CONNECT. PLAN. THRIVE.

TRANSFORMING TOMORROW TOGETHER.
Montgomery Planning collaborates with the people of Montgomery County, MD to plan vibrant, livable and thriving communities.

Our county is a beautiful blend of urban, suburban and rural settings with different needs, challenges and opportunities. We partner with community members to create visions for how their neighborhoods can succeed in the future. Montgomery Planning creates thoughtful and innovative plans that direct where and how new development can take place and shape future development to ensure a community’s vision is achieved.

Montgomery Planning’s work begins and ends in conversation and collaboration with you. First, we listen to the needs, wants and realities of the people who make Montgomery County their home. Then, we apply our research, analysis and expertise - under the framework of the county’s regulations and priorities - to bring together community hopes, practical realities and planning best practices. Our goal every step of the way: help Montgomery County thrive into the future.
We plan for the future and preserve what’s good about what’s already here.

Montgomery Planning develops plans and sets policies so that everyone in Montgomery County has what they need as our county grows. Our team of planning and research experts do this through:

- **Land use and transportation planning strategies** that balance development needs with impacts on traffic, public infrastructure and the natural environment.
- **Development of master plans and functional plans** that work toward balancing the county’s present realities with the needs of the future to improve our communities.
- **Review of development applications** so that proposed development follows approved plans and enhances communities.
- **Land use and zoning regulations** to ensure that communities grow as intended.
- **Cutting-edge research** to study and analyze trends in population, housing, the economy, employment, real estate and other factors that impact how we live.
- **Historic preservation** to identify, designate and protect historic sites in the county to preserve our rich heritage.
Types of plans

Montgomery Planning creates four types of plans with the community.

**THE GENERAL PLAN**

The General Plan is a policy document that guides, over multiple decades, how Montgomery County will fundamentally develop and change over time; maintain its important assets; and respond to future opportunities and challenges.

We’re currently updating the General Plan via Thrive Montgomery 2050. Get involved at [thrivemontgomery.com](http://thrivemontgomery.com).

**FUNCTIONAL PLANS**

Provide guidance and recommendations on networks and systems, such as transportation, historic preservation, green infrastructure and other countywide systems.

**MASTER PLANS**

Define land use and community goals for a specific geographic area that sets a vision for the future with specific recommendations intended to help implement that vision.

**SECTOR AND MINOR MASTER PLANS**

Include detailed guidelines for a more targeted geographic area that covers small portions of a master plan area.

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**HOW DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS GET APPROVED**

Every development project in the county must conform to the requirements of an applicable master plan. If a property owner wants to develop a project, the owner must follow a development review process resulting in Montgomery County Planning Board review and decision.

To learn more about the development review process, go to [montgomeryplanning.org/development](http://montgomeryplanning.org/development).
How plans get approved

Montgomery Planning collaborates with community members at multiple points in the process to develop innovative plans to help communities thrive into the future.

1 COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Planners consult with and provide recommendations, analysis and information to county residents, the Montgomery County Council, the County Executive and other government agencies throughout the planning process.

2 DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS PRESENTED

After initial community input, planners present a draft plan to the Montgomery County Planning Board, which has final authority on land use matters.

3 PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

Planners take comments from the Planning Board and present a revised draft at a public hearing.

4 TRANSMITTAL TO THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL AND COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Planners incorporate community comments into the plan and present a revised draft to the Planning Board. The board approves the new draft and sends it to the County Council and the County Executive for review.

5 COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING AND REVIEW

The County Council holds its own public hearing on the plan and reviews it before approval. The County Council approves area master plans and functional master plans which span more than one geographic area and makes decisions about zoning on individual land parcels.

6 APPROVAL AND ADOPTION

After the County Council approves the plan, Montgomery Planning certifies it and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission gives the plan’s final approval.
Successful planning depends on the community.

Montgomery Planning’s ability to develop plans with the best possible solutions to keep Montgomery County thriving requires involvement from everyone in the county including residents, community organizations, businesses, developers and county government.

It is vitally important that community members take part in the planning process. That’s why every planning process begins with reaching out to the community. Planners then share information and listen to what the community thinks, wants, needs and values. We continue the conversation when we ask you to review recommendations and plan drafts and share your thoughts at public hearings, community meetings, online and more.

Help shape the future of your community! Check out our website to learn how at montgomeryplanning.org/connect.

The Montgomery County Planning Board’s role

The five-member Montgomery County Planning Board, part of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, works to maintain and improve the quality of life in our community. Acting upon such issues as growth, transportation, environmental protection, agriculture, historical preservation and forest conservation, the Planning Board is largely responsible for setting land use policy and protecting parkland resources throughout our 323,000-acre county.

Planning Board members welcome community participation as they:

- Consider large- and small-scale plans for new development
- Provide plans and guidelines for the pattern and pace of future development
- Develop and manage Montgomery County’s nationally recognized 32,900-acre park system
- Recommend to the County Council which sites receive historic designations
What happens after plan approval

While we provide consultation and research support to the agencies responsible for making land use and functional plans come to fruition, Montgomery Planning does not implement plans or build things.

Once a plan is approved, the Montgomery County government is responsible for coordinating plan implementation with Montgomery County agencies and partners, along with the community and developers, as appropriate.

Following plan approval, Montgomery Planning’s role is to review proposals from developers and public agencies to ensure that they follow plans, zoning and other policies and regulations. Other government agencies provide the infrastructure to support approved new development. For example:

- Montgomery County Department of Transportation and the Maryland State Highway Administration improve existing roads and builds new ones, create pedestrian and bike paths, and provide transit options.
- Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services is responsible for conducting inspections and issuing building permits to ensure safe and sound building practices.
- Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection works to ensure that environmental protection plan recommendations and regulations are followed.

DID YOU KNOW? MONTGOMERY PLANNING IS NOT PART OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Montgomery Planning is a department of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (mncppc.org), a bi-county regional planning agency. Though we’re separate from the Montgomery County government, the County Council approves Montgomery Planning’s budget and work program. Montgomery Planning also serves as the principal land use advisor to Montgomery County’s elected officials. We craft land use plans and policies and make recommendations to decision-makers on the Montgomery County Planning Board and the Montgomery County Council and in county agencies.