





MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

OFFICE OF THE CHAIR

March 11, 2021

TO: The Honorable Tom Hucker, President of the Montgomery County Council
The Honorable Hans Riemer, Chair of the Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee

FROM: Casey Anderson, Chair of the Montgomery County Planning Board 
Gwen L.M. Wright, Director, Montgomery County Planning Department 

SUBJECT: Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative

The Montgomery County Planning Department is both honored and excited by this opportunity to conduct a thorough review of zoning and planning policies to develop a comprehensive strategy for achieving new housing opportunities, including Missing Middle housing, for the county's current and future residents. To meet this challenge, the Planning Department is pleased to announce we have initiated the [Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative](#) (AHS), which will result in both recommended zoning changes as well as larger policy and planning changes that may be implemented.

Attainable housing is market-rate housing that is appropriate and suitable for current and future Montgomery County households. Implicit in this idea of attainability is that a range of housing options (type, size, tenure, cost) exists in the local market for a range of household incomes and preferences. Strategies to implement Missing Middle housing are a major part of the AHS effort, as are opportunities for new housing around transit stations, within transit corridors, and near activity centers across the county.

Although this initiative has a tight turn-around, it will be a collaborative process with extensive stakeholder engagement. This includes creating the Housing Equity Advisory Team (HEAT), comprised of external stakeholders from various perspectives and areas of expertise, hosting public meetings and staff office hours, and conducting multiple worksessions before the Planning Board. Our goal is to use the information gained through public outreach and the HEAT to better understand the real challenges to providing attainable housing in Montgomery County. This process will enable us to propose changes to the zoning code along with other policies to encourage the production of new forms of housing.

We will begin the AHS effort immediately by forming and meeting with the HEAT this month and organizing an initial virtual community forum scheduled for March 29. Planning staff will continue to engage the public and the HEAT and work to understand existing conditions and develop appropriate strategies through the end of May. Worksessions with the Planning Board would be held in June, with the goal to transmit the AHS recommendations to the Council by the end of June.

We thank you for entrusting us with this important task. We look forward to ongoing discussions with the Council as we work together to solve Montgomery County's housing crisis.