



Columbia
Neighborhood Conservation Plan | **Forest**

November 2000



**Neighborhood Conservation Plan
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The Columbia Forest Neighborhood Conservation Plan Committee

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In addition, the committee received prompt and professional support from many county staff members in many county departments. Their comments were always helpful and were incorporated into the text and recommendations, or are shown as footnotes throughout this document. We appreciate the assistance we received from the Arlington County Police Department in conducting a security survey of the neighborhood.

We wish to thank the staff in the Office of Neighborhood Services who enthusiastically supported this work: Robert Collins, Chris Nixon, Bill Roberts and Chris Shaheen. We want to recognize the dedication of Nancy Michael who steadfastly guided us through each phase of this project. Not only did she capably fulfill her responsibilities as a Office of Neighborhood Services staff member, she continued to support this effort through the last three and half months on a volunteer basis, after she had resigned her position with the County.



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Executive Summary

The Columbia Forest Neighborhood Conservation Plan describes existing conditions within Columbia Forest and makes recommendations for improvements. A neighborhood survey was distributed in May of 1999 and the results of the survey, together with interviews of residents and property owners, form the basis of this plan.

The plan opens with a brief history of Columbia Forest's place in the formation of Arlington County, the development of the original subdivision in 1941, and the subsequent construction of additional sections of single-family homes, town homes, apartments, condominiums and commercial property along Columbia Pike.

The Neighborhood Characteristics and Goals chapter offers seven goals for Columbia Forest. The neighborhood wants to preserve a balanced mix of housing options and foster home ownership, insure safety for pedestrians, control traffic, expand parks and recreational opportunities, improve the appearance and livability of the neighborhood and build community identity and involvement.

The Land Use and Zoning chapter details the types of Columbia Forest housing and recommends that existing residential density be maintained and that home ownership be emphasized. An analysis of zoning and land use results in recommendations to make small zoning changes to reflect existing usage and to modify the General Land Use Plan. The Columbia Forest neighborhood has features that may have historic significance and has one acknowledged historic site, the SW Number 6 Mile Marker, on the South Jefferson Street median. The plan recommends that the County place more emphasis on maintaining historic sites and that the evaluation of historic districts within Arlington be completed. The neighborhood supports County code enforcement efforts and would like to work with the county to develop a Resident's Guide to county ordinances.

Recommendations in the Capital Improvement chapter target improvements in sidewalks, pedestrian street lighting, safety barriers and other public safety measures. Several recommendations focus on improving conditions along South Columbus and South Frederick Streets, including completing missing sidewalks and installing pedestrian street lighting. The location and condition of existing safety barriers are noted and locations needing additional safety measures are identified. Improvements to the Columbia Pike streetscape are discussed in this chapter as well as in the Beautification chapter.

The Traffic Management and Transportation chapter offers detailed recommendations for reducing the volume and speed of traffic and improving pedestrian safety on South Columbus and South Frederick Streets, the two neighborhoods streets that receive a high volume of traffic. Pedestrian safety measures are emphasized for the Columbia Pike corridor. The neighborhood supports improvements in public transportation along Columbia Pike but cautions that specific proposals must be evaluated with respect to impacts on the neighborhood. The plan recommends improvements to make bicycle transit a more appealing and practical alternative.

In the Parks and Recreation chapter the neighborhood recommends enhancements to Bailey's Branch Park, acquiring park land along Bailey's Branch and Four Mile Run, and moving the Four Mile Run Trail to the west side of Four Mile Run. The plan recommends the development of a neighborhood park and neighborhood house in the western part of Columbia Forest.

The Beautification chapter suggests additional landscaping in public areas and in certain commercial areas. It recommends the creation of "community entrances" into the neighborhood where attractive landscaping and neighborhood signs mark the boundaries of Columbia Forest. A series of locations are targeted for additional landscaping: the South George Mason Drive and South Jefferson Street medians, several dead end streets within the neighborhood, and proposed parking nubs. The preservation of one of Columbia Forest's most important assets, its canopy of mature trees, is encouraged. Finally, litter is a serious concern in several parts of the neighborhood and there are recommendations for both county and neighborhood action.



Introduction

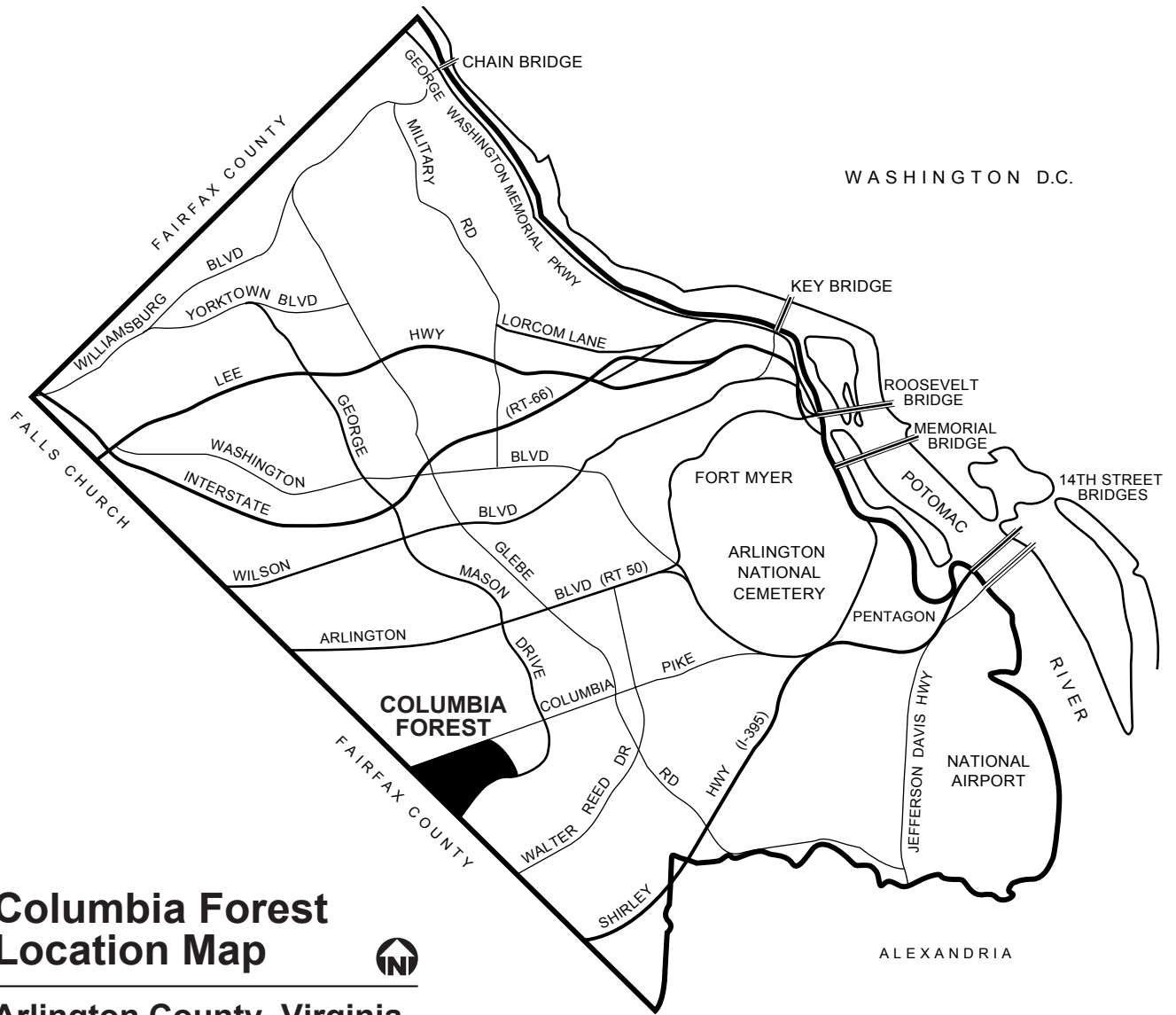
The Columbia Forest neighborhood is located in southern Arlington County, bordered by Columbia Pike between Four Mile Run and the Fairfax County line, and extending back to South George Mason Drive. The original community, established in 1941, was a planned development of single-family homes built to serve as housing for wartime Pentagon workers. Soon after WWII, more single-family homes were built, continuing the original plan. Starting in the 50's, apartments and condominiums were built along Columbia Pike adding more housing options. The ownership of the houses in the original development subsequently passed to new residents who would like to preserve the character of the community.

Since the conception of the Columbia Forest community, there have been significant changes in Arlington County. Traffic and population have more than doubled. Residential and commercial development along Columbia Pike and in adjacent Fairfax County has expanded. Our community has acquired many urban characteristics, one of them being a large volume of traffic that traverses our streets en route to other destinations.

Arlington County itself has a diminishing land area dedicated to single-family residences. As the population of the County increases, there is a tendency to allot building space to multi-family dwellings. Because of our neighborhood's location along Columbia Pike, a busy commuter corridor, residents are concerned that redevelopment pressures may increase residential density and aggravate existing problems.

The Columbia Forest Civic Association has been in existence for about twenty-five years. Last year it renewed its commitment to participate in the Neighborhood Conservation Program. In May of 1999, a survey was distributed asking residents to evaluate their neighborhood. Based on results of this survey and numerous interviews with other residents and property owners, the Columbia Forest Neighborhood Conservation Plan was developed.

Not all present and future opportunities can be addressed at this time. We have distinct communities joined in the association, and there will be times when their desires and interests may differ. It is our wish to be representative of all residents of Columbia Forest and to treat the problems of each resident as a community problem. The achievement of this ideal is a long term endeavor in which this Neighborhood Conservation Plan is only the first step.



**Columbia Forest
Location Map** 

Arlington County, Virginia

Map No. 1



Columbia Forest Neighborhood History

County

In 1669, a sea captain, Robert Howson, was given a grant of 6000 acres of land for bringing 120 passengers to Virginia. The captain immediately sold the land to John Alexander, a member of the family for which the City of Alexandria is named. Subsequently, the land was divided into smaller parcels and sold. Two such parcels include what is now Columbia Forest and were sold to Stephan Gray and Gabriel Adams. In 1774, this land, equal to 1200 acres, was sold to George Washington.

At Washington's death, the land was willed to his relative, George Custis, who combined it with other family land to form the Arlington Plantation, from which the present name of the county is derived. Arlington Plantation was part of the 34 square miles of land granted by the State of Virginia to form the District of Columbia. In 1847, after almost 50 years, the land was returned to Virginia. The land was ultimately divided between the City of Alexandria and a new county named Alexandria County. In 1920, because of confusion in the names between the City of Alexandria, which was not in the County of Alexandria, the name of the county was changed to Arlington County.

Transportation

Columbia Forest is located very near the SE corner formed by two turnpikes. In 1805 when Arlington County was still part of the District of Columbia, Congress authorized the charter of the Washington and Alexandria Turnpike (Route 7). Later, in 1813, Congress authorized the charter for the Alexandria and Leesburg Turnpike. Despite Columbia Forest's location at the intersection of these two turnpikes, the community remained rural as long as the horse was the main means of transportation. Although the Alexandria and Harper's Ferry Railroad came close to Four Mile Run and Columbia Pike, when it was built and operated in 1844, it did not cross into the neighborhood. Now, of course, this railroad has been transformed into the popular regional park known as the Washington and Old Dominion Trail.

Columbia Forest

Little changed in this rural area until after World War I. Transportation was forever changed by the introduction of the family car and domestic electricity. The automobile and bus cut transportation time to Washington and Alexandria to the extent that daily commuting was reasonable. Electricity brought not only light and power, it made the telephone, telegraph and radio practical. These urban niceties were gradually being expanded into our rural area when the stock market crashed in 1929. The Depression that followed the crash closed banks, factories and markets. The effects of the depression were felt until the beginning of WW II in Europe in the late 30's.

Early county efforts in 1930 to regulate development designated Columbia Forest as “A” Residential, a designation that allowed single-family, detached homes only. When the government embarked on the Lend-Lease project that created many jobs in Washington, there was pressure to develop areas closer to Washington with excellent transportation. The opening of the Pentagon in 1941 created demand for local housing, which only increased with the start of World War II. With building materials and labor in short supply, private home building had come to a halt. The rationing of gasoline made living near bus transportation attractive. Our rural area came under consideration for development.

In 1941, a sector of the community was laid out for streets lined with single-family housing. This new planned development, named Columbia Forest, nearly did not get off the drawing board due to the lack of construction materials. The Defense Housing Corporation, DHC, stepped in and authorized the formation of our community as a neighborhood of single-family houses to be rented to young married officers and ranking government officials. The Army Corps of Engineers designed the houses and supervised their construction, part of only 40,000 housing units built during WW II. The street layout was designed to conform to the topography and space was allocated for park areas. Efforts were made to save the existing trees to create an impression of a permanent, mature community. Wartime construction could not be stretched to include building a road connecting our community to route 7 nor a bridge over Four Mile Run. Even the streams that ran through the neighborhood crossed our major streets as open fords until the late 60’s. Our government owned, planned community had limited access to Columbia Pike at South Frederick Street. South George Mason Drive, at the back of the development, stopped at Four Mile Run. The closest zoned local business district was located on Columbia Pike, between South Buchanan Street and Four Mile Run.

The explosion of new WWII construction sometimes outpaced Arlington’s efforts to provide basic county services. Even with Congress pitching in to pay for improvements to the sewage system, things did not always happen in an orderly way. As David Brinkley writes in his 1988 book, *Washington Goes to War*, “In March 1943, county authorities had to evict families from a group of homes in the new Columbia Forest development because, the *Evening Star* reported, they had been ‘living since January without sewer service on a street pitted with yawning holes filled six feet or more deep with water.’”

After World War II, the DHC got out of the house renting business. Our development, made up of individual houses, was sold by the government, mainly to returning war veterans. At the time, a house and lot sold for \$4,200.

The demand for housing continued to grow in the Washington area. In 1947, another tract of land in Columbia Forest was developed, the Virginia Heights subdivision. This tract, which included South Forest Drive and some of 12th Street, was zoned for single-family houses. These included a few factory built Lustron Houses which were erected in 1948. The County’s zoning policy had undergone a change that encouraged multi-family housing construction along Columbia Pike and the major streets leading from the Pike, and construction of multi-family residences and commercial businesses flourished along Columbia Pike, rapidly increasing population and traffic.

Despite the increased residential and commercial density along Columbia Pike, the character of the interior part of the community did not drastically change until 1974. At that time, a bridge was constructed across Four Mile Run to connect our segment of South George Mason Drive to the rest of the Arlington County. In addition, South George Mason Drive was extended into Fairfax County to connect with Route 7. This diverted traffic into the next county, so additional access was given to Columbia Pike at South Columbus Street. This short-cut between Columbia Pike and Route 7 through our neighborhood was so successful that traffic increased from a trickle of local residents to over 5000 vehicles per day.

The Civic Association

Originally, there were two civic associations, one for Columbia Forest and one for the Virginia Heights subdivision. In time, the two were combined to form the present Columbia Forest Civic Association. Most recently, park improvements and traffic management issues have been the focal point of association concerns and activities.

Plans to develop a Neighborhood Conservation Plan in 1989 were renewed ten years later and have been important in reviving interest in the work of the Association. Membership has increased and great energy has been fixed on improving conditions within Columbia Forest.

As one can see, the neighborhood changed from rural fields to a planned community to house Washington's WW II population. The 1941 plan that saved existing trees, laid out curvilinear streets following the topography, dedicated open spaces for parks and recreation, and that separated land use to areas of commercial, single-family houses and multi-family residences, has paid off. The result is a mature, thriving residential area providing housing for almost two thousand families. The Association believes that to a great extent, the original plan for the community can be preserved and improved for the betterment of all residents. We believe that the area can be made safer, calmer and more beautiful, and to that end this Neighborhood Conservation Plan was developed.





Neighborhood Characteristics And Goals

The 1990 census set the population of Columbia Forest at about 3500 residents living in approximately 1700 residences. The population reflects the rich diversity of Arlington County and many ethnic groups and nationalities are represented.

The neighborhood is primarily residential but with a variety of housing options. The neighborhood along Columbia Pike has an urban character and residents live in apartments and condominiums. South of Columbia Pike, the atmosphere is more suburban, with town homes, duplexes and single-family detached homes on neighborhood streets.

The variety of housing styles create a number of smaller communities within Columbia Forest. Residents living in multi-family dwellings identify with their building, complex or town home development, and belong to condo and home owner associations. Many residents in single-family homes define their smaller community as one of the several subdivisions making up Columbia Forest.

When the neighborhood survey was distributed last year, we heard back from only a subset of the neighborhood, primarily owners of single-family detached homes. A large part of the work of this plan was to seek out all the communities and residents within Columbia Forest. We met with residents and managers from the condominiums, town homes and apartment buildings as well as business and property owners. We asked each to describe their problems and share their ideas. In turn, we shared drafts of this plan and sought their advice. As a result of this Neighborhood Conservation process, we have enlarged our understanding of our neighborhood and our neighbors.

Despite our different homes and backgrounds, we recognize that we are united by the strong bonds of geography. We know that changes to Columbia Pike will reverberate to South George Mason Drive, and that changes to Columbus Street will drastically affect what happens on Frederick Street. Above all, we are united in our wish to improve our surroundings and to maintain Columbia Forest as a good place to live. Following from this common desire, and



expressed in the recommendations which follow in the next chapters, Columbia Forest has adopted the following neighborhood goals:

Neighborhood Goals

1. Maintain a balanced mix of housing options: preserve the single-family character of interior sections of Columbia Forest, support appropriate residential density along Columbia Pike, and foster opportunities for home ownership where ever possible.
2. Ensure pedestrian safety: improve sidewalks, street design, and pedestrian lighting.
3. Support variety and safety in transportation options: protect the neighborhood from cut-through and speeding traffic, alleviate on-street parking shortages, make mass transit a convenient and appealing choice, and encourage bicycle commuting.
4. Expand access to parks and recreational facilities and establish community stewardship of Four Mile Run and Bailey's Branch.
5. Improve the livability and appearance of the neighborhood: through beautification, tree preservation, litter control and code enforcement.
6. Build a strong Columbia Forest identity using neighborhood signs.
7. Promote community involvement.



Land Use And Zoning

Existing Residential Uses

Columbia Forest offers a variety of housing. There are 357 single-family detached homes in one contiguous area, 92 semi-detached homes lining both sides of two streets, 49 townhouses in two developments, 304 condominium units in two developments (one garden-style with 168 units and one high rise with 136 units) and 987 apartment units in five complexes (one small garden-style with 16 units, one larger garden-style development with 210 units, one mid-rise with 227 units and two high rise buildings with 134 and 400 units each). The condominiums and apartments are all located on or near Columbia Pike. By our count, there are a total of 1,789 residences in Columbia Forest. There are no undeveloped lots in the neighborhood.

Single-family homes were built in a ten year period between 1942 and 1952 and 61% have added on living space. The semi-detached homes were built in the early 50's and 53% of these have additions. The townhouse developments were built in 1978 and 1990, the condominiums were built in 1950 and 1975, and the apartments, in the period 1953 to 1964.

Most people living in Columbia Forest rent. Besides the 987 rental apartment units which represent 55% of our residences, at least 12% of the single-family residences, 33% of the semi-detached and 10% of the townhouses are also rented. (The method of determining rental rates for these residences tends to understate the number of rental properties.) Rental rates for the two condominiums are 36% and 32%. Overall, we estimate that *at least* two thirds of all residences in Columbia Forest are rentals.

The residents of Columbia Forest understand the need for diversity in housing options which our community offers. However, it is a well established precept that home ownership is the foundation of a stable and secure community. Columbia Forest seeks to build a strong community through the careful balancing of owned and rented properties.

Recommendation 1: The county should take no action that would increase the percentage of Columbia Forest residences that are rented.

Recommendation 2: The county should ensure that any redevelopment of multi-family housing in Columbia Forest will significantly increase opportunities for home ownership.

The residents of Columbia Forest have expressed strong support for maintaining and enhancing the single-family character of the interior of Columbia Forest. Residents oppose the redevelopment of single-family properties into multi-family dwellings, either as duplexes or townhouses. Further, many residents, including those living in the more densely populated areas along Columbia Pike, are cautious about possible increases in housing density that could come with redevelopment of existing multi-family properties

along Columbia Pike.

Recommendation 3: The county should commit to the preservation of existing single-family homes in Columbia Forest, recognizing that, traditionally, residents of single-family homes have formed the core of active civic life in Arlington neighborhoods.

Recommendation 4: The county should work closely with neighborhoods in any redevelopment planning along the Columbia Pike corridor so as to minimize any adverse effects associated with increases in the density of multi-family housing.

Existing Commercial Uses

Commercial properties within Columbia Forest include a 33,000 square feet retail/office complex at Columbia Pike and South Greenbriar Street, a Mobil gas station at Columbia Pike and South Frederick Street, and a 7-11 convenience store and an automotive repair shop located at Columbia Pike and South Columbus Street

Current Zoning

The Columbia Forest neighborhood is comprised of eight zoning districts as shown in Map #2. The predominate land use is classified as “R-6” which is defined as a single-family dwelling district, 1 unit per lot with a minimum of 6,000 square feet per lot. The remaining land is zoned for residential apartments of various density (“RA 6-15”, “RA 8-18”, “RA 14-26”, “RA 7-16”), for commercial use (“C-1”, “C-2”) and for special use (“S-3A”). “C-1” is defined as local commercial and “C-2” is defined as service commercial. The area known as Bailey’s Branch Park in our neighborhood is designated as “S-3A”.

Worthy of mention is the designation of the land along the 5200 block of South 10th Place, South Buchanan Street, the cul de sac in the 5100 block of South 10th Place, the 4800 block of South 10th Street and the designation of the area surrounding South 12th Road. The South 10th Place and South Buchanan Street areas are zoned “RA 14-26” which is appropriate for the existing “duplex” type dwellings but could permit higher density construction. Likewise, the 4800 block of South 10th Street contains townhouses but is also zoned as “RA 14-26”. The 5100 block of South 10th Place is zoned “RA 14-26” but contains single-family homes on three sides. The area immediately surrounding South 12th Road is zoned “R-6” but are townhouses which were permitted with a special exception approval from the County Board. The land designation at Columbia Pike and South Frederick Street, where the Mobil station is located, is “RA 14-26” which is zoning for residential apartments, and existing usage is non-conforming. All other areas of Columbia Forest appear to have land use that is consistent with the zoning designations.

Recommendation 5: The 5100 block of South 10th Place should be rezoned to “R-6” consistent with its current usage.

Recommendation 6: The usage of the property at South Frederick Street and

Columbia Pike as a gas station should not be expanded beyond what is currently there and usage should revert back to its zoned designation in the future.¹

Proposed zoning changes and development plans along our Fairfax County border could have a significant impact on Columbia Forest, particularly along South Forest Drive and South Hamilton Street.

Recommendation 7: The county should continue to share information concerning development plans along the Fairfax County border and continue to notify the neighborhood of any proposed zoning or traffic management changes that could impact Columbia Forest.

Comparison to the “General Land Use Plan”

According to the Arlington County document, *The Planning Process in Arlington*, the General Land Use Plan (GLUP) serves as the “primary policy guide for future development of Arlington County”. All of Arlington County has a GLUP designation. As shown in Map #3, our neighborhood is depicted on the Arlington County GLUP map primarily as Low Residential with 1 to 10 units per acre. The “R-6” zoning designation for the large majority of Columbia Forest is, therefore, consistent with the GLUP designation. The GLUP map depicts South Buchanan Street and the eastern side of Columbus Street as Low Residential but with a density of 11- 15 units per acre. The entire stretch of Columbia Pike, with one exception, that lies within our neighborhood is depicted on the GLUP map as Low-Medium Residential with a density of 16 - 36 units per acre. The one exception is the commercial area at the South Greenbriar Street and Columbia Pike intersection. This area has a consistent GLUP and zoning designation. Of note is that the commercially zoned area near Columbus Street and Columbia Pike is not so depicted on the GLUP map.

Recommendation 8: The General Land Use Plan should be revised to show the east side of South Columbus Street as Low Residential with 1 to 10 units per acre.²

Recommendation 9: The General Land Use Plan should be revised to show South Buchanan Street as Low Residential with 1 to 10 units per acre.³

Historic Preservation

The most visible reminder of Columbia Forest’s place in history is its first houses. They are situated in the original development between South Columbus and South Frederick Streets and are built entirely of cinder block. Because of the unusual construction, its purpose and timing, this part of the neighborhood may qualify as a historic district. The blocks of homes built for returning service personnel, and some of the first multi-family dwellings along Columbia Pike, also may be considered for historic designation. In addition, Columbia Forest is home to five Lustron houses, enamel steel prefabricated houses, which are also of historic interest. Lustron homes in other parts of the country are on the Federal Registry of historic homes. The neighborhood is only now becoming aware of its

options regarding historic designation and will develop recommendations at a future date.

Also within the boundaries of Columbia Forest rests one of the boundary stones that mark the land Virginia donated to form the original District of Columbia. Placed in 1791 and known as the SW Number 6 Mile Marker, the stone is located in the median strip of South Jefferson Street. The stone bears the dedication of the Daughters of the American Revolution and is enclosed in a small, wrought iron fence. The fence and plantings surrounding the stone are in need of significant refurbishment.

Recommendation 10: The county should evaluate its policy regarding historic places within Arlington to emphasize the importance of these sites and to establish the appropriate maintenance responsibilities and schedules.

Recommendation 11: The county should complete a Preliminary Information Form for the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to determine whether or not the Columbia Forest neighborhood is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Code Enforcement

Residents responding to the survey noted instances of what they believed were code violations visible from the street. The most frequently cited examples were unlicensed, inoperable vehicles (junk cars) and occupancy violations such as illegal duplexing of single-family homes and “boarding houses”. There was a perception that code violations are not enforced unless a citizen makes a formal complaint and residents are naturally reluctant to assume the role of neighborhood policeman. Other residents offered that they were simply unfamiliar with the code.

Recommendation 12: The county should continue to enforce code violations clearly visible from the street and vigorously investigate citizen reported violations. The neighborhood supports the county’s use of warnings to apprise residents when they are in violation prior to issuance of citations and civil penalties.

Recommendation 13: Columbia Forest supports Code Enforcement programs to increase public awareness of county ordinances and code enforcement issues by developing and distributing a Resident’s Guide to county codes. The neighborhood would welcome the opportunity to participate in the development of this Guide.

(Footnotes)

¹This usage is non-conforming, and a non-conforming use cannot be expanded. It can be continued as long as the use is not discontinued for more than two years.

² Staff will need to look at the history of this area as it relates to the General Land Use Plan and the zoning. This is an area that should be studied as part of the on-going Columbia Pike Revitalization Initiative.

³The General Land Use Plan designation for the properties on South Buchanan Street “Low-Residential” 11-15 units per acre is actually lower than what is consistent for the zoning of RA 14-16. This area should be studied as a part of the Columbia Pike Revitalization Initiative.



Capital Improvements

The May 1999 Neighborhood Conservation Plan Survey asked residents to evaluate street lighting, sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and other physical conditions in the neighborhood. Follow up walks of the neighborhood were conducted to record the location of existing structures and to note the locations where improvements should be made. The neighborhood also received superb assistance from the Arlington County Police Department in identifying areas where lighting and other changes could improve public safety.

The community strongly believes that the appearance of its physical structures, both private and public, is a factor in determining whether a neighborhood is perceived as stable and safe or as an invitation for crime. Well-planned and well-maintained public structures provide an overall cohesiveness that makes an neighborhood visually appealing as well.

Neighborhood Lighting and Utilities

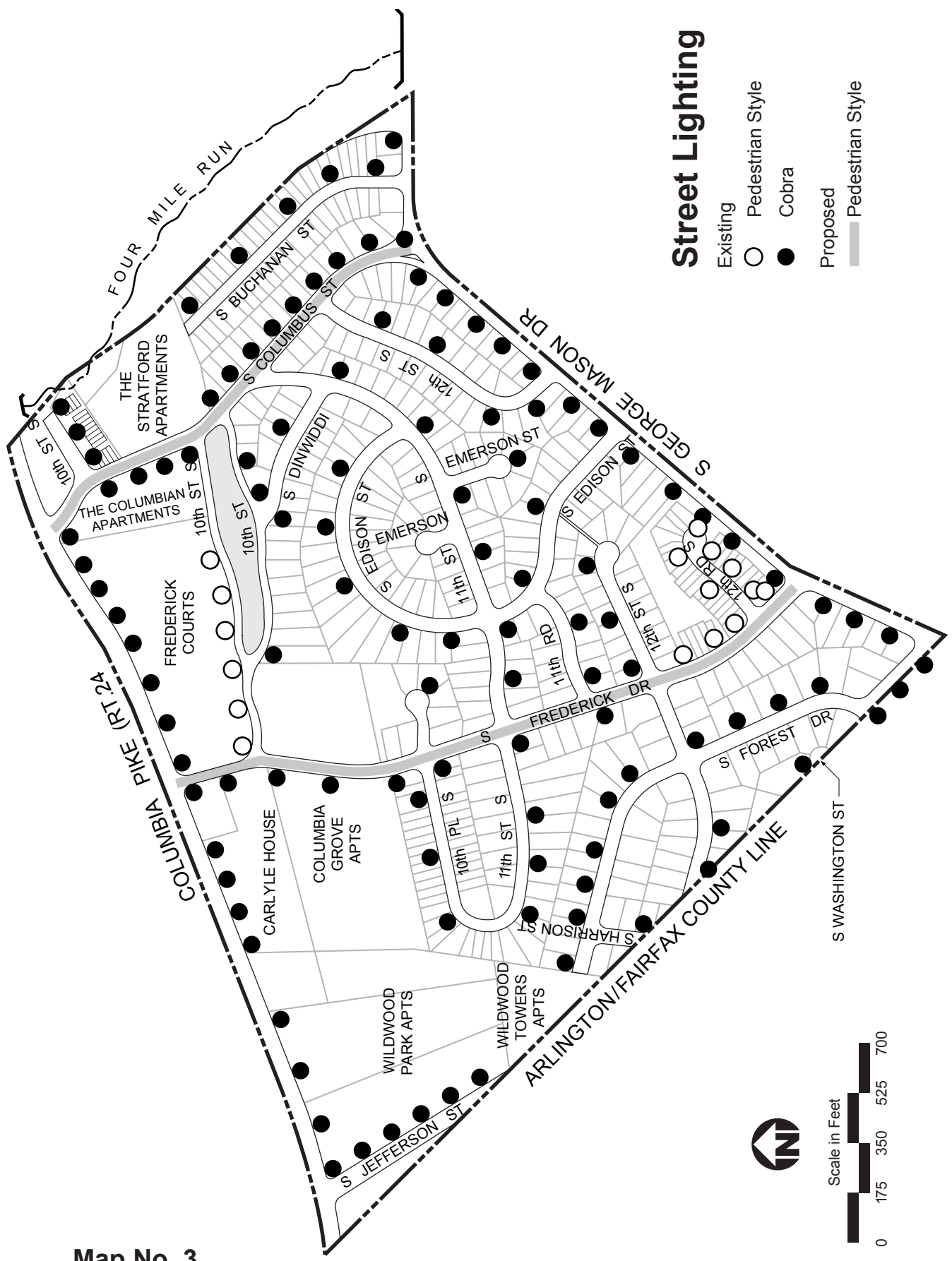
Residents responding to the neighborhood survey judged street lighting to be adequate in many areas. However, in two areas within the neighborhood where there is greater pedestrian activity, additional lighting is recommended. South Columbus Street and South Frederick Street are used by residents to reach mass transit on Columbia Pike and South George Mason Drive. Both streets are traveled by school children meeting school buses or walking to Wakefield High School. There is also a high concentration of residences on these streets near Columbia Pike. The location of existing and proposed street lighting is shown on Map #3.

Recommendation 14: Install pedestrian lighting on South Columbus Street and South Frederick Street from Columbia Pike to South George Mason Drive.

Recommendation 15: Install pedestrian lighting in other parts of the neighborhood as desired and qualified by residents through the established petition process.

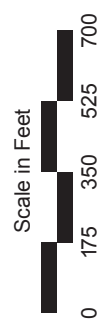
The community encourages the use of pedestrian-style street lights for pedestrian safety. It also supports residents and property owners requesting conventional (cobra) street lights where needed. It should be noted that while residents were satisfied with existing street lights in some parts of the neighborhood, it was the opinion of the Arlington Police Department, in the police security survey, that the neighborhood has poor lighting on almost all neighborhood streets.





Street Lighting

- Existing
- Pedestrian Style
 - Cobra
- Proposed
- Pedestrian Style



Map No. 3

Columbia Forest joins with many other neighborhoods throughout Arlington in urging the county to take steps to rid neighborhood streets of utility poles and overhead wires. Utility poles and the ever increasing tangle of wires detracts from the appearance of the neighborhood and limits the planting of street trees.

Recommendation 16: The undergrounding of utility wires in residential areas should proceed as resources allow. Burying utilities is encouraged in any new development.¹

The neighborhood also supports improvements in pedestrian lighting along Columbia Pike. These recommendations are discussed in the beautification chapter as part of an overall plan to improve conditions along the Columbia Pike corridor.

Sidewalk, Curb and Gutter

Respondents to the neighborhood survey favored having a sidewalk on at least one side of the street but did not support sidewalks on both sides for all street. Most streets in Columbia Forest have a sidewalk on at least one side, as shown on Map #5. Two cul-de-sacs on South Emerson Street do not have sidewalks on either side but residents request that sidewalks not be installed at this time. A few sidewalks along residential streets do not meet the county minimum width of four feet but no action is requested at this time. Columbia Forest supports residents and property owners who wish to have sidewalks installed at a later date. The completion of sidewalks on South Frederick and South Columbus Streets is also recommended in Chapter 6 of this plan in the discussion on pedestrian safety. No action on curb and gutter is required except in areas where sidewalks are requested.

In addition, a walking survey of Columbia Pike determined that sidewalks along our section of Columbia Pike vary widely in width of sidewalk and width of planting strip. In some places, the sidewalk is not only narrow but is obstructed by utility poles.

Recommendation 17: Construct sidewalks on the east side of South Columbus Street and the east side of South Frederick Streets, where missing, as shown in Map #5.²

Recommendation 18: Future Columbia Pike initiatives should establish and implement a standard sidewalk width appropriate for the volume and speed of traffic on Columbia Pike.

It is the consensus of our community that trees not be destroyed while installing new sidewalks, if possible.

Recommendations for improvements of sidewalks along Columbia Pike are also discussed in the Beautification Chapter dealing with Columbia Pike revitalization.

Drainage Problems and Erosion

Several other types of problems needing attention were noted in the neighborhood survey.

Drainage problems were noted at several locations. An example is the western side of the South 12th Street and South Frederick Street intersection where water does not drain properly. Poor drainage can cause streets to deteriorate and can be hazardous in winter during freezing conditions. The locations are identified on Map #6. Related to drainage, at the intersection of South 11th and South Columbus Streets, South 11th Street slopes sharply to the gutter and cars frequently “bottom out”, scraping the pavement. Erosion problems are also identified on Map #6. Of particular note are two areas of severe erosion, one along the east bank of Four Mile Run where trees are in danger of being uprooted and, the other, along the back of Bailey’s Branch park. Finally, in two places underground culverts carry the water of Bailey’s Branch. At two locations, east of South Frederick Street and east of South Columbus Street, the openings of these culverts have been identified by the police as hiding places and locations of illicit activity.

Recommendation 19: The county should investigate and correct drainage and erosion problems noted on Map #5, where possible.

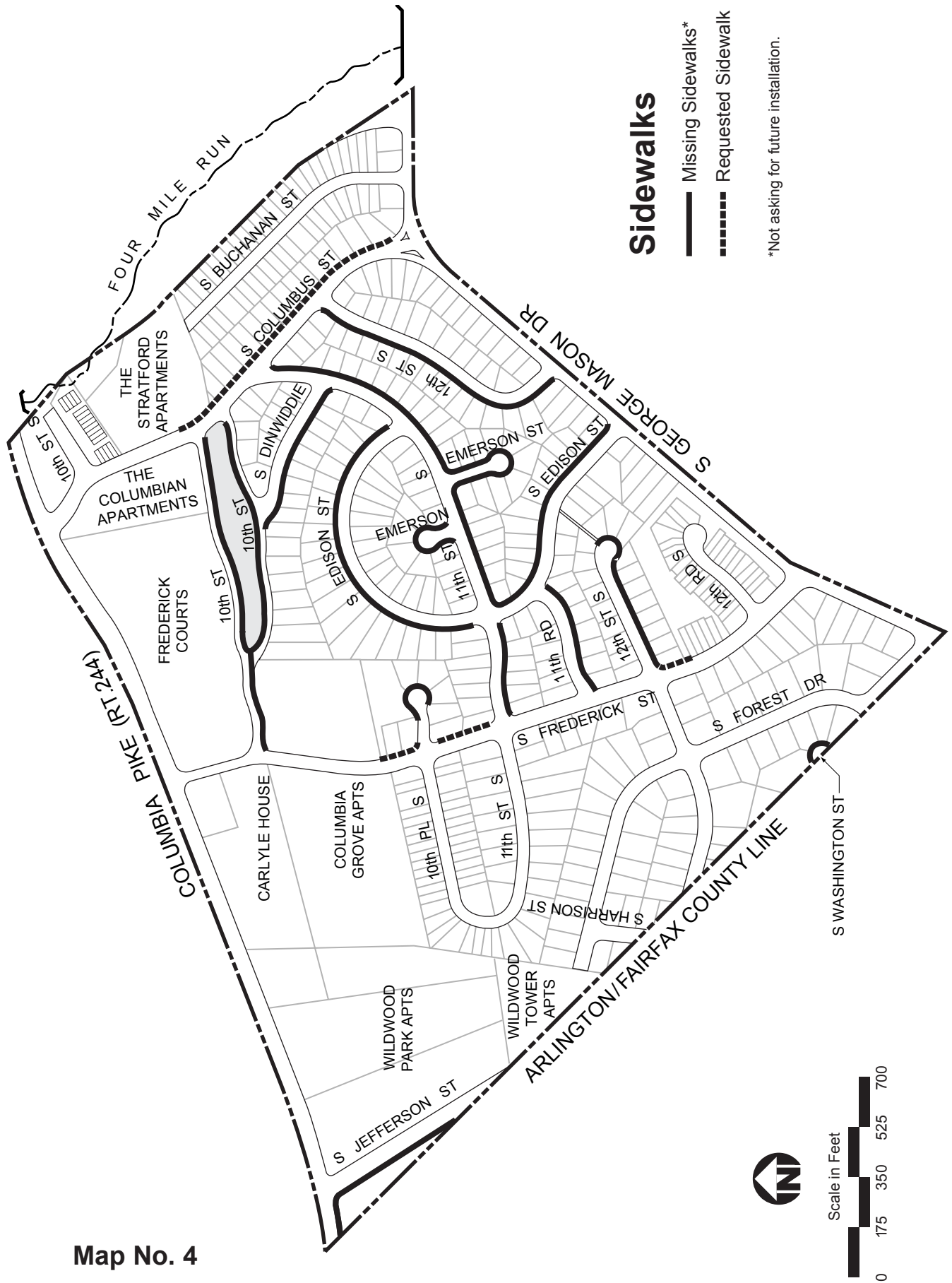
Recommendation 20: The neighborhood would like to work with the County to develop a solution to prevent people from crawling inside the two culverts at Bailey’s Branch.

Safety Barriers

The walking survey of the neighborhood identified several locations where safety barriers are either in poor condition or need to be added. The north end of South Buchanan Street (1100 block) stops at the bank of Bailey’s Branch and has no safety barrier. The existing barrier at 1000 South Forest Drive is used to illegally climb over a privately owned fence and trespass onto private property and should be relocated to the east. The barrier at the east end of the 4800 block of South 10th Street (abutting Four Mile Run) is in poor repair. Barriers along Bailey’s Branch Park on upper and lower South 10th Streets and on a section of South Frederick Street at South 10th Street (next to the park) are deteriorated and unattractive. The location of existing and proposed safety barriers is shown in Map #6.

The neighborhood encourages the county to use barriers made of natural materials, such as wood or stone, in residential areas. Steel safety barriers are considered less appropriate for residential use. (The wood barrier at South 25th & South Culpepper Streets is good example of a residential barrier.) Dead end streets and safety barriers are also discussed in the chapter on Beautification.

Recommendation 21: Install safety barriers where there are none and replace existing barriers that are deteriorated, preferably with barriers made of natural materials.³



Sidewalks

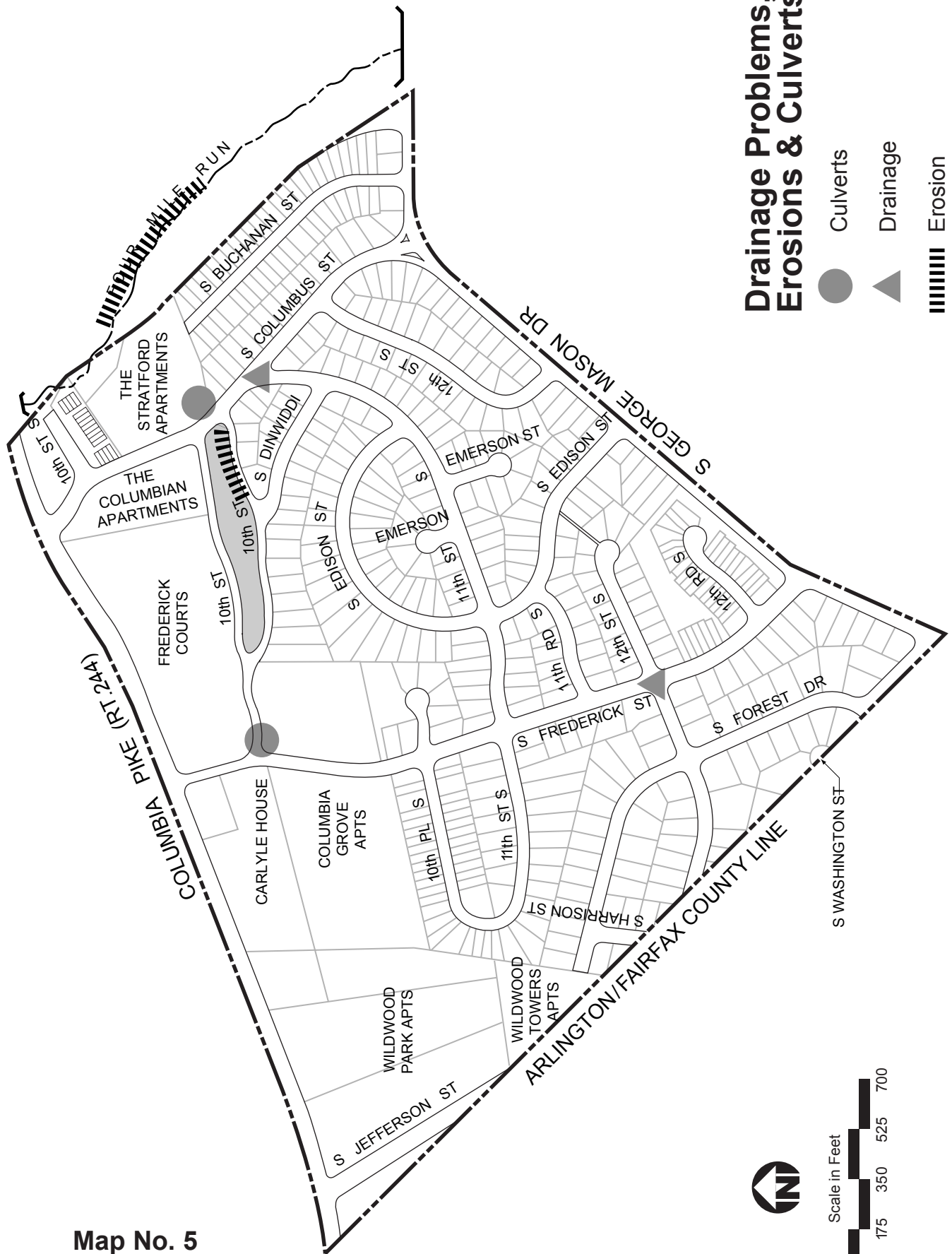
- Missing Sidewalks*
- - - Requested Sidewalk

*Not asking for future installation.

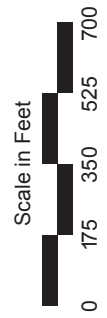
Map No. 4

Drainage Problems, Erosions & Culverts

- Culverts
- ▲ Drainage
- ||||| Erosion



Map No. 5

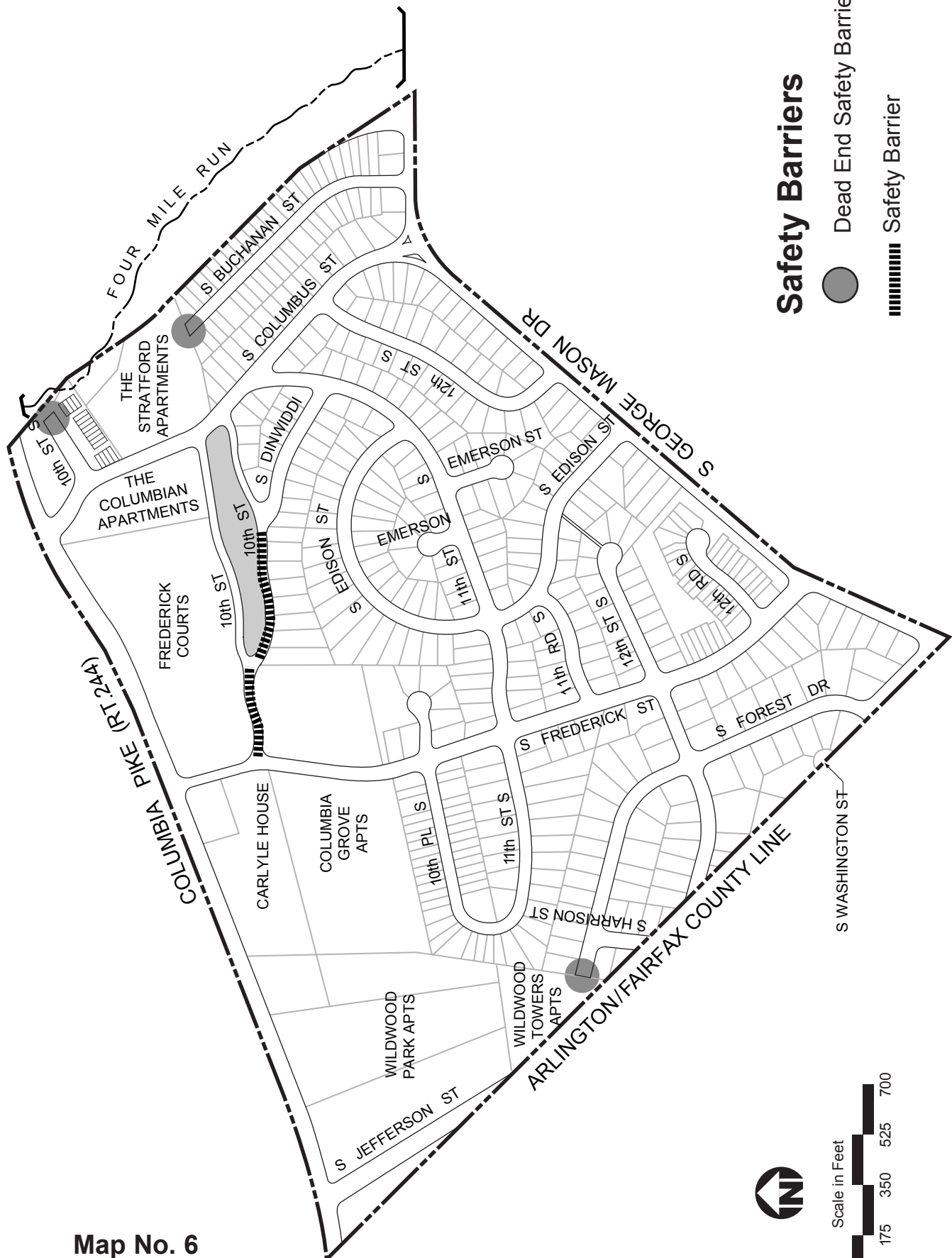


(Footnotes)

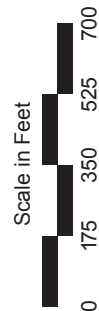
¹County policy has been to underground utilities in commercial corridors and as redevelopment occurs. Undergrounding of utilities in residential neighborhoods is extremely expensive and is not likely to occur anytime soon.

²The missing sidewalks along South Columbus Street have been identified as a community need and identified in the approved Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for construction in FY '01. The missing sidewalks along South Frederick Street are proposed in the CIP for FY '04.

³Using natural materials for safety barriers may not be feasible because they tend to deteriorate and are generally not as secure as conventional guard rail. Using steel guard rails which weather (turn brown with age) may appeal to some residents, will not deteriorate and are more secure than other sorts of barriers.



Map No. 6





Traffic Management And Transportation

Columbia Forest is bordered on the north by Columbia Pike and on the south by South George Mason Drive, both major arterial streets which carry heavy, and often speeding, traffic. The community is crossed by two neighborhood principal streets, South Columbus Street and South Frederick Street, which connect the two arterials. Congestion on these arterials induces drivers to seek alternate routes. Drivers frequently cut through our neighborhood, using streets which were not designed to carry the amount of traffic being experienced. The volume of this cut-through traffic is a major concern of Columbia Forest residents. Fifty-nine percent of the respondents to the May 1999 Conservation Plan Survey expressed extreme concern over excessive traffic cutting through the neighborhood, particularly on South Columbus Street and South Frederick Street.

Another major concern for residents has been the safety problems associated with speeding trucks and automobiles on neighborhood streets and arterials. Seventy-three percent of the respondents rated speeding on residential streets as their major concern, and forty-eight provided comments about the lack of safety on South Columbus Street and/or South Frederick Street for automobile, bicycle, and foot traffic alike. They identified the South Columbus Street and South Frederick Street intersections with South George Mason Drive and Columbia Pike as dangerous for vehicles and unsafe for pedestrians. They also identified the South Columbus Street intersections with South 10th Street and South 11th Street as hazardous, as well as the intersections of South Frederick Street with South 11th Street and South 12th Street. This speeding poses a significant risk to children, pedestrians, bicycle riders, and neighborhood automobile traffic. Besides creating an unsafe neighborhood environment, excessive traffic and speeding leads to deterioration of the community through its impact on quality of life issues such as littering and noise levels.

While the community recognizes that streets are public byways, we believe it is essential to control traffic on neighborhood streets to ensure safety for automobile, pedestrian and bicycle traffic, thus maintaining the desired quality of life for the community. Columbia Forest seeks to work with Arlington County political leaders and traffic planners to develop measures which will improve traffic management and pedestrian safety in the neighborhood. The community is willing to consider all methods of traffic management but it prefers not to use traffic circles when other methods can solve the problem. Residents believe that the absence of cross walks at traffic circles, particularly at intersections where school buses board and discharge children, creates an unsafe condition for pedestrians.

Finally, traffic management changes on one neighborhood street can affect traffic on other streets in the neighborhood. In Columbia Forest this is particularly true for the two neighborhood cross streets - South Columbus Street and South Frederick Street. Consequently, the community believes that traffic management changes should not be considered individually; each proposed change must include an assessment of its impact on traffic patterns throughout the neighborhood.

Over the past several years, Columbia Forest has had a continuing dialogue with county traffic planners and has already endorsed proposals presented by the Department of Public Works as part of an ongoing traffic calming program. These recommendations are noted with a check mark in the following sections of this chapter. Additional recommendations which could further reduce traffic volume and speed in the neighborhood have also been included.

South Columbus Street - Speed and Volume

South Columbus Street is a neighborhood principal street that spans the community from South George Mason Drive to Columbia Pike, with no intervening traffic signals or stops signs. The street is lined with single-family homes from South George Mason Drive to the park at South 10th Street and there are apartment buildings and townhouses on both sides of the street until Columbia Pike. There are several design hazards including three blind curves and a hill at the South 11th Street intersection which imposes severe sight distance limitations for motorists in all directions.

Studies by county traffic planners in 1997 and 1999 confirmed that the volume of traffic on South Columbus Street exceeded what could be expected from local traffic and that speeds were excessive. Residents report that this heavy volume often includes truck traffic. Also, county planners have studied options to improve the grade and visibility at the South 11th Street intersection but have not yet found a feasible or cost-effective solution. It is hoped that slowing traffic down will, in and of itself, improve conditions.

A key factor contributing to both cut through traffic and excessive speed are the free right turn lanes located at South George Mason Drive. The neighborhood believes that this type of traffic design is inappropriate for a neighborhood street.

Recommendation 22: Columbia Forest wishes to work with county traffic planners to make the following improvements: ¹

a—Reconstruct the intersection of South Columbus Street and South George Mason Drive to eliminate the free right turn lanes. This will slow traffic entering and exiting the neighborhood and improve pedestrian safety by reducing the number of conflicts and shortening crossing distances. Include a gateway treatment with landscaping in the design.

b—Construct two flat top speed humps between South 11th Street and South George Mason Drive.

c—Restrict trucks from using South Columbus Street between Columbia Pike and South George Mason Drive.

d—Construct an additional speed hump between South 11th Street and the site of the existing laddered crosswalk, north of South 10th Street.

e—Paint white stripes along South Columbus Street to identify the parking lanes

and to visually narrow the roadway.²

f—Continue to seek solutions to mitigate sight distance problems caused by the hill at South 11th Street.³

g- As part of the Columbia Pike revitalization effort, examine a comprehensive redesign of the South Four Mile Run Drive and Columbia Pike intersection to encourage the use of the under-utilized South Four Mile Run Drive artery.⁴

South Columbus Street - Pedestrian Safety

Because of its proximity to mass transit on Columbia Pike, South Columbus Street experiences a significant volume of pedestrian traffic. In addition, north of South 10th Street there is a major school bus stop where buses from several different elementary schools pick up and discharge students. The sidewalk there is narrow, immediately adjacent to traffic lanes, and often interspersed with utility poles. The only crossing safety is provided by a laddered crosswalk in the vicinity which requires frequent repainting.

There are no sidewalks on a portion of the east side of South Columbus Street and the neighborhood supports the county Capital Improvement Project to add sidewalks where missing. It is also difficult for pedestrians to cross South 11th Street because the intersection has highly rounded corners that increase the width of the intersection and almost double the crossing distance.

The intersection of South Columbus Street and Columbia Pike is also difficult for pedestrians. Again, the intersection is unnecessarily wide, made so by a very rounded corner on the east side, in front of the 7-11 store. In addition, residents report difficulties crossing due to cars turning right onto South Columbus Street (right turn on red is permitted) without stopping and allowing pedestrians to cross. The neighborhood supports including the features of a gateway treatment at this intersection.

The free right turn lanes at South George Mason Drive also provide difficulties for pedestrians due to the increased distance required to cross and the sequence of traffic islands that must be negotiated.

Recommendation 23: Columbia Forest wishes to work with county traffic planners to make the following improvements:⁵

a—North of South 10th Street, narrow South Columbus Street on the west side by six feet to improve the sidewalk where parking is not allowed and include a green planting strip.

b—Install a raised crosswalk in the vicinity of the existing laddered crosswalk.

c—Construct a sidewalk along the east side of South Columbus Street between South George Mason Drive and South 10th Street where it is missing.

d—Narrow South 11th Street at South Columbus Street and create more “squared” corners to substantially shorten the crossing distance, and slow down turning traffic.

e— At South Columbus Street and Columbia Pike, realign the southeast corner (at the 7 11 convenience store) to shorten the distance pedestrians must traverse and to meet the newly redesigned northeast corner of Columbia Pike and South Dinwiddie Street (at the Arlington Mill Community Center). Install a pressed asphalt crosswalk across South Columbus Street.⁶

f—Institute a “No Turn on Red” for eastbound Columbia Pike at South Columbus Street.⁷

g—Monitor speed to ensure pedestrian safety and to determine the effectiveness of installed traffic management measures.

If speed and excessive traffic volume continue to be a problem after currently proposed plans are implemented, the neighborhood supports additional measures to protect children and other pedestrians.

South Frederick Street - Speed/Volume

South Frederick Street is a neighborhood principal street and is similar to South Columbus Street in many important ways. It, too, runs the width of the neighborhood, between South George Mason Drive and Columbia Pike, has no traffic signals or stop signs to slow the flow of traffic and is lined with single family homes, townhouses, and apartments on both sides of the street. There is an extreme grade between South 11th Street and South 10th Street, so steep that school buses are not permitted on that part of the street. The hill also limits sight distances at the South 11th Street intersection. There is also a hill coming into the neighborhood at South George Mason Drive.

The 1997 and 1999 traffic studies confirmed excessive traffic volume, although not as heavy as on South Columbus Street. The studies also confirmed that traffic on Frederick Street moved at excessive speeds.

Recommendation 24: Columbia Forest wishes to work with county traffic planners to make the following improvements:⁸

a—Install a gateway treatment at the intersection of South Frederick Street and South George Mason Drive.

b—Construct flat top speed humps along South Frederick Street where grades do not exceed seven percent.

c—Construct traffic nubs at the intersection of South 12th Street and South Frederick Street and at other interior intersections of South Frederick Street where sight distance constraints or steep grades prevent speed humps.

d—Restrict trucks from using South Frederick Street between Columbia Pike and South George Mason Drive.

e—Paint white stripes along South Frederick Street to identify the parking lanes and visually narrow the roadway.⁹

f—Monitor speed to ensure pedestrian safety and to determine effectiveness of installed traffic management measures.

Another issue on South Frederick Street is the location of the entrance to the Mobil gas station at Columbia Pike. The South Frederick Street entrance is only feet away from the intersection and cars turning onto South Frederick Street and cars going into and out of the Mobil station are in conflict.

Recommendation 25: The county should work with the owner of the Mobil station to relocate or close the South Frederick Street entrance into the station.

South Frederick Street - Pedestrian Safety

South Frederick Street is lined with single-family homes from South George Mason Drive to the area near Columbia Pike where there are apartment complexes and condominiums. There is pedestrian traffic coming from Columbia Pike into the neighborhood along this street, particularly users of mass transit on Columbia Pike. There are two places where sidewalks are missing on the east side of South Frederick Street, which causes pedestrians to step out into traffic lanes. Also, there are no crosswalks at any point along the entire length of South Frederick Street. The intersection of South 12th Street and South Frederick Street is the location of a school bus stop serving dozens of children from two elementary schools.

Recommendations 26: Columbia Forest wishes to work with county traffic planners to make the following improvements:

a—Construct sidewalks along the east side of South Frederick Street between South 11th Street and South 10th Street and near South 12th Street where they are missing.¹⁰

b— Add pressed asphalt crosswalks at proposed traffic nubs where sight distances permit, particularly at the South 12th Street and South Frederick Street intersection where school buses board and discharge children.

If speed and excessive traffic volume continue to be a problem after currently proposed plans are implemented, the neighborhood supports other measures to protect children and other pedestrians, particularly at the intersection of South 12th Street and South Frederick Street.

Columbia Pike - Pedestrian Safety

Forty percent of Columbia Forest's residents live on Columbia Pike; seventy-five percent within one block. For these residents, extremely heavy traffic volume and speed are a part of their daily experience. Residents must cross Columbia Pike to reach the retail stores and a community center on the other side. Residents using mass transit must constantly negotiate the Pike.

Safely crossing Columbia Pike on foot is considered difficult if not, at times, impossible. The county has recorded many pedestrian/automobile accidents along our entire border with Columbia Pike. The neighborhood supports a comprehensive analysis of pedestrian safety improvements for Columbia Pike as part of Columbia Pike revitalization initiatives and offers the following as starting points.

Recommendation 27: The neighborhood would like to work with County planners to improve pedestrian safety on Columbia Pike between South Columbus Street and South Frederick Street taking into consideration the location of Metrobus stops. The neighborhood would like to explore a raised median in the center of Columbia Pike at this location as well as other pedestrian crossing safety measures.¹¹

Residents also report difficulty with crossing Columbia Pike at South Jefferson Street. The roadway is particularly wide at this intersection increasing the distance pedestrians must traverse to cross. In the same area, the two free right turn lanes at Jefferson Street complicate the pedestrian crossing and traffic does not slow as it reaches the crosswalks. Shrubbery west of Jefferson Street also interferes with drivers' ability to see pedestrians as motorists approach the free right turn lane and crosswalk. Residents have also noted that this intersection is difficult for westbound motorists making a left turn onto South Jefferson Street.

Recommendation 28: Improve the intersection of Columbia Pike and South Jefferson Street both to improve pedestrian safety and to reduce conflicts for westbound motorists turning left from Columbia Pike to South Jefferson Street and eastbound motorist turning right onto South Jefferson Street.¹²

South George Mason Drive - Speed/Volume and Pedestrian Safety

South George Mason Drive is lined with single-family homes and townhouses. The Arlington County Police Department monitors the speed of northbound traffic regularly and issues speeding citations. Residents on the other side of South George Mason Drive (southbound) also perceive excessive speeding and would like increased enforcement of established speed limits. In addition, residents noted that the intersection of South Columbus Street and South George Mason Drive is difficult for pedestrians to cross because of the free right turns lanes.

Recommendation 29: Use Smart Sets or similar devices to increase motorist awareness of speeding in order to control speed on southbound South George Mason Drive.

Recommendation 30: Eliminate the free right turns at South Columbus Street to improve pedestrian safety. (See South Columbus Street recommendations.)¹³

Parking

The Columbia Forest neighborhood is comprised of apartment, condominium, duplex, and townhouse residences as well as detached single-family homes. This housing density creates competition for available on-street parking, especially at night, which has escalated as the number of vehicles per household has increased over the years. Vehicles are frequently parked in no parking zones and in front of fire hydrants. Residents report an increase in the number of commercial vehicles parked on residential streets further reducing on-street parking. Columbia Forest is, therefore, interested in exploring measures which will increase on-street parking available to residents.

Recommendation 31: Increase on-street parking on South 10th Street by allowing parking adjacent to the park west of South Columbus Street where curb is in place, adding approximately 10 parking spaces, as a short term solution. Explore making 10th Street a one-way street going east to South Columbus Street to allow parking on both sides between South Frederick Street and South Columbus Street to further increase street parking in the long term.

Recommendation 32: Permit the use of the Arlington Mill Community Center parking lot for overflow overnight parking as a possible short term solution to parking shortages. The neighborhood would like to work with the county to resolve issues of liability, security and enforcement.

Recommendation 33: Establish incentives for existing apartment and condominium complexes to increase resident parking to levels more in line with the number of units in each property.

Recommendation 34: Assure that adequate parking is provided for in any development or redevelopment projects.

Recommendation 35: Vigorously enforce existing parking regulations.

The residents on South Forest Drive are experiencing daytime parking difficulties due to overflow parking from the adjacent office buildings and townhouses in Fairfax County. If, as is being considered, Fairfax County institutes zoned parking in this area, it will exacerbate the parking problem for Columbia Forest residents.

Recommendation 36: If Fairfax County establishes zoned parking in the area adjacent to Hamilton Drive, Arlington County should also establish zoned parking on South Forest Drive between Hamilton Drive and South 12th Street, and in Washington Circle.¹⁴

Public Transit

The community is served by Metrobus on Columbia Pike (which is the most heavily used public transportation route in the state of Virginia) and on South George Mason Drive. Metrobus also provides service on Leesburg Pike and South Four Mile Run Drive, major arterials just to the west and east of the neighborhood. These bus routes connect to Metrorail at the Pentagon. About one-third of survey respondents use the public transportation system.

Sixty-eight percent of neighbors responding to the neighborhood survey say they favor an additional Metrorail line along Columbia Pike, with only eighteen percent dissenting. Fifty-five percent of the respondents favor light rail along Columbia Pike, while twenty-four percent oppose this option. An impressive seventy-eight percent of the respondents desire a stop in our neighborhood if either Metrorail or light rail is added along Columbia Pike. However, while the neighborhood approves of improvements in mass transit, more concrete proposals are needed to evaluate the benefits of such improvements compared to possible negative impacts on the community.

Recommendation 37: County planners should work closely with residents to address the impact on neighborhood traffic volume, parking, and other issues associated with increased commercial or residential density along Columbia Pike, possibly resulting from improvements in mass transit along Columbia Pike.

One of the most heavily-used bus shelters is located on Columbia Pike at South Columbus Street. There is severe erosion under the concrete pad which supports the shelter. In addition, as part of a Columbia Pike streetscape project across Columbia Pike, bus stops are being upgraded with new bus shelters.

Recommendation 38: The county should takes steps to correct the erosion around the bus shelter located at the southwest corner of South Columbus Street and Columbia Pike and replace the existing structure with an upgraded shelter.

Bicycle Transit

A small number of Columbia Forest residents use bicycles as a form of transportation. The neighborhood is served by one designated on-street bicycle route, South George Mason Drive, which provides access to both Four Mile Run Trail and the W&OD Trail. These two trails afford ready access to destinations north and south. However, bicycle transit east to the Pentagon and Washington, D.C. requires circuitous routes using the north/south trails. The neighborhood encourages bicycle commuting as an effective means of reducing the negative impacts of automobile traffic and supports features such as bike lanes and bikes racks that make it practical.

Recommendation 39: The county should study the feasibility of creating a more direct bicycle route to the Pentagon and other points east. Columbia Pike revitalization initiatives should include a study of the feasibility of bike lanes along, or on streets parallel to, Columbia Pike.¹⁵

In addition, the South George Mason Drive bike route connects to the Four Mile Run Trail by means of an underpass at the bridge over Four Mile Run. Under the west end of the bridge span, where a culvert directs storm water into the stream, the bike path crosses over this culvert. The present arrangement is a concrete “bridge” which is quite narrow and somewhat precarious.

Recommendation 40: The county should evaluate the bicycle path crossing under the George Mason Drive bridge at South Four Mile Run Drive to improve the width and stability of this crossing.¹⁶

(Footnotes)

¹The measures shown with a check mark by them were recommended for funding by the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Committee (NTCC) and were approved by the County Board on June 24, 2000.

²Parking edge lines should only be warranted if there is a history of parked car accidents, or if nubs are constructed.

³Staff will continue to explore improvements to the limited sight distance at the intersection of South Columbus Street and South 11th Street.

⁴Staff will also explore ways to encourage the use by through traffic of the Columbia Pike-South Four Mile Run intersection, rather than the use of South Columbus Street to travel between South George Mason Drive and Columbia Pike.

⁵The measures with a check mark by them were recommended for funding by the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Committee (NTCC) and were approved by the County Board on June 24, 2000.

⁶Improvements to the corner of Columbia Pike and South Columbus Street will be pursued with a streetscape project on South Dinwiddie Street adjacent to the Arlington Mill Center.

⁷The County will pursue with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) a “no turn on red” sign from eastbound Columbia Pike to South Columbus Street.

⁸With the exception of the nubs along South Frederick Street at South 12th Street, the items checked were approved for funding by the County Board on June 24, 2000.

⁹Parking edge lines should only be warranted if there is a history of parked car accidents, or if nubs are constructed.

¹⁰Sidewalks along the east side of South Frederick Street, where missing, will be constructed by a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) project in FY’04.

¹¹There is not sufficient pedestrian traffic to justify a mid-block signal between South Columbus and South Frederick Streets along Columbia Pike. There is a possibility, as part of the streetscape project for the shopping center, of a raised median that could range from four to 10 feet in width at the west end of the eastbound left turn lane approaching Dinwiddie Street.

¹²The intersection of Columbia Pike and Jefferson Street was reconstructed several years ago for the installation of a traffic signal. The shrubbery appears to be far enough away from Jefferson Street so as not to be a sight distance problem. Staff will check to see if any changes are warranted at this intersection.

¹³The free right turns are to be eliminated at the north (Columbia Forest) side of the intersection of South Columbus Street with South George Mason Drive. Also, see comments on Recommendation 22.

¹⁴If Fairfax County establishes permit parking in the vicinity of Hamilton Drive, the County would still need to survey the first block of Forest Drive to determine if Arlington requirements for permit parking are met. Cur-

rently, Hamilton Drive has permit parking because of high school parking. The nearest on-street parking in Fairfax County is adjacent to Leesburg Pike (Route 7). Between there and Hamilton Drive, the narrow streets do not have on-street parking.

¹⁵Columbia Pike does not have room for bike lanes, but a side trail is planned east of South Rolfe Street. We will consider options for improving east-west routes.

¹⁶DPW and PRCR will need to investigate options for improvement of the trail at this location.



Parks And Recreation

Bailey's Branch Park

Park land in Columbia Forest exists within the space of Bailey's Branch Park, a one and one-half acre park built over a portion of Bailey's Branch stream. A small tot lot was created in the park in 1997 and additional playground equipment, landscaping and benches were installed in 1999. The completion of these recent improvements was the result of a positive working relationship with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Resources and is a source of much satisfaction among residents. Additional refinements would further enhance the park.

Recommendation 41: Study and implement strategies to correct the erosion along the steep slope going up towards South 10th Street.

Recommendation 42: Install a stairway and path from South 10th Street down the hill to the park to improve park access. The neighborhood would like to work with the county in locating, designing and selecting appropriate materials for the stairway.

Recommendation 43: Take steps to improve drainage at the east end of the park which is subject to flooding during heavy rainfalls.

The location of Bailey's Branch Park as well as proposed park land is shown in Map #8.

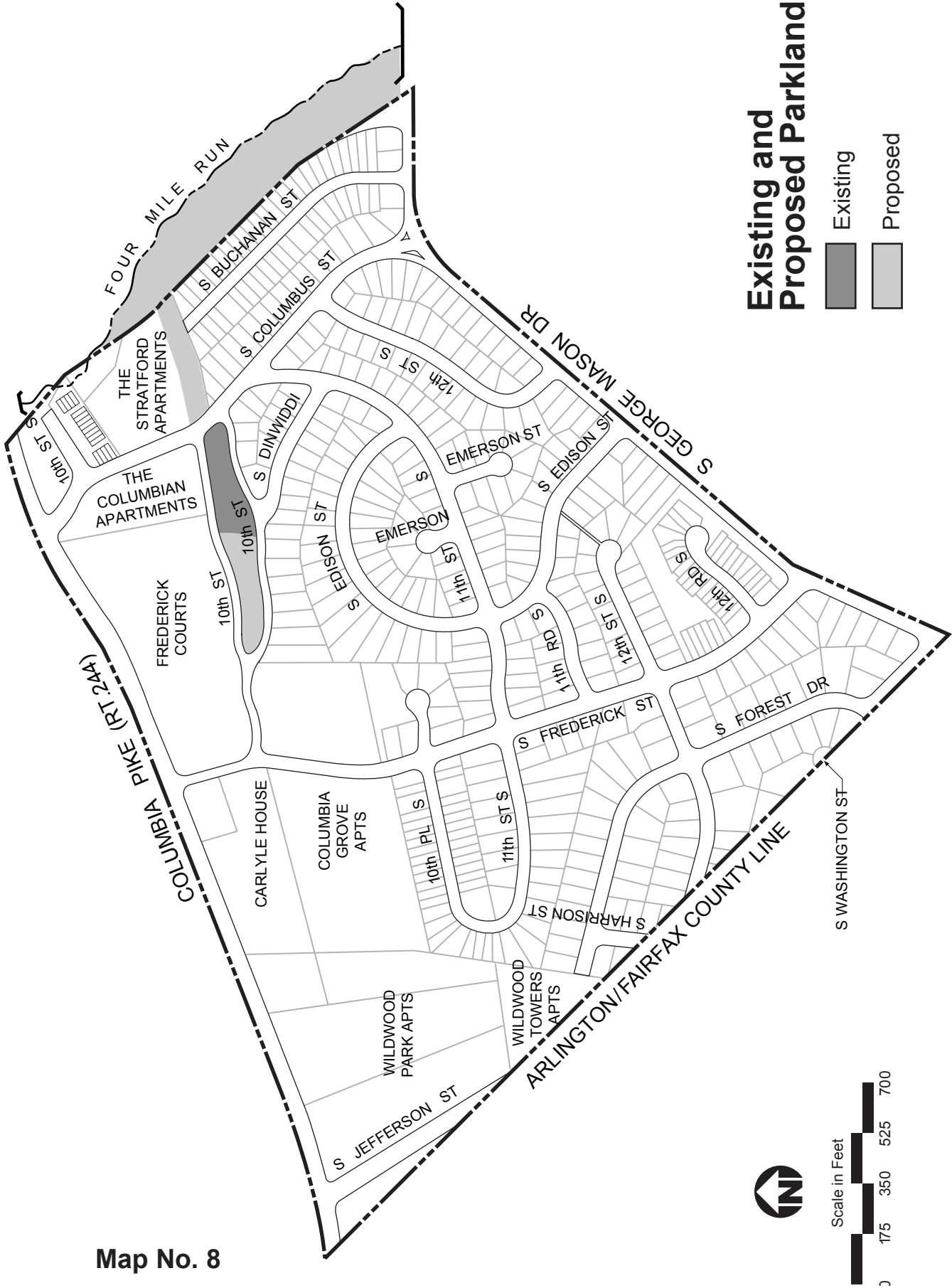
New Park Development

Additional open space lies both east and west of Bailey's Branch Park, the portion to the west is owned by the county and to the east, owned privately. Bailey's Branch provides a natural setting for enjoyment and should be made more accessible to residents. The neighborhood supports the development of park land and encourages the acquisition of additional land for park development.

Recommendation 44: The county should take steps to acquire the open land along Bailey's Branch east of Bailey's Branch Park for development into park land and to develop access to the county park land west of the park.

In addition to Bailey's Branch Park, residents use a number of recreational sites in neighboring communities. These





facilities include Barcroft Park and the new Barcroft Sports and Fitness Center, Wakefield High School and two mixed use trails, the Washington and Old Dominion Regional Park and the Four Mile Run Trail.



Of particular interest is the Four Mile Run Trail, a multi-use recreational trail, from which we are separated by Four Mile Run itself. It is reached by leaving our neighborhood and traveling along either Columbia Pike or South George Mason Drive. The neighborhood supports the development of direct access from Columbia Forest to this multi-use trail.

Further, where the Four Mile Run Trail leaves Barcroft Park, users are presently routed along South George Mason Drive and through the parking lots of two high rise apartment complexes. As the trail leaves the parking lots there is also an extreme grade change which is difficult for some users on this family-oriented recreational trail. We believe access for Columbia Forest and increased safety and enjoyment for residents from many communities would be achieved by relocating the trail from the parking lots on the east side of Four Mile Run to the wooded area on the west side of Four Mile Run. This route would circumvent the extreme grade, as well.

Recommendation 45: The county should take steps to acquire access to the open land along the west side of Four Mile Run for development into park land.

Recommendation 46: The county should relocate the Four Mile Run Trail to the west side of Four Mile Run and create direct access to the trail from Columbia Forest along Bailey's Branch.¹

Columbia Forest believes that having a neighborhood house for community activities would contribute to building a strong community identity and neighborhood cohesiveness. There is no public meeting space within the neighborhood and the community relies on facilities in other communities for this purpose. The acquisition of a property such as one of the five Lustron houses would satisfy the need for a neighborhood center as well as advancing historic preservation efforts. Further, a second neighborhood park located in the western part of Columbia Forest would be desirable and could be simultaneously achieved with the acquisition of a neighborhood house.

Recommendation 47: The county should consider devoting funds for future acquisition of land and houses within Columbia Forest to provide additional green space, particularly in the western part of the neighborhood, and a neighborhood meeting house.²

Neighborhood communication and involvement would also be improved with a conveniently

located community bulletin board.

Recommendation 48: The neighborhood would like to work with the county to study options for locating a Columbia Forest bulletin board.



(Footnotes)

¹Relocating the trail as proposed would require property acquisition and disruption, but may provide significant improvement to the trail.

²At this time, PRCR does not support using park land/open space or park bond funds for neighborhood houses.



Beautification

A combination of natural features and man-made improvements unite to create a pleasant atmosphere in Columbia Forest. The neighborhood is hilly with land sloping upwards from both sides of Bailey's Branch and also rising to the west from Four Mile Run. Our two streams are lined with natural vegetation and offer a pleasant contrast to a busy urban environment just yards away. Overhead, a canopy of mature trees provides the forest-like setting for which our community is named.

The original subdivision of Columbia Forest laid out streets and park land to take advantage of the hilly terrain. Few of our roads run straight for more than one or two blocks. Several loop back on themselves or end in cul de sacs. These roads add visual interest and limit the number of paths of travel through Columbia Forest. The pattern of home building was orderly with waves of construction adding homes of similar size and style in each new section of the neighborhood.

Residents of Columbia Forest value these features which add beauty to their daily lives. Through public works, neighborhood initiative and individual effort, residents seek to preserve and enhance the environment. Challenges facing our neighborhood include beautification of public spaces, making the natural environment of our streams cleaner and more accessible, tree preservation, litter control and enhancement of our neighborhood identity.

Public Spaces

Opportunities for beautification exist in a variety of county planting strips and in areas being newly created as part of traffic calming efforts. These areas range from the proposed traffic calming gateway locations to the existing landscaped median strips found along South George Mason Drive and South Jefferson Street. A well planned landscaping scheme, used consistently in all possible public areas, will give the neighborhood a harmonious appearance which will contribute to neighborhood identity. Each potential landscaping location will be addressed separately and is identified on Map #10.

Recommendation 49: We recommend that a Columbia Forest neighborhood landscape design theme be developed which can be carried out on all public land where landscaping is appropriate.

“Community Entrances”

Traffic calming measures at three of Columbia Forest's major intersections will create ideal locations for “community entrances”. These locations are George Mason Drive at South Columbus Street, George Mason Drive at South Frederick Street and Columbia Pike at South Columbus Street. Marking the physical boundaries of the neighborhood with a

community sign, attractive landscaping, pedestrian lighting, and special sidewalk and paving treatment will aid in defining our cluster of homes as a cohesive community.

Recommendation 50: Coordinate the construction of the three traffic calming gateways with landscaping and paving plans to create attractive entrances into the community.

Recommendation 51: We recommend the neighborhood’s three “community entrances” as locations for the neighborhood identification signs and to carry out the neighborhood landscape design theme.

The fourth main entrance into the neighborhood is at Columbia Pike and South Frederick Street but the lack of public land at this location will prevent it from being used as a formal entrance. The corner of South 10th Street at South Frederick Street is being proposed as a viable alternative. This corner is at the bottom of two steep hills and backs onto Bailey’s Branch. The proposed site is currently a narrow strip and possesses several problems. The prominent location of a telephone pole, metal guardrail, numerous parked cars and the use of this strip as a dirt pedestrian cut through for the adjacent apartment complex are just a few of these problems. However, proposed sidewalk installation and safety barrier enhancements at this location may provide the opportunity to make this area suitable.

Recommendation 52: We recommend the area along the park at the intersection of South Frederick and South 10th Street as the location of our community’s fourth “community entrance”. The community would like to work closely with county landscape designers to resolve the existing design problems.

Dead End Streets

There are four dead end streets in our Columbia Forest neighborhood. Three of these dead end streets are in need of landscaping efforts, tailored to each location. In addition to landscaping, new wood safety barriers have been proposed previously in this plan.

South Buchanan Street: This dead end backs onto the north bank of Bailey’s Branch. Currently this area is in its natural state and no safety barrier exists. Installation of an attractive wooden barrier, along with an effort to blend ordered landscaping with the natural beauty of the surrounding woods, would enhance this site.

South Forest Drive: South Forest Drive dead ends at a high metal picket fence which belongs to the adjacent apartment complex. Pedestrians frequently cut through this area and skirt the metal fence by first climbing on top of the existing safety barrier, and then trespass on the neighboring fence. The dead end of South Forest Drive extends for over 15 feet past the last residential property’s driveway entrance before stopping at the existing metal safety barrier. This area could be utilized to create an attractive landscape which could also incorporate methods to discourage pedestrians from climbing over a private fence.

South 10th Street: The eastern end of South 10th Street dead ends into Four Mile Run.

This block is short but contains a wide variety of property types. On the right is a townhouse complex with off street garages and parking. On the left are a 7 11 and an auto repair shop. In this confined location, the extreme mix of property uses creates an unpleasant feel which is amplified against a backdrop of scenic Four Mile Run vegetation and the beaten up safety barrier. At this location, as at the South Forest Drive location, the street continues for several feet past the townhouse driveway and also past the entrance point of the repair shop. The use of the public street extension, along with possible landscaping to help improve this area, should be investigated.

Recommendation 53: The community would like to work with the county to coordinate installation of attractive landscaping with the previously proposed new safety barriers at the neighborhood dead end streets.

Traffic Nubs and Sidewalk Improvements

The proposed locations of the new nubs and sidewalks are a great opportunity for landscaping and beautifying our community. Columbia Forest urges the inclusion of new landscaping in all of these locations.

Recommendation 54: The community wishes to work closely with county planners to provide landscaping for new traffic nubs and planting strips for sidewalks, where possible.

Street Medians

Two streets which border our community contain median strips suitable for landscaping — South Jefferson Street and South George Mason Drive.

Only a modest portion of South Jefferson Street lies within the county and Columbia Forest. The county has planted oak trees on a grass median along this stretch of roadway and should be commended for their efforts to beautify this strip. Columbia Forest would like to further enhance the appearance of this area with additional landscaping.

South George Mason Drive, one of our neighborhood's longest borders, boasts an extremely wide grass median strip, which contains an assortment of trees, shrubs and flowering bulbs. This landscaping greatly enhances the residential feel of our community and also provides a transition in land use to the public areas of Wakefield High School. The county puts much effort into annual plantings and maintenance of this median for which Columbia Forest is appreciative. Any additional enhancements along this roadway will have positive effects on our entire neighborhood environment.

Recommendation 55: We support additional landscaping in the median of South George Mason Drive and South Jefferson Street and would like to actively participate in any future landscape planning. The community supports additional street trees, flowering trees and flower beds.

Columbia Pike

Our longest community border, Columbia Pike, is in need of considerable streetscaping attention. The widely varying width of sidewalks and planting strips, the haphazard placement of utility poles, and the location and condition of signage are examples of the current lack of cohesive design. Beyond its impact on Columbia Forest, Columbia Pike at our western border serves as a gateway to Arlington which is viewed by thousands of motorists daily and, as such, defines Arlington's image.

Recommendation 56: The county should develop and implement a cohesive streetscape design for Columbia Pike including sidewalks, tree planting and street lighting.

Recommendation 57: The county should study additional ways to enhance the "gateway" into Arlington County at Columbia Pike and the Fairfax County border to reinforce the image of Arlington as a vital, well maintained and progressive community.

Commercial Spaces

The commercial establishments within Columbia Forest are sited in three locations along Columbia Pike. At South Columbus Street are located a 7-11 and an automotive repair shop. At the South Frederick Street intersection is a Mobil gas station including a repair facility. At 5510 Columbia Pike, at South Greenbriar Street, is a 33,000 square foot retail/office complex. Each of these locations provide opportunities for the beautification of our community. In particular, measures are required to mitigate the situation created when non-conforming zoning permitted a gas station to operate in close proximity to residences. County land in front of the 7-11 is proposed to become part of the "community entrances" at South Columbus Street which is discussed in the Public Spaces section above.

Recommendation 58: The neighborhood would like to work with the Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization, county staff and the owner of the Mobil station to develop a landscaping project in order to screen the Mobil station from residences on South Frederick Street. There is a planter located along the stone wall for this purpose. The neighborhood requests county assistance in obtaining easements, if necessary.

Recommendation 59: We recommend the property at 5510 Columbia Pike, at South Greenbriar Street, for improvements through the Business Conservation Program. Proposed improvements include the development of landscaping to screen the parking area from the street. Further, the county should explore additional improvements through the Office of Economic Development. Among these improvements is a recommendation to establish a more distinct identity for this complex by installing an identifying sign. The neighborhood would like to work with the owner and the county in this process.

Multi-family Residences

Along the Columbia Pike boundary of our community are multi-family residences which include high rise and garden-style condominiums and apartments. The management of each of these complexes are to be commended for creating and maintaining beautifully landscaped grounds. However, where parking lots are in front of the residences or otherwise visible from the street, the planting of street trees and other landscaping would soften the hard edges of the wide expanse of asphalt that is visible from the street.



Recommendation 60: We recommend Wildwood Park Apartments for streetscape improvements through the county's Apartment Conservation Program, the county's Streetscape Program or new Columbia Pike initiatives. The neighborhood would like to work with the owners and county in this process. We propose that this effort be undertaken in conjunction with a similar recommendation for the adjoining commercial property (see section on Commercial Spaces).

Recommendation 61: The county should work with the management of the Columbian-Stratford Apartments to coordinate planned sidewalk improvements along South Columbus Street with landscaping improvements to screen the parking lot at the corner of South Columbus Street and South 10th Street.

Private Residences

The first planned development of single-family homes was built in the core of the neighborhood and consists of small two story cinder block colonial style homes. The next wave of home construction added two story brick colonials which were similar in style to the block colonials.

In the 50's, a development was added on the western side of South Frederick Street which consists predominately of one level, single-family ramblers. Duplexes are located in two separate sections. Along South Buchanan Street they are a traditional two story brick and along South 10th Place they are a contemporary style. The town homes were built last and are constructed in a traditional multi story manner using brick.



This 'planned development' construction pattern has given the neighborhood a desirable consistency of scale and design.



Many of the homes have been expanded over the years and many of the cinder block homes have been clad with siding and, very recently, stucco. Most yards have some fencing and a variety of materials have been used. Chain link fencing, particularly popular in the 40's and 50's, has been replaced as it has aged with other materials such as cedar pickets, split rail or wood stockade privacy fencing. Personal touches residents have added to their homes provide interest and variety to our neighborhood and, for the most part, the homes in our community are well maintained and cared for.

Recommendation 62: The residents of Columbia Forest, through their words and actions, should encourage each other to maintain their properties so as to create a beautiful and pleasing environment for everyone.

Tree Preservation

Columbia Forest is indeed fortunate to have so many mature trees in the neighborhood. Besides the economic benefit for the individual homeowner, we must acknowledge the benefit to our entire community. The numerous trees in Columbia Forest create a pleasant and welcoming environment: an environment that is worth keeping.

The forest-like aspect one observes in the Columbia Forest community should be retained. Trees are an invaluable part of the environment: locally, regionally, and globally. It behooves us to encourage tree plantings and discourage tree destruction. Also, as many of our trees are oak, Columbia Forest should promote diversity in tree plantings to ensure the survival of a variety of trees should once species become susceptible to a new disease or insect infestation.

George Washington once owned this land. He valued trees, using this property, among others, to acquire trees for his estate. Columbia Forest and Arlington County should continue his legacy.

Recommendation 63: The county should include tree plantings in all new landscaping projects where ever possible.

Recommendation 64: Residents are encouraged to replace trees that have been lost through disease, accident or re-landscaping.

Recommendation 65: The county should plant street trees along public ease-

ments on residential streets even where there are no sidewalks, where desired by residents and where sidewalks are not likely to be built in the future.

Recommendation 66: The county and residents are encouraged to use a variety of species, including indigenous species, when considering tree plantings.

Recommendation 67: The planting strips along the west side of South Buchanan Street are very wide and the county is encouraged to plant street trees, where desired by residents.

Litter

Residents responding to the survey expressed concern regarding the general cleanliness of the neighborhood. Litter was identified to be a problem in private, public and commercial areas. Residents were particularly concerned about litter along Columbia Pike, South Frederick Street and South Columbus Street.

Trash was identified as coming from passing vehicles, from people walking through the neighborhood and, specifically, from patrons of commercial food establishments in Columbia Pike Plaza (across the street from Columbia Forest) and the 7-11 convenience store on South Columbus Street. Residents also expressed concern about the overall cleanliness of the parking lot and grounds surrounding the 7-11.

Recommendation 68: The county should increase the frequency of street cleaning along Columbia Pike and the intersecting residential streets.

Recommendation 69: The county should place trash receptacles at locations along South Columbus Street and South Frederick Street, particularly north of South 10th Street. The neighborhood would like to work with the county in placing these receptacles.

Recommendation 70: The county should work with the owners of the 7-11 convenience store to ensure that parking lots are periodically washed and that surrounding premises are litter free.

Recommendation 71: The neighborhood should organize regular Columbia Forest neighborhood clean-up days.

Recommendation 72: Columbia Forest supports the creation of Columbia Forest clean up days which would include free or reduced price special trash pick up.

An area of severe trash accumulation is the Metrobus stop at the southwest corner of Columbia Pike and South Columbus Street.

Recommendation 73: The neighborhood would like to work with the county to assist in trash removal around heavily used bus stops and shelters and would

like to coordinate this effort with the county's regular maintenance schedule.

Recommendation 74: The neighborhood should identify groups willing to participate in Metro's Adopt-A-Shelter Program to further enhance the areas around bus shelters and to monitor maintenance efforts.

The accumulation of trash is also very heavy along the banks of Four Mile Run and Bailey's Branch and the wooded areas adjoining the streams. Trash fouls the water and spoils what otherwise could be a scenic part of the neighborhood.

Recommendation 75: The county should work with property owners along Four Mile Run and Bailey's Branch to establish maintenance responsibilities.

Recommendation 76: The neighborhood should organize regular stream clean up and participate in clean up efforts sponsored by other community organizations.



Appendices

Arlington County, Virginia Inter-Departmental Memorandum

October 17, 2000

TO: The County Board of Arlington, Virginia
FROM: William T. Donahue, County Manager
SUBJECT: Columbia Forest Neighborhood Conservation Plan
RECOMMENDATION: Accept the Columbia Forest Neighborhood Conservation Plan with the staff comments specified as footnotes in the Plan.

ISSUES: None

SUMMARY: The Columbia Forest neighborhood is located in southern Arlington County, bordered by Columbia Pike between Four Mile Run and the Fairfax County line, and extending back to South George Mason Drive.

The Columbia Forest NC Plan presents the following as Neighborhood Goals:

1. Maintain a balanced mix of housing options; preserve the single-family character of interior sections of Columbia Forest, support appropriate residential density along Columbia Pike, and foster opportunities for home ownership where ever possible.
2. Ensure pedestrian safety: improve sidewalks, street design, and pedestrian lighting.
3. Support variety and safety in transportation options: protect the neighborhood from cut-through and speeding traffic, alleviate on-street parking shortages, make mass transit a convenient and appealing choice, and encourage bicycle commuting.
4. Expand access to parks and recreational facilities and establish community stewardship of Four Mile Run and Bailey's Branch.
5. Improve the livability and appearance of the neighborhood: through beautification, tree preservation, litter control and code enforcement.
6. Build a strong Columbia Forest identity using neighborhood signs.
7. Promote community involvement.

Staff: Chris Nixon, Neighborhood Conservation Coordinator,
Office of Neighborhood Services, DCPHD

Reviewed by County Attorney: _____

There are a few recommendations where staff has provided comments to clarify issues and provide additional information. At the request of the neighborhood, all of these comments (as well as additional information provided by County departments regarding certain items) have been inserted in the NC Plan as footnotes. Staff generally supports the plan, and recommends County Board acceptance of the Columbia Forest Neighborhood Conservation Plan.

BACKGROUND: The Columbia Forest Civic Association joined the NC Program in 1999. In May of that year, a written survey was distributed asking residents to evaluate their neighborhood and to solicit volunteers for NC Plan Committee. The committee met regularly during during late 1999 and early 2000, reporting progress and requesting citizen input through the Civic Association newsletter. Drafts were presented at CFCA meetings, and many useful suggestions were incorporated into the document. Neighborhood Conservation staff has worked extensively with volunteer plan writers to complete and review this plan, which was approved by the Columbia Forest Civic Association in June, 2000. The Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee reviewed the Plan on July 13, 2000 and recommended that it be forwarded to the Planning Commission and County Board for acceptance.

DISCUSSION: The Columbia Forest NC Plan makes 76 recommendations covering a broad spectrum of topics. NC staff and the staff from other appropriate County departments will work to implement the community projects as initiated by the neighborhood, subject to funding availability and/or NCAC approval. For non-capital recommendations, NC staff will act as a liaison between the community and other County agencies. Staff comments on the Columbia Forest NC Plan are incorporated, in total, as footnotes within the document.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: The acceptance of the Columbia Forest Neighborhood Conservation Plan does not have any immediate fiscal impact upon County operations. If recommendations from this plan requiring funding or staff resources outside of the NC bond allocation are brought forward for implementation, they will each be analyzed as part of the County budget process.

CONCLUSION: Staff generally supports the Columbia Forest Neighborhood Conservation Plan, subject to the staff comments presented as footnotes, and recommends County Board acceptance of the plan on that basis.

Standard Motion

County Board Acceptance of Neighborhood Conservation Plans

Whereas, the County Board created the Neighborhood Conservation Program in 1964 to encourage neighborhoods to carry out neighborhood improvement plans and provide dedicated funding to implement those plans; and

Whereas the Neighborhood Conservation Program is a mechanism for improvement and maintenance of areas where residents indicate a desire to achieve an improved neighborhood and fulfill a broader vision of the modern “urban village” through coordination of public and private efforts; and

Whereas, these plans are initiated and prepared by the neighborhoods, who work with the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee and County staff; and

Whereas, Neighborhood Conservation Plans have three purposes:

- 1) To build a neighborhood vision and consensus on issues affecting the neighborhood, to evaluate County service delivery and the state of the neighborhood, and to suggest policies and projects that will improve the neighborhood
- 2) To establish eligibility for Neighborhood Conservation funding
- 3) To provide guidance to the County Board, Commissions, Departments and staff concerning issues in neighborhoods; and

Whereas, the County Board created the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC) to guide the Neighborhood Conservation Program, and the NCAC reviewed this new, updated or amended Neighborhood Conservation Plan and recommends plan acceptance; and

Whereas the Planning Commission also recommended acceptance of this plan.

Now, therefore be it resolved **that after careful consideration of the recommendations of the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee, the County Board hereby accepts the Columbia Forest Neighborhood Conservation Plan as a statement of the Columbia Forest neighborhood and directs the County Manager to ensure that the recommendations of this plan are considered in decision-making and actions that affect the Columbia Forest neighborhood.**

Demographic Profile Columbia Forest Civic Association

	Number	Percent of Total Population
TOTAL POPULATION	4,609	100.0%
TOTAL NON-HISPANIC OR LATINO	2,803	60.8%
Population of One Race	2,544	55.2%
White alone	1,176	25.5%
Black or African-American alone	756	16.4%
American Indian or Alaska Native alone	10	0.2%
Asian or Other Pacific Islander alone	574	12.5%
Some Other Race alone	28	0.6%
Population of Two or More Races	259	5.6%
TOTAL HISPANIC OR LATINO	1,806	39.2%
AGE DISTRIBUTION		
Under 5 years old	395	8.6%
5-17 years old	738	16.0%
18-24 years old	476	10.3%
25-34 years old	1,025	22.2%
35-44 years old	897	19.5%
45-54 years old	536	11.6%
55-64 years old	271	5.9%
65-74 years old	149	3.2%
75-84 years old	101	2.2%
85 years and older	21	0.5%
SEX		
Male	2,342	50.8%
Female	2,267	49.2%

	Number	Percent of Total Households
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	1,679	100.0%
Family Households	1,009	60.1%
Married Couples with Children	401	23.9%
Married Couples without Children	284	16.9%
Single Parent Households	157	9.4%
Other Family Households	167	9.9%
Non-Family Households	670	39.9%
HOUSEHOLD SIZE		
1-Person Households	495	29.5%
2-Person Households	441	26.3%
3-Person Households	269	16.0%
4+ Person Households	474	28.2%

	Number	Percent of Total Housing Units
TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	1,752	100.0%
Occupied Housing Units	1,679	95.8%
Owner-Occupied	554	31.6%
Renter-Occupied	1,125	64.2%
Vacant Housing Units	73	4.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census of Population and Housing (SF1). Tabulated by Lisa Fowler, Arlington County CPHD - Planning Research and Analysis Team.

Columbia Forest Civic Association Neighborhood Conservation Plan Survey

8 May 1999

Arlington County spends over a million dollars a year on capital improvements in neighborhoods that have Neighborhood Conservation Plans. The Neighborhood Conservation Plan allows us as a community to evaluate existing conditions, establish goals, make recommendations to the County Board and develop guidance for protecting and improving the quality of life in our neighborhood. As such, a Neighborhood Conservation Plan is a document that will serve as a blueprint for managing development of the neighborhood for years to come.

The CFCA membership has voted to create our conservation plan. **The attached survey is the first step in creating the Neighborhood Conservation Plan. For the N.C. Plan to be successful and represent the total neighborhood, we all need to participate. This effort affects you and the quality of life in your immediate neighborhood. Please take a few moments of your time and complete the attached survey. It is the best way to convey your thoughts and opinions on how to improve our neighborhood.**

When you have finished completing the survey, fold the survey along the line on the back page and tape or staple it closed, then drop it in the nearest mailbox using one 33 cent stamp or drop the survey at the home address of a committee member as listed below. **Please mail or deliver the survey by Friday, June 4th, 1999.** A summary of the survey results will be available at the June 16 meeting of the Columbia Forest Civic Association to be held at Wakefield H.S., Room 110, at 7:30 pm.

Once the survey results are tabulated, we will draft our new Neighborhood Conservation Plan. After the N.C. Plan is accepted by the Columbia Forest Civic Association membership, it will be submitted to the Arlington County Board for adoption. Specific projects in the plan (e.g., street and sidewalk improvements, traffic control measures, streetlights, parks, trees and other beautification efforts) then become eligible for Neighborhood Conservation funds. The plan will also guide the County in making development decisions in our neighborhood.

If you are interested in participating in the development of our Neighborhood Conservation Plan or if you have any questions, please contact any one of the Committee members listed below:

Members of the CFCA Neighborhood Conservation Plan Committee

Pat Williamson Edwards – 5008 S. 12th Street – 578-3603

Inta Malis – 5157 S. 11th Street – 671-8759

Bill Thomas – 955 S. Columbus Street – 671-0398

Clarke Harlefinger – 5012 S. 11th Street – 931-6046

Virginia Hall – 1122 S. Harrison Street – 671-0287

Sandi O'Connor – 5013 S. 12th Street – 379-4181

Paul B. Greenfield – 5121 S. 12th Street – 578-1407

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS IMPORTANT PROJECT!

Please answer any questions that apply to you. If more than one answer pertains to your household, you may give more than one answer. Please feel free to add comments on any question. **Responses will be kept anonymous.** Please refer to the map below when describing a location in response to any of the questions. If you prefer, you may write the number of the question in the map to indicate the location. The heavy outline shows the boundaries of the neighborhood.



I. GENERAL NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS

1. What do you consider the three primary advantages and disadvantages of living in our neighborhood?

Advantages	Disadvantages
a) _____	a) _____
b) _____	b) _____
c) _____	c) _____

2. Is there a chronic problem with noise on your street? **(Check all applicable boxes.)**

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> From traffic
(specify)_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> From public areas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> From commercial establishment(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> From dogs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> From other residents | <input type="checkbox"/> From ambulances |
| <input type="checkbox"/> From aircraft | <input type="checkbox"/> Other
(specify):_____ |

II. LAND USE AND ZONING

1. How do you feel about the interior of Columbia Forest remaining an area of mostly single-family detached homes? **(Circle one number.)**

Strongly favor 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly oppose

2. How would you describe your level of concern about too many occupants in some houses in the neighborhood (e.g. boarding houses, group houses)?

- Not concerned Somewhat concerned Very concerned

3. Are there any structures, vacant lots, abandoned or inoperable vehicles on your block or elsewhere in the neighborhood that you consider eyesores or safety hazards? Yes No

If yes, please specify location(s):_____

4. Are you aware of any possible zoning violations in the neighborhood?

- Yes No

If yes, please specify the nature of the problem and the location:

III. STREETS, SIDEWALKS AND LIGHTING

1. If you have a sidewalk in front of your house, please rate the condition. Otherwise, skip to the next question. **(circle one)**

Intact 1 2 3 4 5 Disintegrating

2. If you have a curb in front of your house, please rate the condition. **(circle one)**

Intact 1 2 3 4 5 Disintegrating

3. Are there problems with gutters or drainage on your street? Yes No
If yes, please specify the location and the nature of the problem:

-
4. Is additional lighting needed in the neighborhood? Yes No
If yes, please specify the location(s): _____

5. Indicate your opinion of the following statements. **(circle one)**

a) There should be a sidewalk on at least one side of each street in the neighborhood.

Strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly disagree

b) There should be a sidewalk on both sides of each street in the neighborhood.

Strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly disagree

c) On your block, there should be curbs and gutters on both sides of the street.

Strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly disagree

d) Bars should be installed on storm drains to prevent injuries.

Strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly disagree

IV. TRAFFIC

1. Are any intersections or places in the neighborhood difficult for you or others to maneuver because of traffic flow, traffic speed, visual obstructions (i.e. vegetation or structures), or the configuration of the road?

Yes No

If yes, please specify the problem(s) and location(s): _____

-
2. Indicate your level of concern about the following traffic problems.

a) cut-through traffic in the neighborhood

Not concerned at all 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely concerned

Please specify the location(s) of concern: _____

b) vehicles exceeding the speed limits in the neighborhood

Not concerned at all 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely concerned

Please specify the location(s) of concern: _____

3. Please indicate your opinion of each method listed for changing traffic patterns in CFCA.

	Strongly favor	Favor	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly oppose
a) More aggressive enforcement of traffic laws	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Increased speeding fines for residential streets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Truck restrictions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Four way stops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Speed humps (made for 25 mph)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Raised crosswalks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Traffic nubs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please specify any other method(s) you favor _____

4. Are the street or traffic signs (stop signs, street name signs, etc.) in the neighborhood adequate?

- Yes No No opinion

If no, please explain: _____

5. Are there areas in the neighborhood where *traffic* may create a safety hazard for school children or other pedestrians?

- Yes No

If yes, please specify each location and why you think it is unsafe. _____

6. Do any of the below cause a vibration problem at your house?
(circle the appropriate number.)

	No problem			Big problem	
a) Metro buses	1	2	3	4	5
b) Delivery trucks	1	2	3	4	5
c) Large construction vehicles	1	2	3	4	5

V. TRANSPORTATION

1. How many persons in your household commute to work? _____

2. Indicate the primary commuting method(s) used by person(s) in your household?
(Check all that apply.)

- a) walk
- b) bicycle
- c) bus
- d) metro rail
- e) car (single driver)
- f) carpool or vanpool
- g) combination
- h) other _____

3. If you use METRObus, which Route #? _____

If you use METROrail, which line? _____

4. Do you favor the addition of a METROrail line along Columbia Pike? Yes No

5. Do you favor the addition of a light rail line along Columbia Pike? Yes No

6. If there were a METROrail or light rail line along Columbia Pike, do you favor a stop near our neighborhood? Yes No

VI. PARKING

1. How often is it difficult to find parking on the street near your house?

4-7 days/week 1-3 days/week Never

2. If you consider parking on the street near your house a problem, what do you think are the causes? **(Check all that apply.)**

- a) Commuters
- b) Residents do not use their driveways
- d) Too many parking restrictions (specify nature/location of restriction(s):_____)
- e) Lack of residents-only parking restrictions
- f) Group houses/Boarding houses
- g) Overflow Parking from Apartment Buildings
- h) Commercial vehicles (taxis, trucks, etc.)
- i) Other (specify)_____

4. Please indicate your opinion on the following methods for managing parking in the neighborhood.

a) During business hours, reserve areas for residential permit parking only.

Strongly favor Favor No Opinion Oppose Strongly oppose

b) At all times, reserve areas for residential permit parking only.

Strongly favor Favor No Opinion Oppose Strongly oppose

c) Improve parking enforcement (i.e. Arlington police should issue tickets for repeat parking offenders.)

Strongly favor Favor No Opinion Oppose Strongly oppose

VII. PUBLIC SAFETY

1. Are there areas in the neighborhood where the lack of sidewalks, handicapped access, crosswalks, traffic lights, curbs or gutters create a safety hazard for school children or pedestrians? Yes No

If yes, please specify the nature and location of each hazard. _____

2. Have you seen any rats in the neighborhood within the last year? Yes No

If yes, please give the location _____

3. Are you aware of any fire or health hazards in the neighborhood? Yes No

If yes, please specify the nature and location of each hazard. _____

4. Do you think neighborhood crime is a problem? Yes Maybe No
If yes or maybe, what type of crime are you particularly concerned about?

5. Do you think increased police patrols are needed in the neighborhood?
 Yes No

6. Would you participate in a Neighborhood Crime Watch Program on your block?
 Yes No Not sure

VIII. PARKS AND RECREATION

1. If you use Bailey's Branch Park (10th Street between Columbus and Frederick), please list the reasons. **(Check all that apply)**
- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk dog(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Socialize |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Picnic | <input type="checkbox"/> Use the playground equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> Use the open field |

2. Which other nearby park/recreational facilities do you use?
- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Barcroft | <input type="checkbox"/> Tyrol Hills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Claremont | <input type="checkbox"/> Wakefield |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____ | |

3. What changes to parks and recreational facilities would you like to see in the neighborhood? **(check all that apply)**
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> More trails - walking jogging, biking | <input type="checkbox"/> More athletic ball fields and/or courts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More picnic areas | <input type="checkbox"/> Public gardens |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More park benches | <input type="checkbox"/> Dog runs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____ | |

X. BEAUTIFICATION

1. Please list any public areas in need of beautification and/or preservation that you want our plan to address.

2. Arlington County allows up to four (4) signs identifying a neighborhood. **These signs must be located on county land.** The county will pay initial purchase and installation costs up to \$12,000 (total for all signs). The neighborhood is responsible for upkeep. Would you favor installing neighborhood identification signs at entrance points to the neighborhood?

- Yes No

If yes, please suggest locations: _____

XI. COMMERCIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL ESTABLISHMENTS

1. Check the box next to any of the local businesses or institutions listed below which give you cause for concern:

- a) 7 – 11 (S. Columbus & Columbia Pike)
- b) Auto Repair Shops behind 7 - 11
- c) Arlington Mill Center
- d) Mobil Station (S. Frederick & Columbia Pike)
- f) Wakefield High School
- g) Bad Habits Grill and/or other Mall Establishments on 5400 block of Columbia Pike

Please describe your concerns regarding any businesses you checked above.

_____ 5. If you have elementary or high school-aged children, what type of school do they attend?

- Public Private Home school
 Other _____

If you marked 'public schools,' please specify which one(s) your child attends:

- Abingdon Claremont Wakefield
- Gunston Kenmore Drew
- Other (Specify) _____

XIII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Please use the space below to address any concerns you have about the neighborhood that were not addressed in this questionnaire. If elaborating on a specific answer, please specify the question number.

5. If you have elementary or high school-aged children, what type of school do they attend?

- Public Private Home school
 Other _____

If you marked 'public schools,' please specify which one(s) your child attends:

- Abingdon Claremont Wakefield
 Gunston Kenmore Drew
 Other (Specify) _____

XIII. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Please use the space below to address any concerns you have about the neighborhood that were not addressed in this questionnaire. If elaborating on a specific answer, please specify the question number.

Thank you for your assistance in completing this important survey. Please fold the survey along the line on this page and tape or staple it closed, then drop it in the nearest mailbox. Postage required is one 33 cents stamp or please hand deliver to the address of the Committee member most convenient to you. PLEASE MAIL YOUR SURVEY BY June 4, 1999.



**PAT WILLIAMSON EDWARDS
5008 S. 12TH STREET
ARLINGTON, VA. 22204-3302**



**Department of Community Planning,
Housing and Development**

Office of Neighborhood Services
Neighborhood Conservation Program

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