

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING CONTROLS

5.1 Special Treatment Areas

There are four areas that contain natural features that may be threatened by development, and if preserved, can be used to enhance the environmental and aesthetic integrity of the OTC. Maintaining the quality and minimizing the impact of development on these natural features and associated waterways are part of the site plan review for the following areas:

A. The Core and Transition sub-areas north and west of the existing neighborhood.

This undeveloped section comprises about 170 acres, including about 25 acres of wetlands in three separate areas, two of which drain into Picture Spring Branch of the Severn River. A smaller wetland area flanking Route 175 at the MD Route 32 interchange poses major constraints for access and development of a key parcel that can anchor the Core area on the west. Some road crossings will also be necessary to serve the Transition sub-area; however, the impact of development should be minimized with ample buffers, and effective stormwater management. These wooded wetland areas may function as stream valley open space, providing visual relief, recreation amenity, and generally enhancing abutting development parcels.

B. Rail station east to MD 170 between MD 175 and the existing neighborhood.

About 25 acres in this area remain largely undeveloped between the highway and railroad spur. It is bisected diagonally by a drainage course and abutting wetlands, and the site is forested. As future development occurs, special attention should be given to preserving the wetlands and retaining a wooded buffer along the edge of the historic Odenton community to the south. Careful layout will be necessary to minimize road crossings and mass grading for commercial use on sloping land near the railroad.

C. East Odenton north of MD 175 behind existing commercial development.

This sensitive area has been designated as the headwaters of Picture Spring Branch between Lions Gate, Hidden Village Apartments and the Winmark office complex. The stream valley contains significant floodplain, associated wetlands and steep slopes. Although most abutting development has been completed, about 20 acres of vacant land remains to the south and east, to be developed for multi-family housing. Special consideration should be given in site planning to preserve trees and stabilize slopes, provide ample buffers and more effective stormwater management for abutting commercial and residential development. Pathway connections across the stream valley should be located for minimal impact on slopes and wetlands.

D. Industrial Area east of MD 170 and north of Arundel Crossing East.

Located near the interchange at Route 32, this area will be under considerable pressure for development due to its convenient access and visibility. It is fully wooded and contains tributaries of Picture Spring Branch, flanked by steep slopes. There are several acres of buildable land, which should be carefully planned to minimize grading, preserve tree cover and maintain water quality at this key point of discharge into the Severn Run.

5.2 Existing Regulatory Documents

The primary means of protecting Odenton’s natural environment during the development process is through the administration of existing regulations. They include:

- Floodplain Management, Sediment Control and Stormwater Management Ordinances, Article 21 of the Anne Arundel County Code;
- Subdivision Regulations, Article 26;
- Maryland Forest Conservation Act and County Tree Preservation Bill 13-90;
- Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act;
- Maryland Scenic and Wild Rivers Act;
- Patuxent River Policy Plan;
- Anne Arundel County Greenways Master Plan;
- Odenton Small Area Plan;
- Severn River Watershed Management Master Plan.

5.3 OTC Greenway Network

Intent:

The intent of these requirements is to promote the expansion and enhancement of a greenway network within the OTC that is connected to the surrounding County and City network, that is a key aesthetic asset in the development of the OTC and that meets the following three environmental objectives:

- A. Ensure a stable environment by protecting the water quality, stream hydrology, flora and fauna, with connected wildlife corridors.
- B. Provides green relief and passive recreation within the urban center.
- C. Provides buffers between the OTC and adjoining areas.

It is intended that new development be designed to contribute and interact with the greenway network and that developments that exceed the minimum greenway requirements be eligible for suitable rewards.

This Greenway network should be comprised of both public and private open space that is permanently protected and visually attractive. It is not intended to be fully accessible for public use or publicly owned and maintained. Many parts of the greenway are too steep or too sensitive for access by people and some parts will be reserved for private use. Only where appropriate, will public accessibility and passive or active recreation be encouraged.

The Design Standards in Chapter IV address the requirements for on-site green areas. These requirements provide for the creation of many pockets of green areas scattered around the OTC. The Environmental standards require that these green areas be connected to the larger greenway where possible.

Recognizing that a significant portion of the most desirable greenway areas in the OTC are not on, or adjacent to, the sites where development will occur, this Plan also encourages developers of smaller sites to build-out their sites to full capacity and to contribute a fee for off-site improvements to the proposed OTC Public Amenities Fund. This program is described in Chapter V - Process & Procedures.

This program will help to create a much more significant aesthetic asset for the area and will maximize the use of the comparatively flat, highly developable sites in the OTC. It can also be used to acquire, protect, stabilize, and enhance sensitive lands in and around the OTC that have steep slopes and stream channels that need protection.

REQUIREMENTS:

A. The Greenway Functional Plan

This Greenway Functional Plan shall be used as a guide in preparing and reviewing the proposed green areas of all development applications and in making strategic selections of sites for inclusion in the greenways network. The OTC Natural Open Areas and Facilities, Figure 40, illustrates an expanded network that links to green areas outside the OTC boundary. It is a combination of public and private lands and of existing and proposed sites and includes:

- 1. Privately owned but permanently protected open space such as:***
 - a. Riparian stream corridors and their buffers***
 - b. Sensitive areas and their buffers***
 - c. Forest preservation & reforestation areas***
- 3. Publicly owned green areas and landscape buffers along highways***
- 4. Public and private land zoned for Open Space***
- 5. Public County and City Parks***

B. Sensitive Areas and Their Buffers

For the purpose of this Plan, as elsewhere in the County, sensitive areas include intermittent and perennial streams extending from the headwaters to tidal areas and steep slopes in the stream valley of more than twenty-five (25) percent outside the Critical Area and more than fifteen (15) percent inside the Critical Area. Buffers are as defined in the Stormwater Management Manual.

C. Greenway Protection

Green areas shall be protected either through protective easements or through dedication to the County or other Land Conservation entities in accordance with the Subdivision code, SWM Manual and the Forest Preservation regulations. All green areas to be credited for a development bonus shall be permanently protected.

D. Off-Site and Public Green Areas

As part of the OTC Bonus program, the OTC open area regulations encourages all developers to make off-site improvements or contribute to the OTC Public Amenities Fund in order to assist in:

- 1. Acquiring new green area parcels in and around the OTC,*
- 2. Making improvements on these parcels and,*
- 3. Maintaining them over time.*

In addition, this fund will be used to provide a matching fund to solicit grant money from the State and other sources to build the OTC greenway network system. Several recommendations of strategic acquisitions of sites for open space are noted in the Sub-Area section of this Plan.

E. Landscape Requirements

The Design Standards in Chapter IV provide the landscaping requirements in the OTC. These are intended to ensure that plantings contribute to improving the environment, at the same time as they provide an aesthetic appeal and green relief suitable to an urban setting.

5.4 OTC Specific SWM Requirements

The County's Storm Water Management Practices and Procedures Manual provides excellent standards that are consistent with the OTC environmental protection goals and all developments are required to follow these standards. No additional requirements are included in this plan.

5.5 Bonus Eligible Actions

In order to help achieve the Plan's environmental related goals and objectives, the following bonus eligible actions have been created to reward developments that exceed the minimum requirements. The Land Use and Development Controls section of this plan describes these development bonus rewards.

REQUIREMENTS:

In order to be eligible to receive a development bonus, applicants shall meet, or exceed, one or more of the following environmental actions.

A. Green Area Preservation Bonus

Provision of protected green space, beyond that which is required:

Land may be dedicated to the County or a County approved land conservancy organization, or it may be protected with a permanent recorded easement. Protected lands shall be approved by the County and may be located as follows:

- 1. Onsite; or*
- 2. Offsite within the OTC area; or*
- 3. Offsite within the OTC sub-water sheds; or*
- 4. Offsite elsewhere in the county in areas designated by Small Area Plans as TDR sending areas, in critical areas or designated rural legacy areas.*

Protected land shall meet one or more of the following criteria:

- 1. Sensitive areas and their buffers within the OTC sub-water sheds*
- 2. Riparian stream corridors within the OTC sub-water sheds*
- 3. Existing forestland within the OTC sub-water sheds*
- 4. Developable land that is designated by a Small Area Plan as a TDR sending area, in a Critical Area or in a designated Rural Legacy Area.*

B. Contribution to an Approved Environmental Fund

Contribution to an established fund, approved by the County, whose function is to:

- 1. Acquire and/or protect agricultural land, public parkland and natural green areas in Anne Arundel County.*
- 2. Restore and or enhance the hydrological function of streams in the OTC watersheds.*

C. No-Runoff Bonus

Development of a SWM system that causes all site stormwater to be infiltrated within the site resulting in no run-off. This bonus may be granted in addition to other bonuses.

D. SWM Redevelopment and Renovation Bonus

Provision of one or more of the following in a manner that exceeds requirements:

- 1. Redevelopment and renovation of a pre-existing development site, that does not meet current SWM standards, in a manner that brings the entire site up to the current standards for a new development site.*
- 2. Provision of stormwater management for areas currently unmanaged, beyond the minimum requirements in the Maryland Department of Environment*

Stormwater Management Manual and the Anne Arundel County Stormwater Management Practices and Procedures Manual.

3. *Retrofitting of an existing SWM pond that does not meet current SWM standards in order to meet new SWM standards.*
4. *Conversion of in-stream ponds that are currently utilized as SWM ponds to a community amenity function.*
5. *Elimination and/or environmentally and aesthetically beneficial reuse of pre-existing regional management ponds through the use of innovative management techniques.*

E. Innovative SWM & Infiltration Bonuses

Provision of one or more of the following:

1. *Structured parking and or shared parking solutions that result in a reduction of land area coverage needed for a site's parking needs. Reduction shall be in excess of fifty (50) percent, as compared to the area that would be required for surface parking with no reductions.*
2. *Provision of pervious or semi-permeable surfacing treatments on more than fifty (50) percent of the site's surface parking areas that aid infiltration.*
3. *Innovative recharge and water quality management techniques that result in SWM performances that exceed County standards.*
4. *Improvements to compacted impermeable soils in order to significantly increase their infiltration capacity. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:*
 - a.. *Replacement of impermeable soils with porous fill to create in-ground storage.*
 - b. *Reconditioning of existing compacted soils to increase permeability.*
5. *Significant environmentally friendly design features in surface parking areas that minimize heat gain such as concrete, and/or asphalt mixtures with ground glass and other approved measures.*
6. *Management for off-site stormwater flow beyond that which is required.*
7. *Incorporation of state-of-the-art water quality and quantity techniques that maximize operational efficiency, beyond that which is required.*

F. Stream Restoration Bonuses

Provision of one or more of the following:

1. *Additional restoration to a stream valley or financial contribution to a stream valley restoration project being undertaken by another party, that is within a OTC water-shed and which exceed requirements.*
2. *Day-lighting of buried stream elements and recreation of streambed, streambanks and riparian corridor plantings.*

G. Green Roof, Evapotranspiration Management Bonus

Provision of a significant area of green roof treatment that promotes SWM infiltration, evapotranspiration and minimizes heat gain, in a manner that exceeds applicable County SWM standards. Significant is considered to be 90% of an individual roof-top area or 15,000 square feet whichever is greater.

H. Green Buildings

Provision of a Buildings design that meets the minimum LEED standards for Green Construction.

I. Air Quality

Provision of an action that contributes to improving air quality in the area, including but not limited to: Provision of one or more transit vehicles for use by local public transit, company vans, car pools and/or corporate fleets and that is powered by natural by gas, a hybrid power or other less polluting fuel system than gasoline or diesel.

