is expected to legislate energy efficiency and conservation measures; put Burtonsville in forefront.

### More Restaurants

- “More and better restaurants” – more stores/service is desired in Burtonsville.
- Vital ingredient for a vibrant center where people can gather.
- Include variety of eating establishments: upscale, family, ethnic, cafes.

### Connect Burtonsville through Walkable Streets, Bikeways, Local Transit, and Accessible Roads

- Pedestrian improvements and sidewalks .
- Sidewalks must be walkable – no more than 400 feet in length. No super blocks!
- Requiring cross streets will give more frontage “like a village” to build on.
- Shade trees and other landscaping should enhance the walking experience.

### Traffic Improvements

- Adjust traffic light timing along US 29 and MD 198 for safer entry and egress.
- Install light between two existing lights along MD 198 west of US 29.
- Slow down traffic on MD 198.
- Incorporate a center lane along MD 198 to make left and right turns.
- Set up lanes and trails – “Cycle Avenues” – for bicyclists.
- If feasible to fund, the County could link Park and Ride lot behind Burtonsville Crossing to shopping district with free shuttle like *Bethesda Trolley* or *Downtown Silver Spring Van Go*.

### Development Process

- Streamline and simplify at County level.
- Enable and encourage incentives at County level and by M/NCPPC – including green tape incentives.
- Provide tools for businesses and property owners to improve buildings.
- Provide financial compensation or assistance for impact during construction.
- Compensate landlords to reduce tenants’ rent during construction.
- Modify entrances and exits so that businesses are not cut off.

## Based on Interviews and Consumer Shopping Survey

### Beautification

- Beautify, modernize, streetscape, and green Burtonsville's central core with an overall plan – predominant role for local government – including 'facelift' or new facades along MD 198.
- Foster synergy between the revitalizing Burtonsville Shopping Center and MD 198 shops and restaurants.

### More Food Market Choices

- Giant at Burtonsville Crossing a mainstay.
- Consumers express need for more food store choices.

### Retain the Amish Market

- Amish Market is integral to Burtonsville community identity– bridging early days as farming center to present suburban lifestyle evolving as a village center.
- County asked to work with residents and business community to find suitable location for Amish Market in Burtonsville area.

### Park, Playgrounds for Sports, Health, Relaxation

- Exercise and fitness activities – bowling, hiker-biker paths, gym, swimming, games, horseback riding, fishing and miniature golf.
- Tennis, soccer, football, basketball.

### Align Community, Culture, Arts

- Consider declaring Burtonsville a "renovation district" – gateway to Montgomery from Howard, Prince George's counties and Baltimore.
- Community leaders would like County to be a partner in a multi-cultural center for theater, dance hall, arts studio, quality crafts and antique shows to enrich community life; serve as museum to preserve Burtonsville's history.
- Feature live music, including jazz.

- Outdoor fountain "where people can congregate" - incorporate with Master Plan's 'Public Square' family gathering place.
- Consider a community center for children and for adult education and senior citizens' activities.
  - ◆ Indoor sports, bingo, arts and crafts classes.
  - ◆ Teen club.

### Attractive signage

- Along US 29 and MD 198.
- Park and Ride (behind Burtonsville Crossing).
- Unite the community.

### Web Site

- Create excitement online about amenities and changes.

### Branding Campaign

- Signage and web site anchor cohesive campaign to uplift downtown image.
- Enlist local media to feature best of historic and new Burtonsville.
- Use 'Burtonsville' name with amenities.





Burtonsville



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