



Montgomery Planning | Countywide Planning & Policy

06/02/2021

Attainable Housing Strategies

Community Meeting #3



Attainable Housing Strategies

Agenda

- I. About Attainable Housing Strategies
- II. Summary of Prior Proposals and Terms
- III. Preliminary Attainable Housing Recommendations
- IV. Next Steps
- V. Question and Answer



About Attainable Housing Strategies

- Attainable Housing Strategies is an initiative through which the Planning Department is **evaluating and potentially refining various proposals to allow the development of more diverse types of housing**, including [Missing Middle Housing](#), in Montgomery County.
- The initiative is the result of a [County Council request](#) for the Planning Board to consider and recommend “zoning reforms that would allow greater opportunities for Missing Middle housing in Montgomery County.”



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

Casey Anderson, Chair
Montgomery County Planning Board
Gwen Wright, Director
Montgomery County Planning Department
2425 Reedie Drive, 14th Floor
Wheaton, MD 20902

March 4, 2021

Dear Chair Anderson and Director Wright:

On behalf of the Council, we write to request that the Planning Board consider zoning reforms that would allow greater opportunities for Missing Middle housing in Montgomery County, provide opportunity for public input, and transmit to us a Zoning Text Amendment with your recommendations. This process was suggested by PHED Chair Riemer in the attached memo to colleagues and a majority of Councilmembers have agreed. Councilmember Riemer attached a draft ZTA and fact sheet for your consideration, and we hope you will consider the concepts in ZTA 20-07, introduced by Councilmember Jawando.

If we can receive your recommendations shortly after we receive the Thrive 2050 plan, we could hear from the community and complete our work by the end of the year.

We look forward to engaging in this important discussion.

Regards,

Handwritten signature of Tom Hucker in black ink.

Tom Hucker
Council President

Handwritten signature of Hans Riemer in black ink.

Hans Riemer
Chair
Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee



About Attainable Housing Strategies

- The Attainable Housing Strategies initiative aims to **identify viable options for existing and new residents to find homes at the right sizes, locations, and price points for their needs** and expand homeownership opportunities for the county's diverse populations.
- It also helps Montgomery County grow its housing supply even where space is a concern—a critical consideration as we anticipate population growth in the coming decades.



Our terms have evolved

Missing Middle Housing

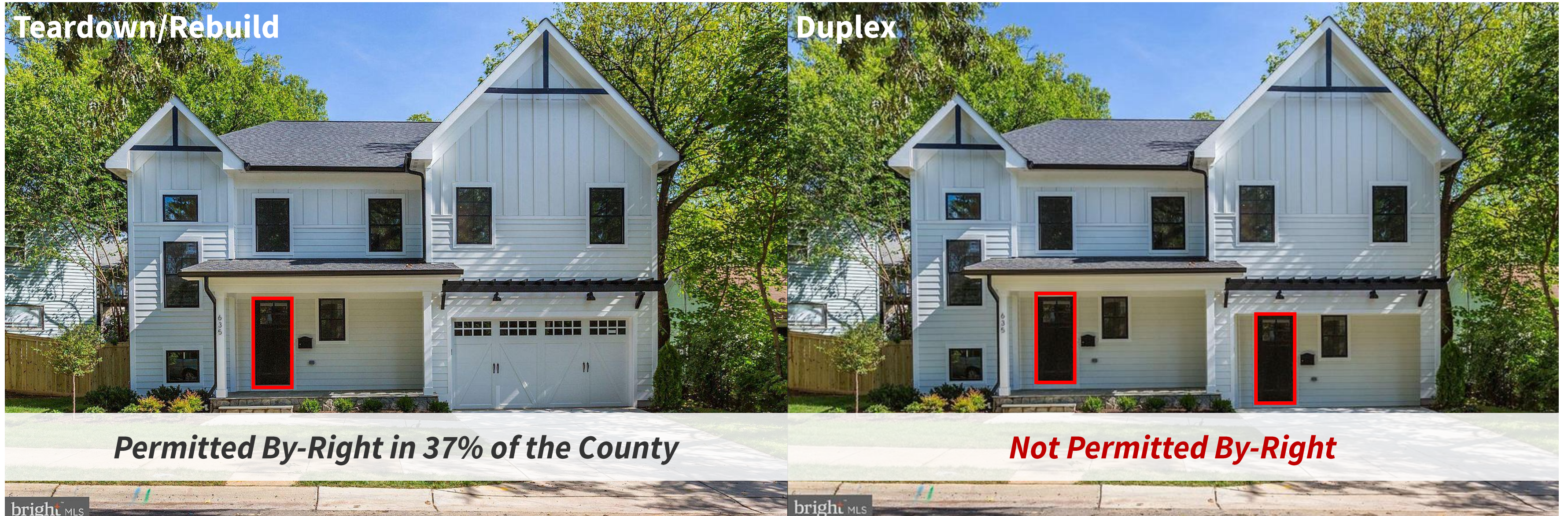
- A term coined by Opticos Design to describe a range of house-scale multi-unit structures that are compatible in scale with detached single-family homes.

Attainable Housing

- Attainable housing offers more diverse types of housing beyond house-scale Missing Middle housing types.
- Attainable housing incorporates building types described as Missing Middle but also adds a focus on households of various incomes being able to obtain housing that is suitable for their needs.

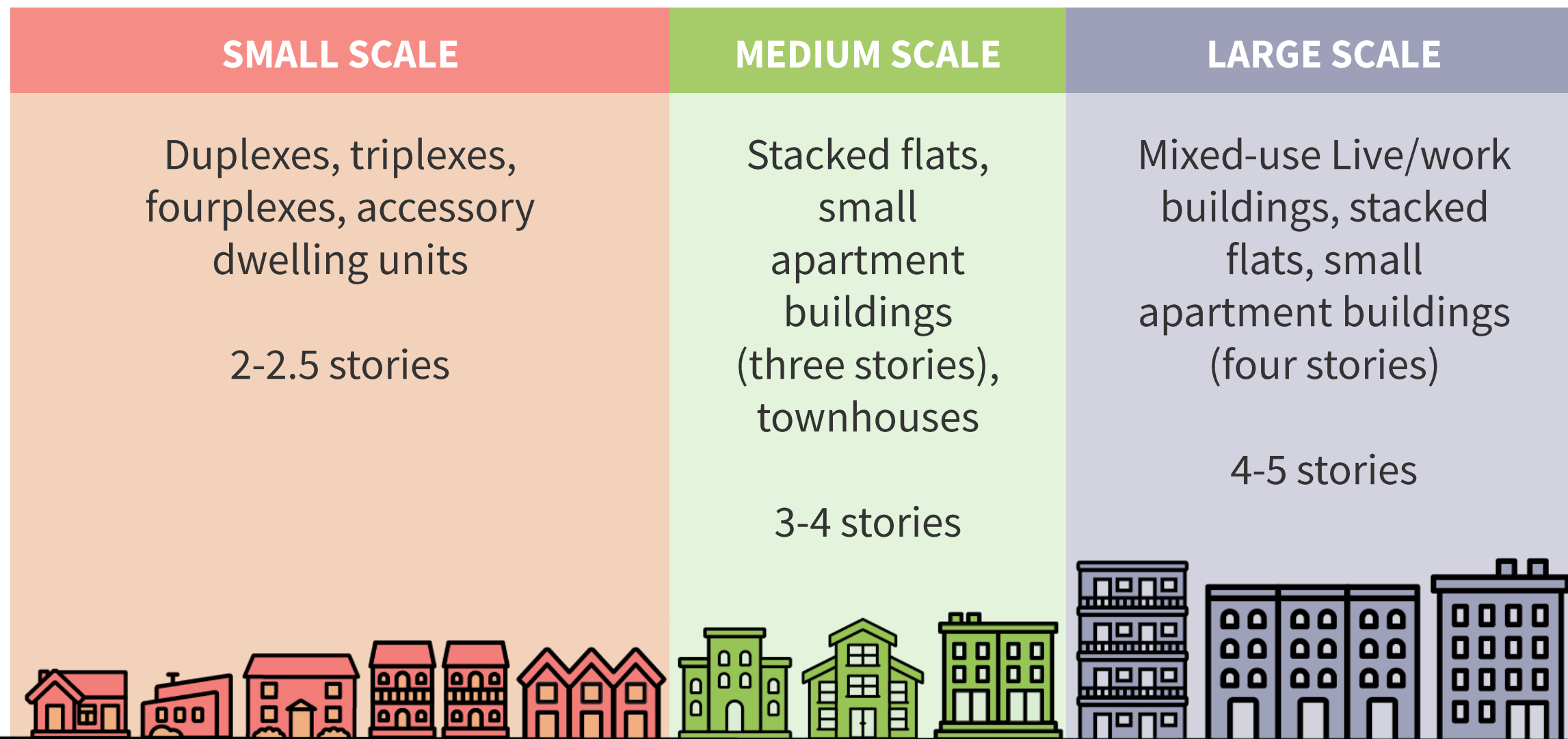


Attainability is relative – but size has a big impact



Attainable Housing Types and Scales

Range of Housing Types and Scales



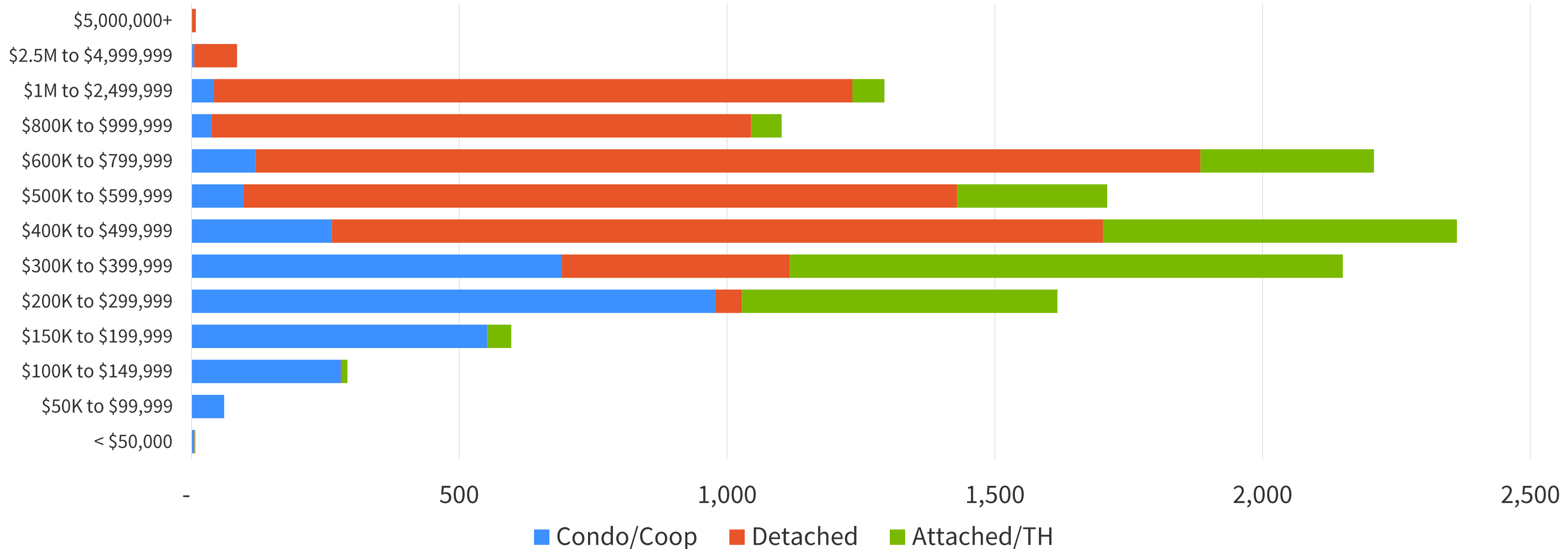
At the root of this effort is a desire to make housing in Montgomery County more equitable and more inclusive.

- Revisiting our land use and zoning are integral to implementing the County's 2019 Racial Equity and Social Justice Law and the resulting Montgomery Planning's [Equity Agenda for Planning](#)
 - Montgomery Planning recognizes and acknowledges the role that our plans and policies have played in creating and perpetuating racial inequity in Montgomery County.
 - We have a long history of land use decisions that created exclusionary neighborhoods and formed barriers to resources and opportunities for people of color and other disadvantaged persons.



In 2020, the average detached home in Montgomery County was sold for \$775,000 compared to \$370,000 for attached structures.

Sales Range by Type



Real Estate

\$1 million over asking: D.C. bidding wars escalate as U.S. housing crunch intensifies



By [Kathy Orton](#)

June 1, 2021 at 6:30 a.m. EDT



Our neighborhoods have become less attainable and more exclusive

\$109K

Median Income in 1996
(inflated to 2020 dollars)

\$110K

Median Income in 2020

Assumptions: 4% interest rate, 5% down payment, 30-year mortgage, escrow/insurance is 20% of primary principal/interest payment, debt cannot exceed 35% of income, borrower has no additional debt

Sources: Zillow Single-Family ZHVI Value, US Census

Typical 1996 house value (inflated to 2020 dollars) and estimated income required to afford that house

Typical 2020 house value (and estimated income required to afford that house)

**Zip Code 20817
Bethesda**

\$670K
\$125K



\$1.05M
\$197K

**Zip Code 20852
North Bethesda**

\$419K
\$78K



\$655K
\$122K

**Zip Code 20910
Silver Spring**

\$364K
\$68K



\$650K
\$121K



Attainable housing alone is not expected to solve our housing crisis

- Contains wide-ranging housing policies (among other topics) and actions to address to housing production and preservation
- Key policies in the Affordable & Attainable Housing chapter of Thrive Montgomery 2050:
 - Encourage the production of more housing to better match supply with demand.
 - Plan for a wide range of housing types and sizes to meet diverse needs.
 - Promote racial and economic diversity and equity in housing in every neighborhood.



Concurrent and related efforts

Thrive Montgomery 2050

The Planning Board transmitted its draft of Thrive Montgomery 2050 to the council in Spring 2021.

A General Plan provides long-range policy framework. **It does not change zoning.**

Thrive Montgomery 2050 will have its public hearings at the Council this month.

Attainable Housing Strategies

In March 2021, the County Council asked the Planning Board to consider zoning reforms that “would allow for greater opportunities for Missing Middle housing.”

Silver Spring Downtown & Adjacent Communities Plan

Planning Board expanded the Silver Spring Plan Area to examine the potential for Missing Middle housing in blocks adjacent to Downtown and the Purple Line.

The recommendations from AHS will inform the recommendations on Missing Middle for SSDAC.

ZTA 20-07

Councilmember Jawando introduced Zoning Text Amendment 20-07 in December 2020 to allow Missing Middle types of housing in the R-60 zone.

ZTA 20-07 has had its public hearing, but no further action has been taken.

Zoning Recommendations

The Planning Board will transmit zoning recommendations to the County Council for its consideration and potential introduction as a ZTA to pursue the AHS and Thrive objectives.

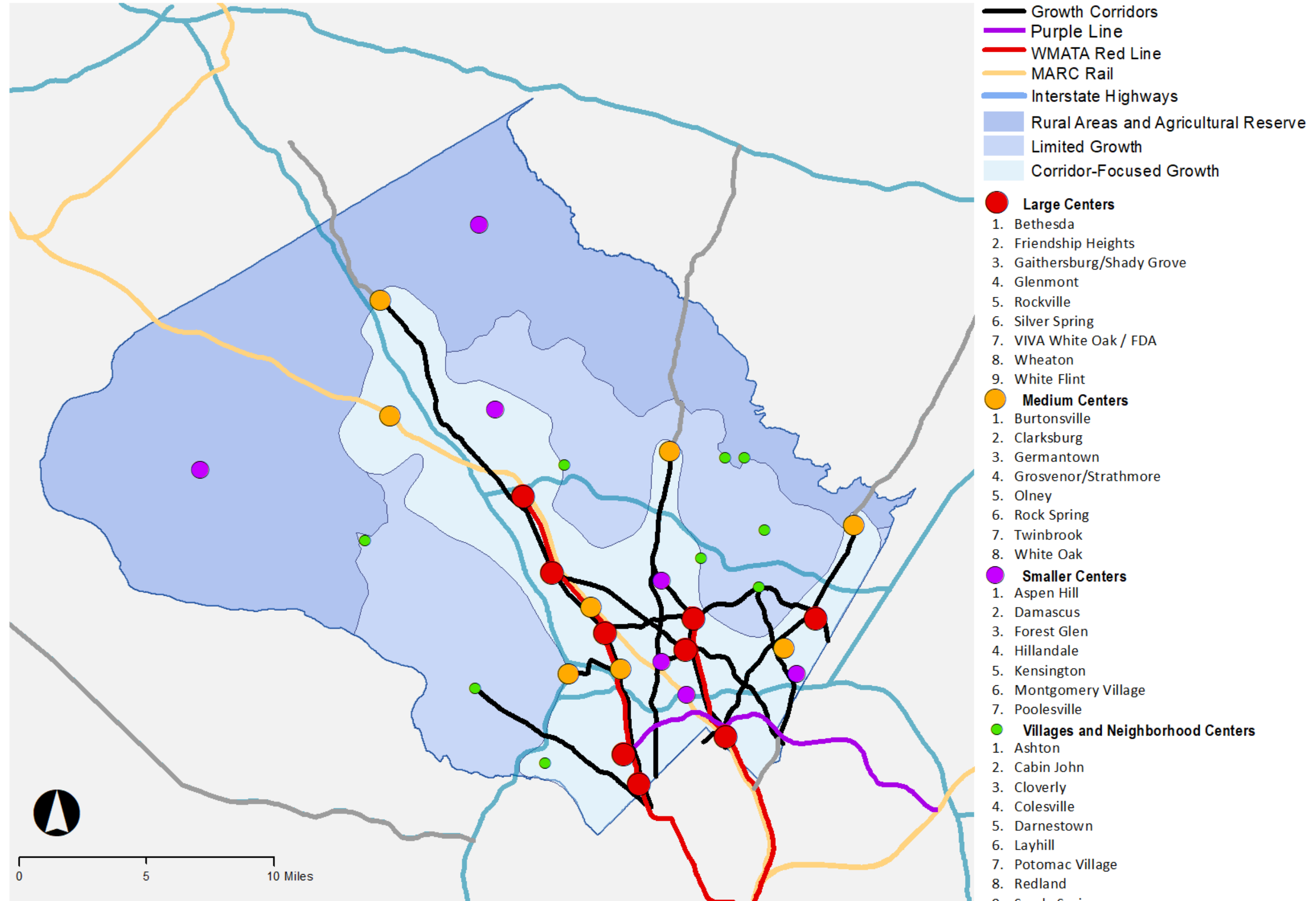
Sectional Map Amendment

The master plan process will conclude with the adoption of a sectional map amendment that implements the zoning recommendations in the SSDAC Plan.



Thrive Montgomery 2050 Growth Map

The Thrive Montgomery 2050 Growth diagram illustrates growth concepts and potential centers of activity, but the diagram should be considered in the context of the Compact Growth and Complete Communities chapters. The centers of activity shown are not exhaustive of all existing or potential centers.



The Thrive Montgomery 2050 Growth Diagram illustrates growth concepts and potential centers of activity, but the diagram should be considered in the context of the Compact Growth and Complete Communities chapters. The centers of activity shown are not exhaustive of all existing or potential centers.



Preliminary Montgomery Planning Staff Recommendations



About Preliminary Staff Recommendations

- These are relatively high-level recommendations
 - Details remain to be worked out
- These are a work in progress
 - Still looking for feedback from the community
 - Outstanding questions
 - Things may change
- There is still a lot of process remaining
 - Finalize our recommendations
 - Planning Board review and recommendations
 - Potential Council introduction
 - Official Planning Board review and public hearing
 - Council public hearing, committee and full Council work sessions

Initiative Goals

- Create more opportunities for homeownership for more households in more parts of the county
- Unravel the exclusionary aspects of our single-family residential zones and help to diversify our communities by diversifying our housing stock
- Work toward meeting the county's housing supply obligations and needs



General Recommendations

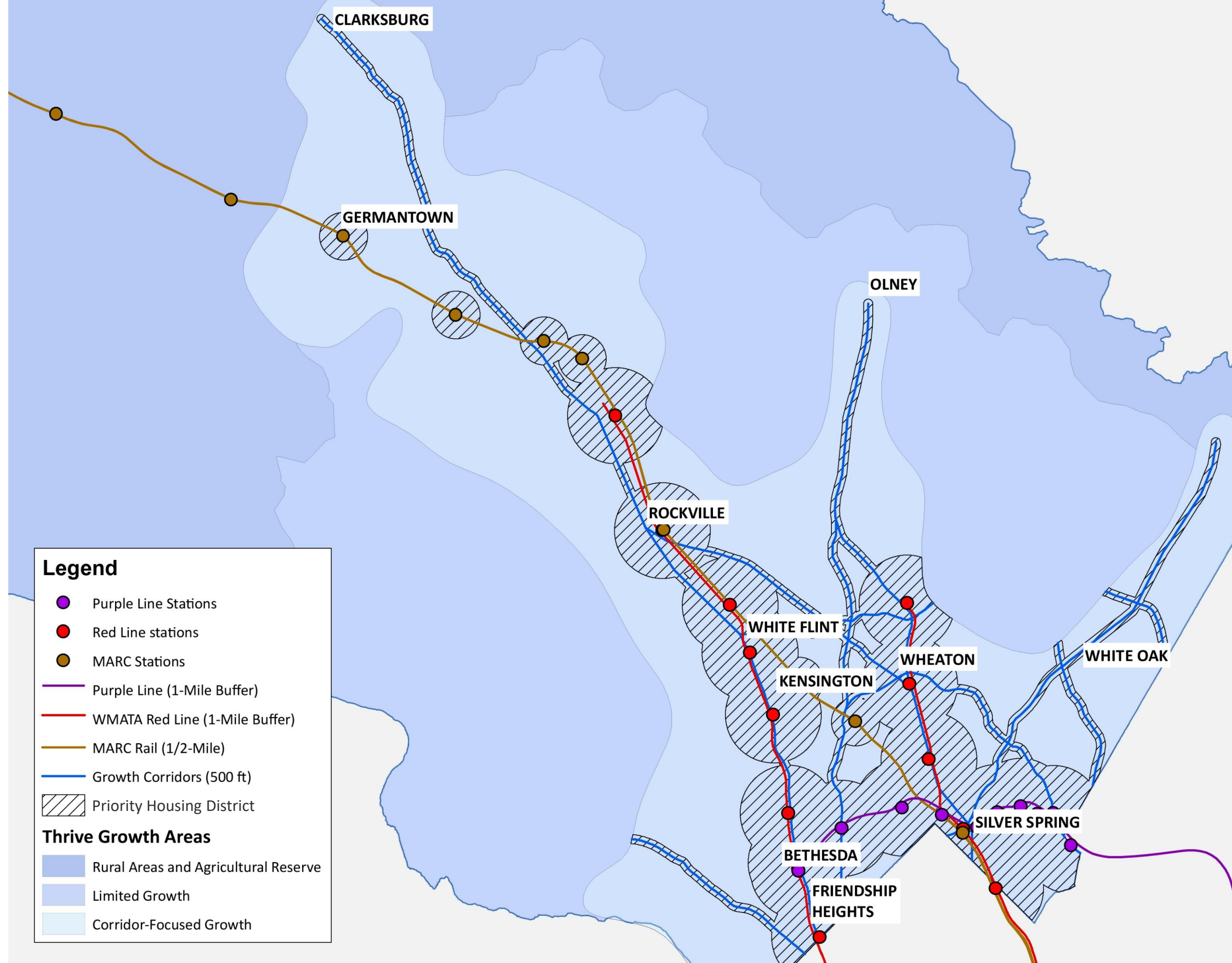
- All recommendations are targeted to the Corridor-Focused Growth area from the Thrive Montgomery 2050 Growth Map
- Allowing **by right house-scale duplexes and triplexes** in the R-40, R-60, R-90, & R-200 zones with conformance with a pattern book. Quadplexes allowed closer to transit. The pattern book will give guidance on massing, scale, and design to ensure these housing types blend in among single family homes.
- Creating a **new optional method of development** to encourage consolidation and development of duplexes, cottage courts, townhouses, and small multiplexes and apartments near transit, along our growth corridors, and near the county's centers of activity.
- Supporting more **corridor-focused master plans** to evaluate options to enable development of larger/higher density townhouses, stacked flats, and apartments along select growth corridors.



Priority Housing District

Defined Geography:

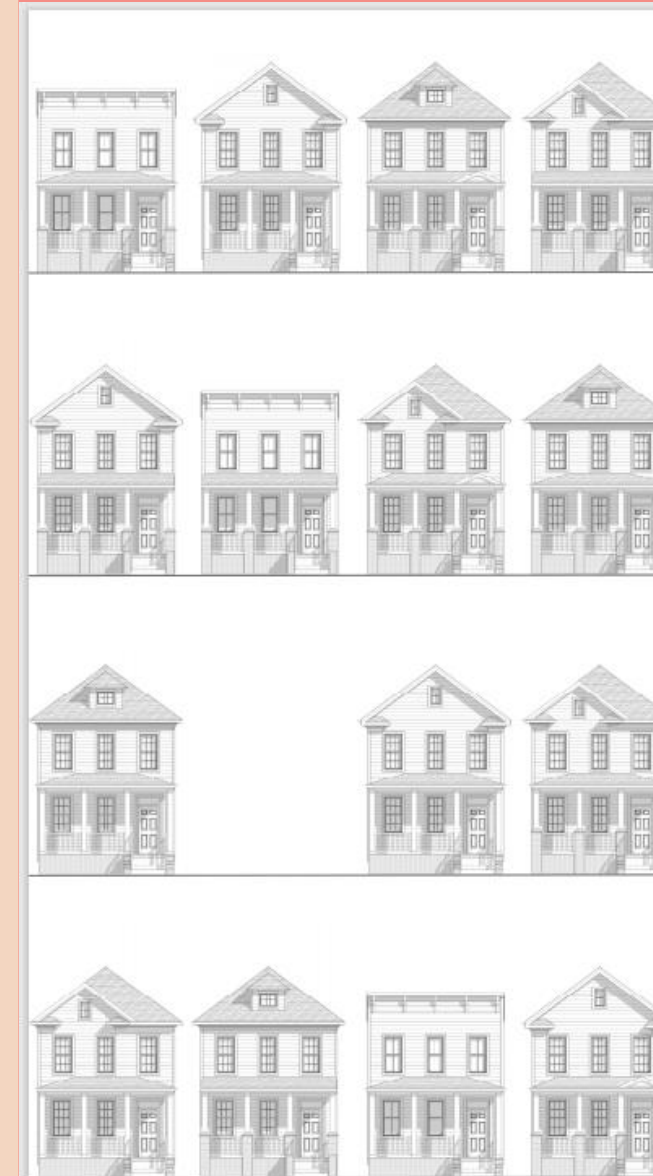
Areas within 1 mile of a Metrorail or a lighttrail station, ½ mile of a MARC station, or 500 feet of a Growth Corridor identified in Thrive Montgomery 2050.



Pattern Book

- A document containing various pre-approved design options for building small scale housing
 - Building massing, placement, height, door placement, parking, building features (porches, etc.)
 - Options tailored based on a range of lot sizes and shapes
 - Designed to keep units ‘**house scale**’
- Allows the creation of duplexes, triplexes and quadplexes ‘by right’ **only** if they follow the contents of the pattern book.

Example



Traditional Neighborhoods Plan Book
Chapter 1 - Olde Huntersville



Optional Method of Development

Optional methods of development allow flexibility in the project design, in exchange for a public benefit and design review with the Planning Board

- MPDU & Cluster

New “Attainable Housing” optional method

- Properties within the Priority Housing District that have frontage along one of the Thrive Identified Growth Corridors or is adjacent to certain Thrive identified Centers of Activity.
- Increased density and more flexible standards in exchange for a Planning Board Site Plan review, and limits on average unit size to achieve more attainable price points.



Three scales of Attainable Housing



Small Scale

- Duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes

Medium Scale

- Stacked flats, small apartment buildings, and townhouses (up to three stories)

Large Scale

- Live/work buildings, stacked flats, small apartment buildings, and townhouses (four stories)



Where Attainable Housing would be allowed (within Thrive Corridor-Focused Growth Area)



Small Scale

- Duplexes and triplex allowed by-right (with conformance to pattern book) in R-40, R-60, R-90 & R-200 zones
- Quadplex allowed by-right (with conformance to pattern book) in R-40, R-60 & R-90 in Priority Housing District

Medium Scale

- Along growth corridors and around our larger centers of activity with regulatory review

Large Scale

- Along corridors and within larger centers of activity with regulatory review



Ensuring developments are compatible



Small Scale

- Proposals must conform with a pattern book that defines allowable layout, massing, and scale
- Limit on amount of land that can be consolidated for development

Medium Scale

- Planning Board review and site plan approval with opportunities for community feedback

Large Scale

- Planning Board review and site plan approval with opportunities for community feedback



Attainable Housing development standards



Small Scale

- No change to setbacks, heights, coverages, or building placement
- Reduced parking minimums near transit facilities

Medium Scale

- Attainable housing optional method (AHOM) will identify applicable development standards for medium scale structures, based on existing optional methods of development

Large Scale

- Development standards applicable to existing Commercial/Residential zones as designated through the Master Planning process, including applicable recommendations for compatibility and design



How Attainable Housing would be implemented



Small Scale

- Zoning Text Amendment that makes small scale attainable housing 'permitted' in R-40, R-60, R-90 & R-200 in certain circumstances and in conformance with a pattern book

Medium Scale

- Zoning Text Amendment creates a new attainable housing optional method (AHOM) of development accessible for properties adjacent to defined growth corridors and larger centers of activity

Large Scale

- Master Plan processes would identify properties along corridors and designate appropriate commercial/residential zoning



Ensuring attainability in price

- The Planning Department continues to explore policies and tools to ensure developments are attainable in price
 - Allow more types of housing in certain zones given the impact of size on affordability
 - Limits to the size of units
 - Limits to the developable area of any property and the total amount of land that could be aggregated in each project, limiting total unit size

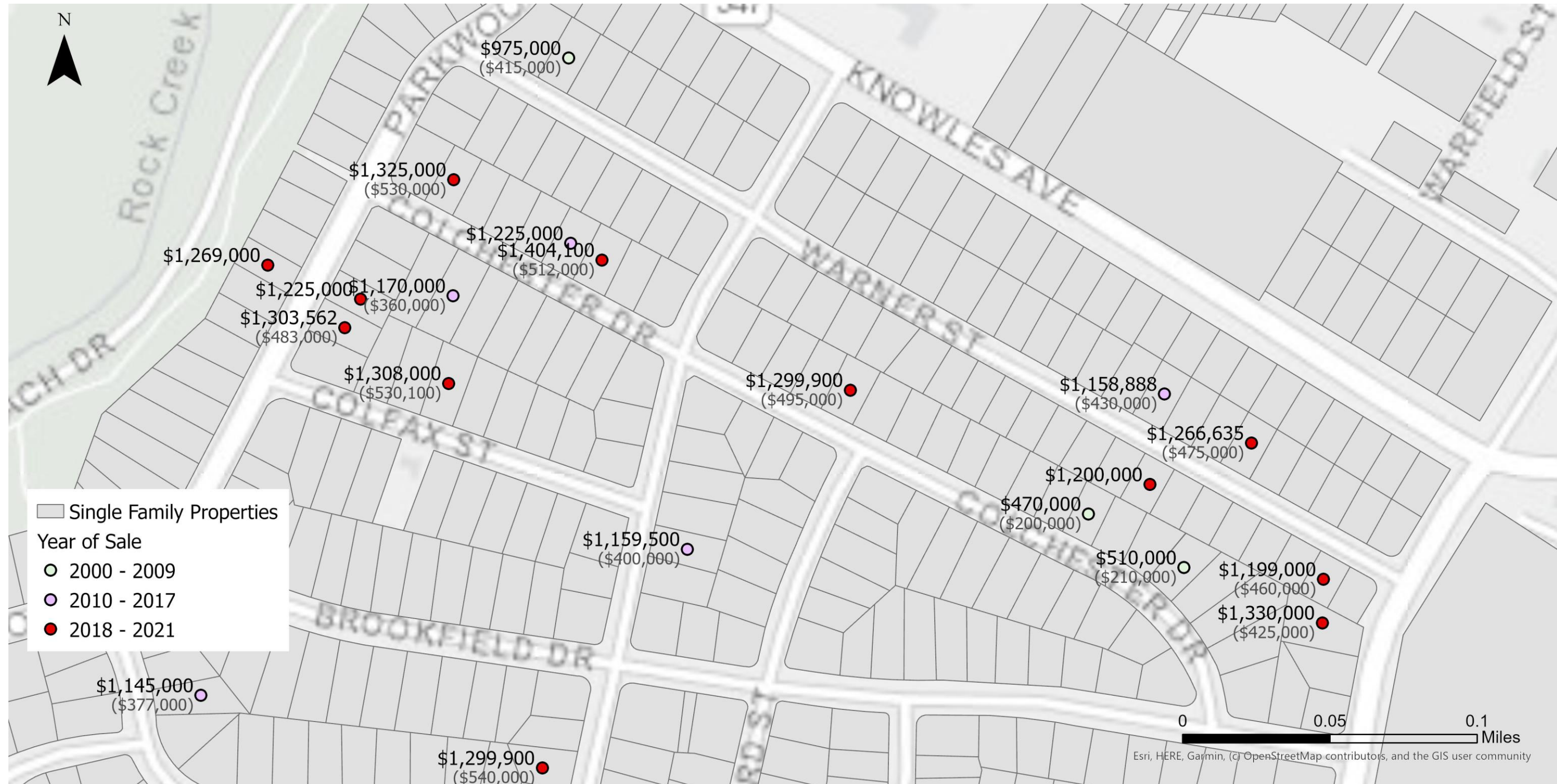


Attainable housing is a long-term goal, and will not happen over night

- We expect the addition of these housing types to be incremental and manageable.
- Mechanisms exist to mitigate infrastructure impact.
 - Contemplating focus on water and sewer and other infrastructure with 2024 update the Growth & Infrastructure Policy.



Sample neighborhood with active tear-down custom home market



24

Tear-Down-Custom Homes built/sold from 2015-2021 in larger neighborhood

\$850K

Average home sale 2015-2021

\$510K

Avg. value of properties acquired by home builders


\$1.31M



Average sale price of resulting custom homes

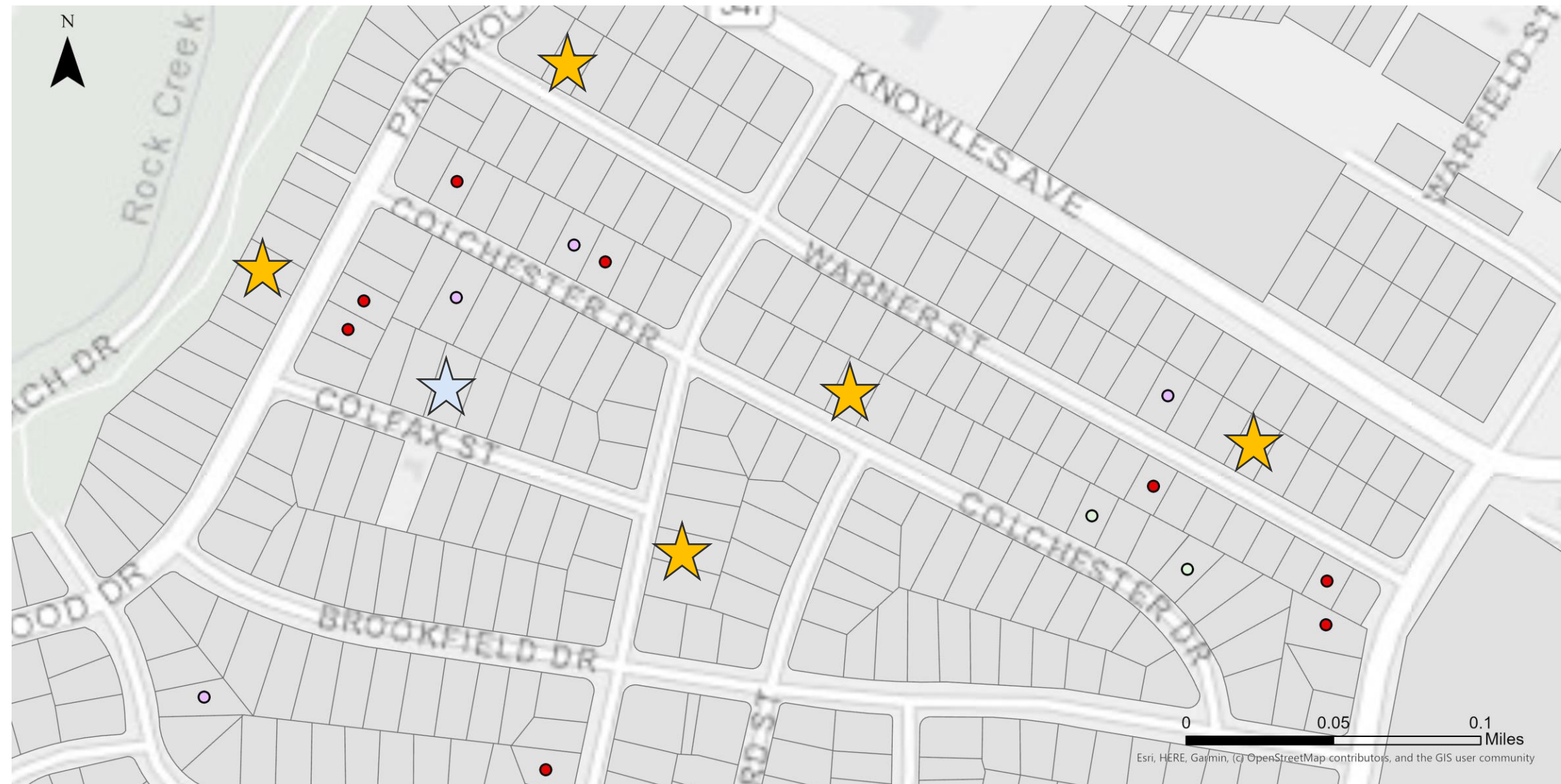


Limited impact if some of these homes were instead Attainable Housing

- 5% of tear-down-custom homes across 20-years were instead multi-unit: 1 property
- 30% of tear-down-custom homes become multi-unit: 6 properties

5% of 20 = 1 = 

30% = 6 =  + 



Attainable Housing Strategies Timeline



Montgomery Planning's
#HousingDay
 JUNE 14, 2021

Major Events/Milestones	
March 24	HEAT Meeting #1
March 29	Community Meeting #1
April 9	Virtual Office Hours
April 14	HEAT Meeting #2
April 21	Community Meeting #2
April 27	Virtual Office Hours
April 28	HEAT Meeting #3
May 13	Planning Board Briefing
May 19	HEAT Meeting #4
June 2	Community Meeting #3
June 3	Virtual Office Hours
June 14	#HousingDay on Twitter
June 24	Planning Board Briefing and Public Comments
July	Planning Board Worksessions
Fall/Winter	Potential Council Action



Stay Involved

Attend our next virtual office hours: Tomorrow (5-7 PM)
RSVP from the [AHS website](#)

Sign up to give public comment: June 24 (time TBD)
[Sign up to testify](#) 10 days before the meeting.

Sign up for the housing eLetter
Sign up link on the [AHS website](#)

Visit the AHS website:
<https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/housing/attainable-housing-strategies-initiative/>

Email your questions and comments:
Lisa.Govoni@montgomeryplanning.org
Jason.Sartori@montgomeryplanning.org

