



Montgomery Planning | Countywide Planning & Policy Division

Attainable Housing Strategies

Planning, Housing, and Parks Committee Briefing

June 24, 2024

Attainable Housing Strategies

- Prior [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.”
- Attainable Housing Strategies is the resulting effort, through which the prior Planning Board **prepared recommendations to allow the development of more diverse types of housing**, including [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 Reedy 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

Attainable Housing Strategies Goals

01

Increase opportunities to meet the county's diverse housing supply needs and obligations, as well as the county's economic development objectives.

02

Unravel the exclusionary aspects of the county's single-family residential zones to diversify the county's communities by diversifying the county's housing stock.

03

Create more opportunities for homeownership for more households in more parts of the county.

Why Now?

We still need to complete the **County Council request**.

Many jurisdictions, including some of our neighbors, have **adopted similar changes** putting us in good company.

Thrive Montgomery 2050 has been adopted, creating a framework and policy guidance for us on the topic of **diversifying our housing stock**.

Significant equity component. This is the **right thing to do**.

The county has a significant **housing supply issue**.

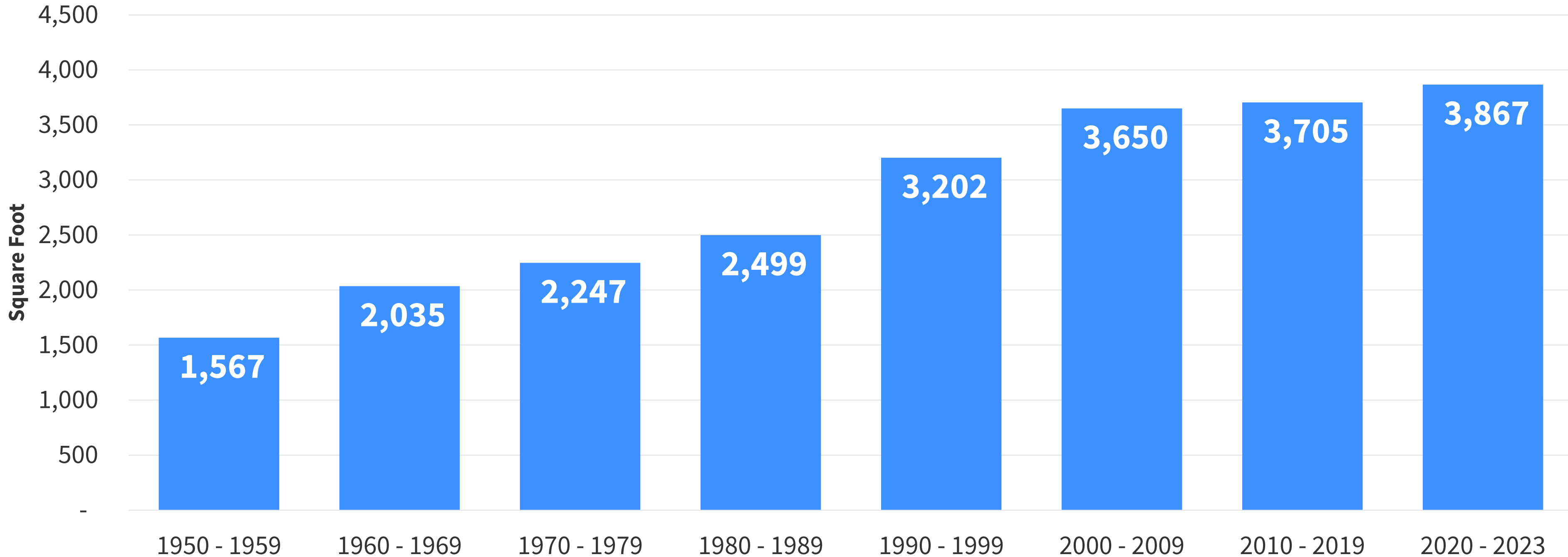
At the root of the initiative is a desire to make housing in Montgomery County more equitable and more inclusive.

- 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.
 - 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.



New single-family housing units are getting larger

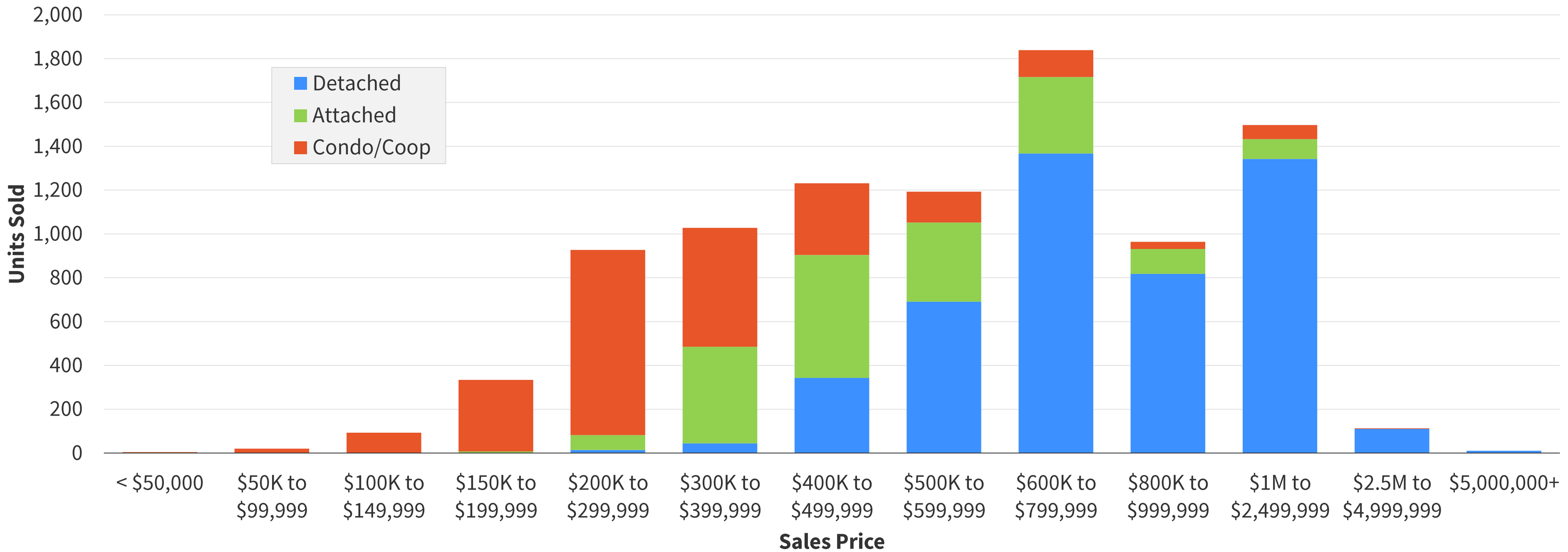
Single Family Detached Housing Units Average Gross Floor Area by Decade Built



Source: SDAT

In 2023, the average detached home in Montgomery County sold for \$970,000 compared to \$440,000 for attached structures

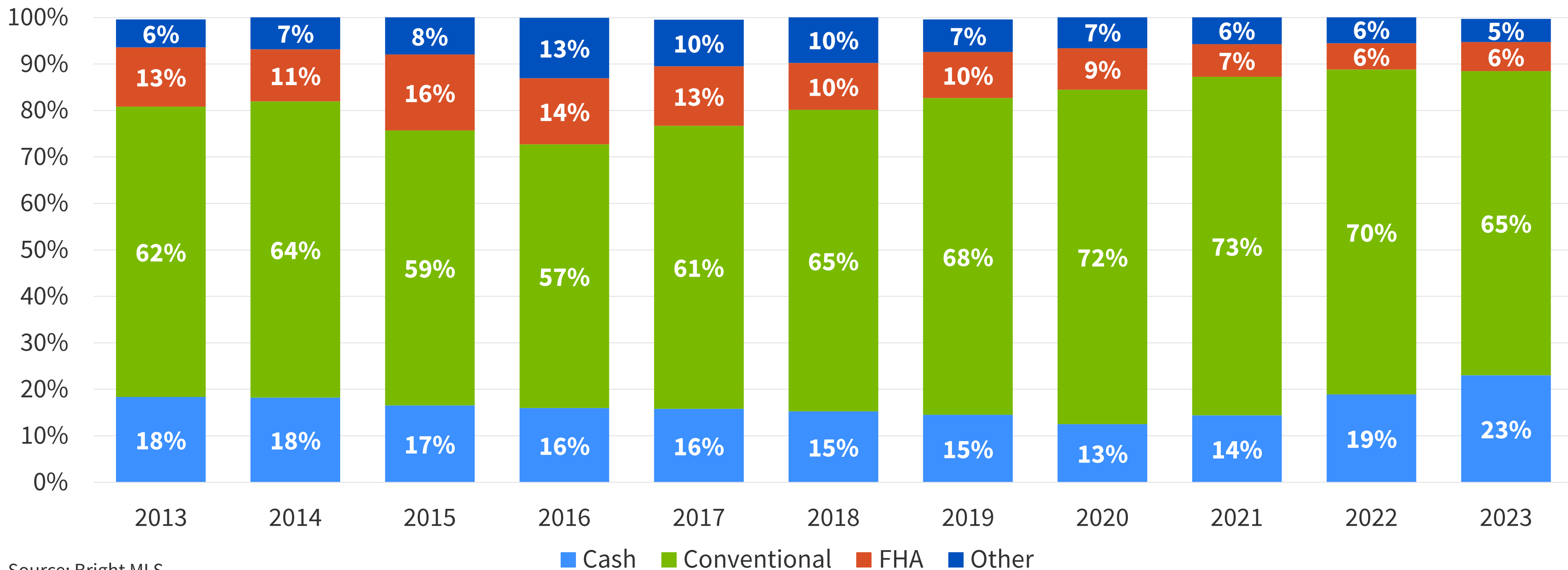
Units Sold by Sales Price Range and Unit Type (2023)



Source: Bright MLS

Cash financing is increasing – FHA loans are decreasing

Financing of Sold Units



Source: Bright MLS

Our Neighborhoods have become less Attainable and more Exclusive

\$108K

Median Income in 1996
(inflated to 2019 dollars)

\$110K

Median Income in 2019

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 for June 1996 and June 2019, US Census

Typical 1996 house value (inflated to 2019 dollars) and estimated income required to afford that house

Typical 2019 house value and estimated income required to afford that house

**Zip Code 20852
North Bethesda**

\$415K
\$77K



\$650K
\$120K

**Zip Code 20910
Silver Spring**

\$360K
\$67K



\$630K
\$117K

**Zip Code 20817
Bethesda**

\$665K
\$125K



\$1.01M
\$190K

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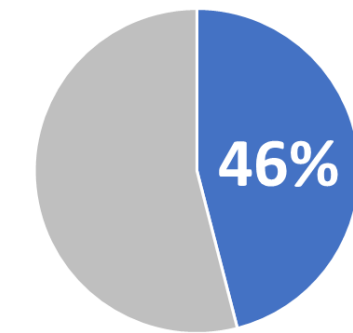
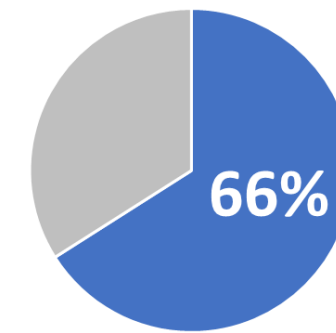
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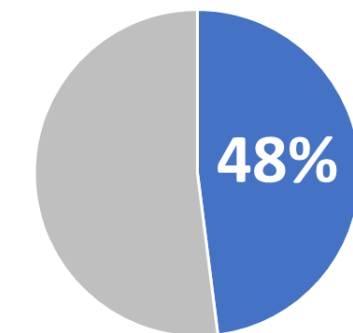
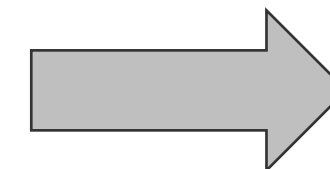
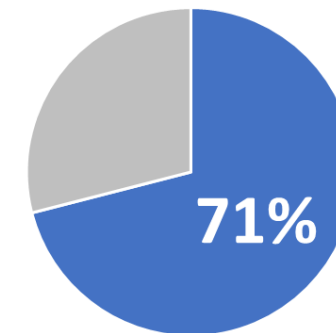
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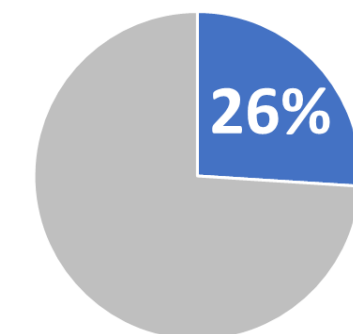
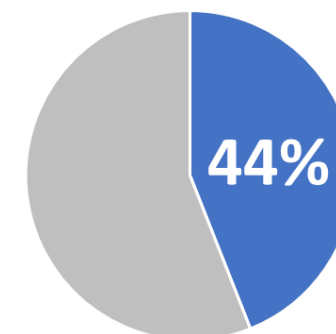
**Zip Code 20852
North Bethesda**



**Zip Code 20910
Silver Spring**



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Bethesda**



Our terms have evolved

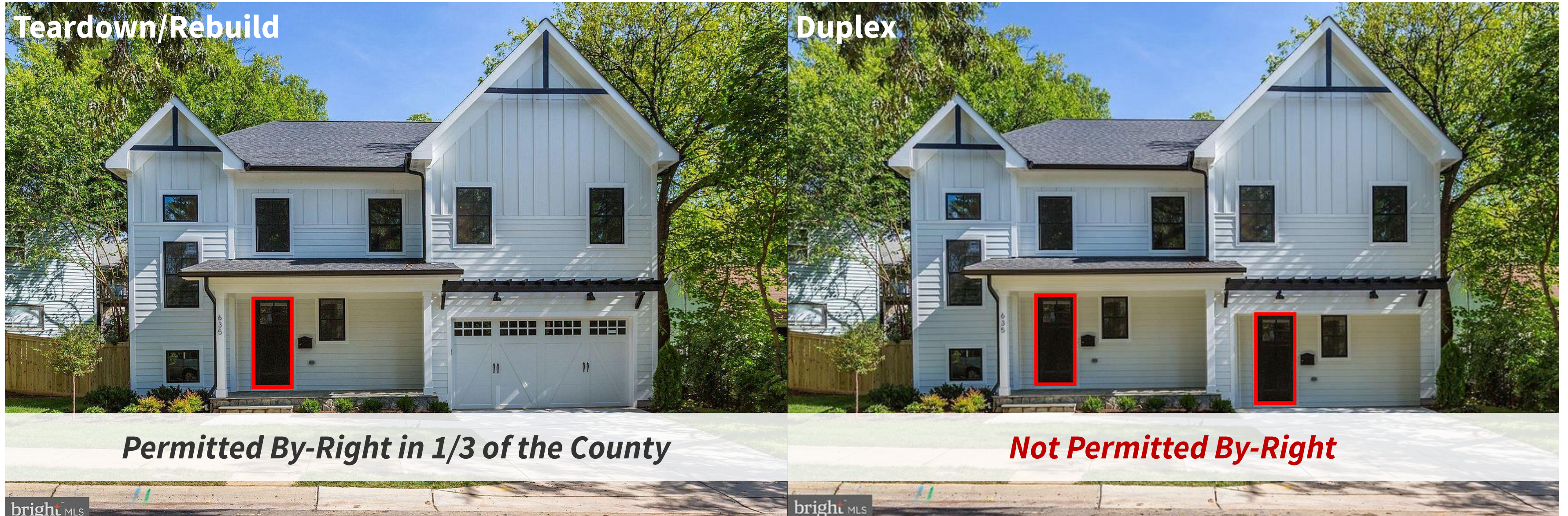
Missing Middle Housing

- 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.

More options, generally same character



Community Engagement

Engaging the community has been a key priority of AHS. Providing numerous opportunities and utilizing multiple engagement formats has allowed us to hear a wide variety of perspectives and to garner support for the AHS initiative.



- **25+** eLetters with regular project updates
- **2**-page explainer in **8** languages
- **1** “social media” day with historically high engagement rates
- **4** external stakeholder group meetings
- **15+** targeted stakeholder meetings (civic associations, NAIOP, etc.)
- **6** virtual public office hours
- **4** Planning Department hosted community meetings
- **1** expert panel discussion
- **2** informational videos
- **3** Planning Board listening sessions
- **11** work sessions with the Planning Board

Media coverage



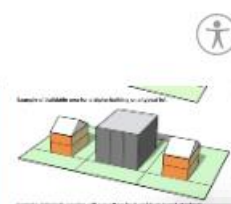
Montgomery Planning Board approves plan to allow multi-family home zoning changes

The plan would allow multi-family homes, like duplexes or triplexes, to be built on properties currently zoned for single-family homes.



Montgomery County may end single-family zoning to boost housing affordability

by Brad Bell | Thu, June 13th 2024 at 5:08 PM
Updated Fri, June 14th 2024 at 10:49 AM



Montgomery County plans to revamp zoning and allow multiplexes amid affordability crisis. (Credit: Montgomery County Planning Board)



Real Estate News & Development

Planning Board recommends changes to allow more housing options in single-family home zones

Initiative designed to increase county's 'missing middle' housing

by Elia Griffin June 14, 2024 9:56 am



County Planning Board Approves Attainable Housing Strategies Report

June 17, 2024



Plan To Loosen Single-Family Zoning Advances In Montgomery County

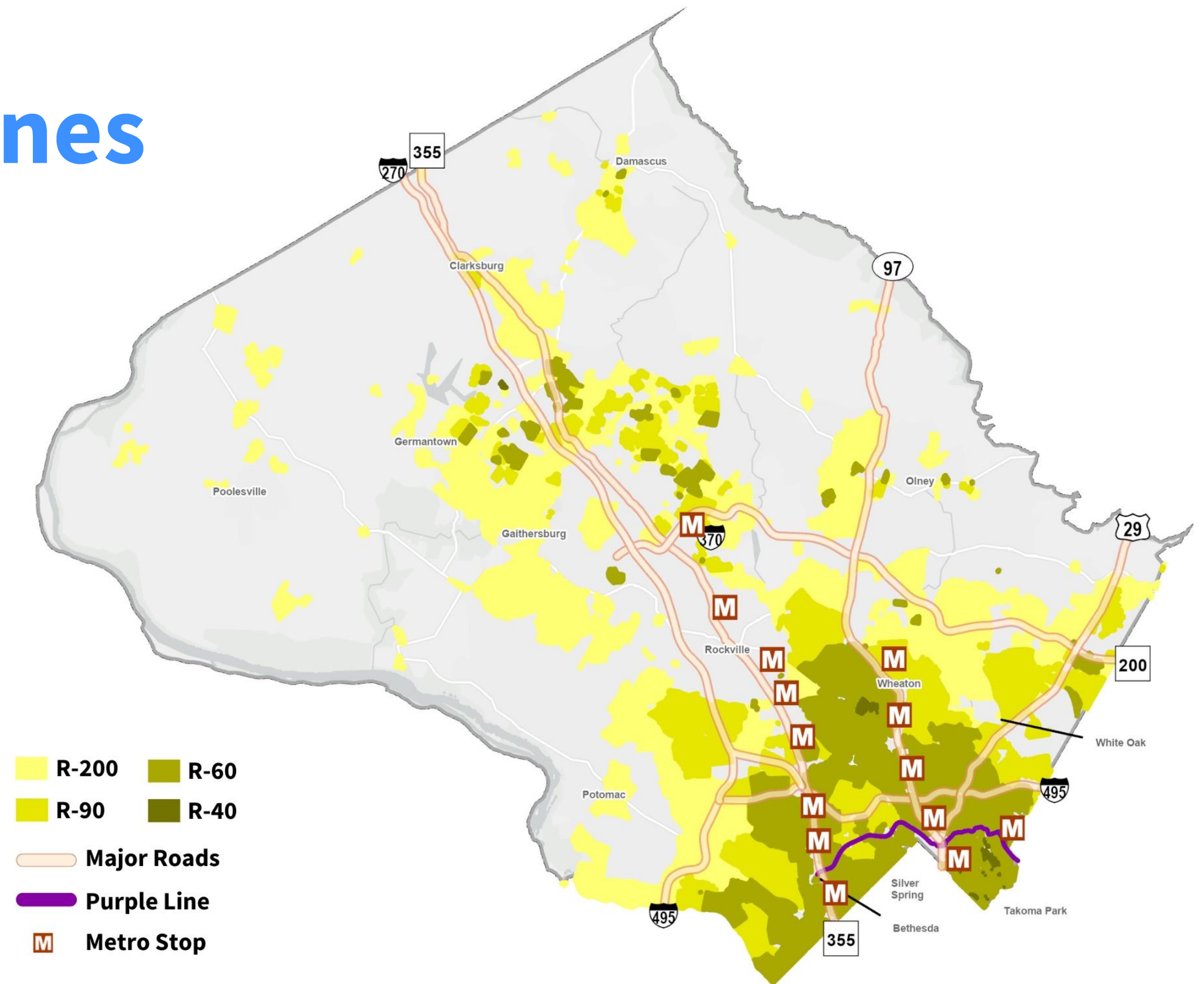


Home > Montgomery County, MD News > Montgomery County weighs changes...

Montgomery County weighs changes to zoning in single family neighborhoods to open housing opportunities

Recommendations

R-40, R-60, R-90 & R-200 Zones

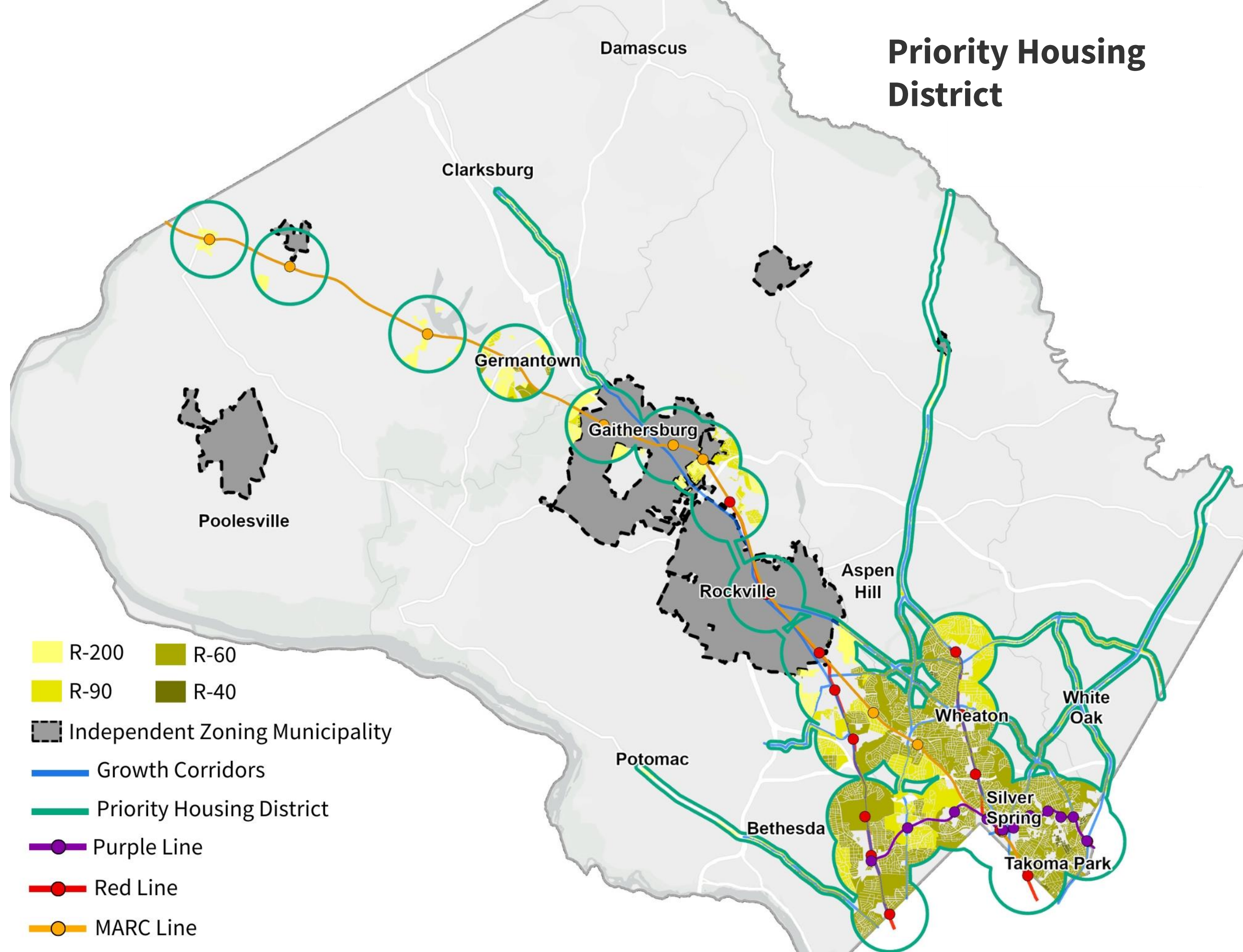


Priority Housing District

Priority Housing District

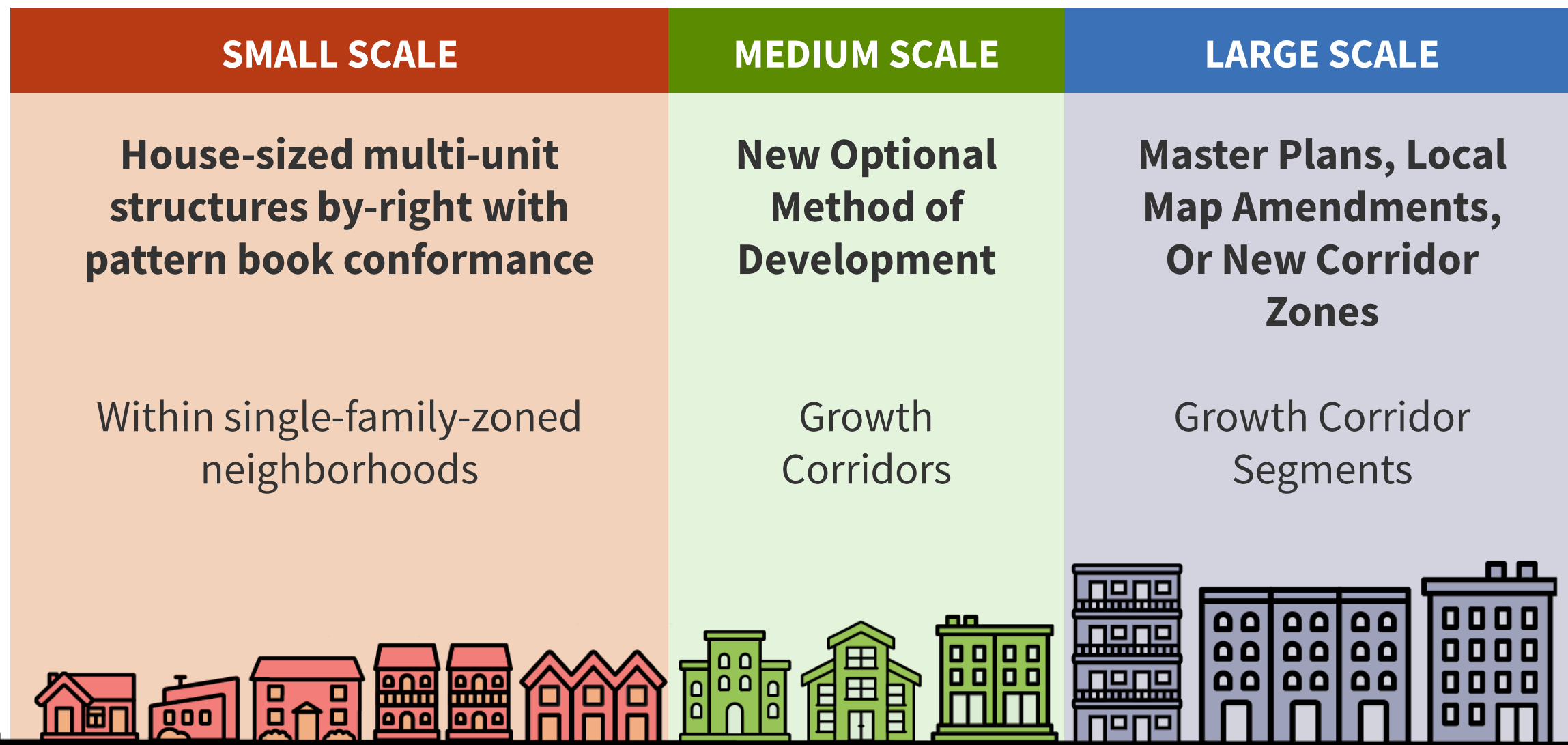
The Priority Housing District is a straight-line buffer of **1-mile** from Metrorail's Red Line, the Purple Line light rail, and MARC rail stations, plus **500 feet** from a *Thrive Montgomery 2050* Growth Corridor.

PHD allows additional unit density and reduces parking standards.



3

Scales Recommended Tools Geographic Targets



Small Scale



What	Where	How
<p>House-scale buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes that are of a similar size as existing detached houses. 2-2.5 stories tall. 	<p>In the R-40, R-60, and R-90 Zones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duplexes and triplexes everywhere, quadplexes in the PHD. <p>In the R-200 Zone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duplexes everywhere, triplexes and quadplexes in the PHD. 	<p>By-Right</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On a recorded lot. Building permit from DPS, checking for conformance with a Pattern Book.
<p>Standards</p> <p>Similar to Detached Houses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No changes proposed for building height, setbacks, lot coverage. Some reductions in on-site vehicle parking. 	<p>Implementation</p> <p>Zoning Text Amendment(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modify use standards to allow duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes by right with conformance to a pattern book. Modify development standards to accommodate new building types. 	

Medium Scale



What	Where	How
<p>Moderate Density</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Townhouses, stacked flats, small apartments. 3-4 stories tall. 	<p>In the R-60 and R-90 Zones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within 500 feet of a <i>Thrive Montgomery 2050</i> identified Growth Corridor. Recommended for the AHOM or a Residential Floating Zone in a master plan. 	<p>Optional Method with Site Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Administrative Site Plan process for projects with 19 or fewer dwelling units. Existing Site Plan process for projects with 20 or more dwelling units.
<p>Standards</p> <p>Similar to MPDU Optional Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced setbacks, increased site coverage, requirement for public open space. 	<p>Implementation</p> <p>Zoning Text Amendment(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the Attainable Housing Optional Method of Development (AHOM) Permit AHOM in the R-60 and R-90 zones within 500 feet of Growth Corridors. 	

Large Scale



What	Where	How
<p>Multi-Story, Multi-family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stacked flats, townhouses, Live/work, small apartments, large apartments. 4+ stories tall. 	<p>Growth Corridors and Centers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Located along the <i>Thrive Montgomery 2050</i> Growth Corridors, and in and around centers of activity. 	<p>Preliminary/Site Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preliminary and Site Plan process. Same as how larger residential developments are approved today.
Standards		Implementation
<p>Underlying Zones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow applicable standards of the zones (Multi-Unit or CR zones). Following any recommendations from design guidelines or Overlay Zones. 		<p>Master Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Master Plan process to identify opportunities for more intensive residential uses. Local Map Amendments to rezone property outside of a master plan Future Corridor Floating Zones.

Parking

AHS recommends parking reductions, based on location and availability of street parking.

- Generally greater parking reductions closer to transit (inside PHD) and where street parking is available.

Zone	Outside Priority Housing District		Inside Priority Housing District	
	No Street Parking	Yes Street Parking	No Street Parking	Yes Street Parking
R-200	0%	50%	50%	75%
R-90	0%	50%	50%	75%
R-60	0%	50%	50%	75%
R-40	0%	50%	50%	75%

- Reduce parking by 50% in the R-40, R-60, R-90 and R-200 zones outside the PHD where on street parking is available, and inside the PHD where on street parking is not available.
- Reduce parking by 75% in the R-40, R-60, R-9 and R-200 zones inside the PHD where on street parking is available.

Pattern Book

Small-Scale Attainable Housing created by-right shall comply with the standards of a pattern book.

- Implemented at the building permit stage by DPS staff.
- Removes arbitrary terms such as “character” and “compatibility” from the evaluation criteria.
- Ensures parking is provided but does not diminish the public realm.
- Ensures new housing maintains “house-scale” in size, and includes elements like porches, stoops, and lead walks.

Pattern Book Desired Outcomes

- Lay out a clear path for getting building permits
- One-stop resource for all requirements for building attainable housing within each zone
- Easy to use tool to review permit applications
- Facilitate production of housing that adds value to neighborhoods



Pattern Book Goals

AVOID



- Unsafe walking and rolling conditions due to unnecessary curb cuts.
- Excessive asphalt for parking and driveways, contributing to heat island effect and flooding.
- Unattractive buildings with complicated massing and expensive building details.
- Lack of porches, stoops, and front yards suitable for social interaction.

ENSURE



- Safe and attractive residential streets with trees, landscaping and sidewalks.
- Adequate parking that does not negatively impact safe walking, rolling, and transit access.
- Simple buildings that look good and are economical to build.
- Porches, stoops, and front yards that encourage social interaction in a Complete Community setting.

Pattern Book

The Pattern Book shall provide recommendations that clearly articulate:

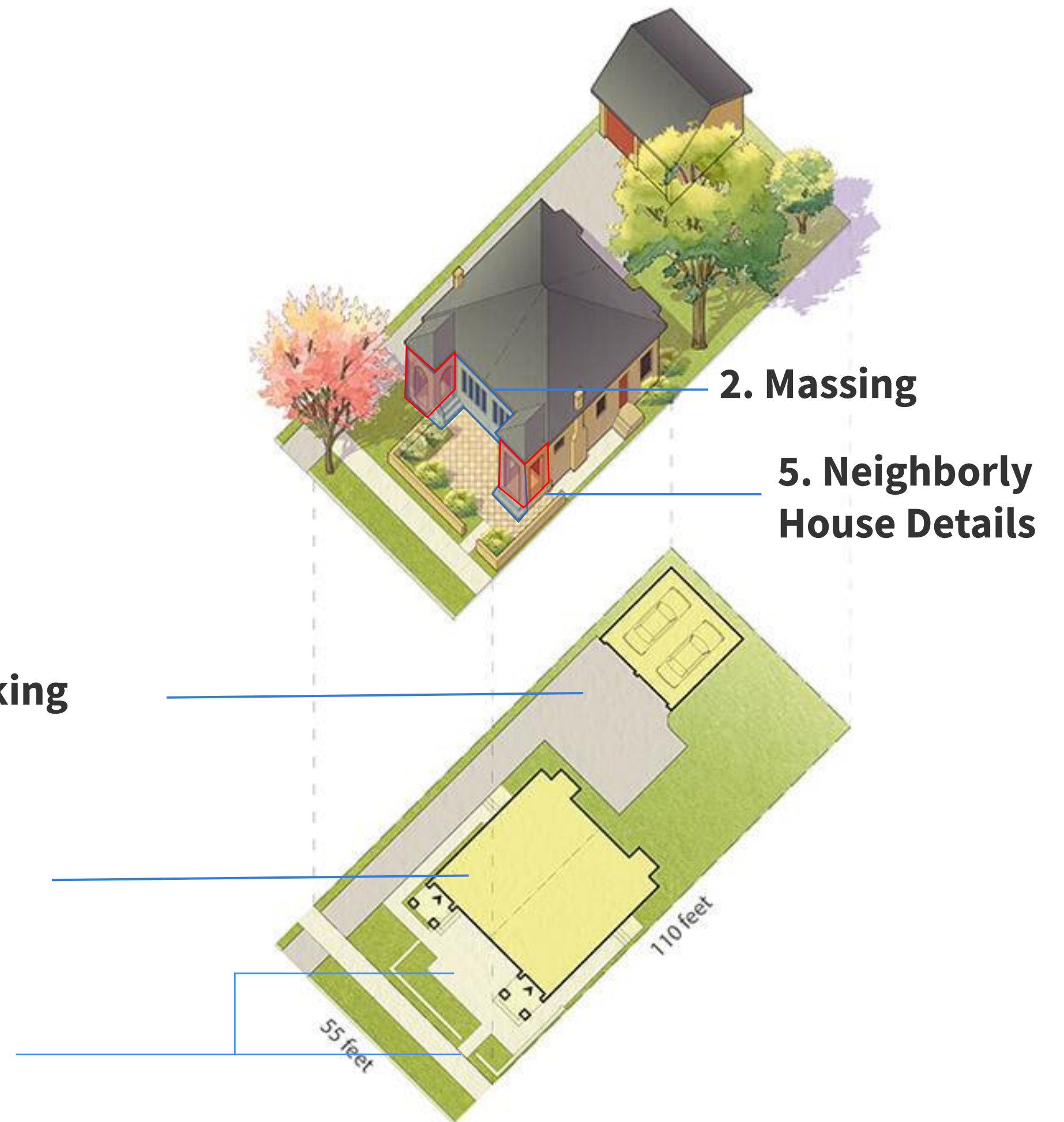
1. Building Placement

3. Frontage design

4. On-Site parking

2. Massing

5. Neighborly House Details



Stakeholder Concerns and Other Topics to Consider

**Demands of
infrastructure**

**Compatibility
concerns**

**Actual
attainability**

Parking

**Gentrification
and
displacement**

**Stormwater
Management**

Role of HOAs

**Role of
Municipalities**

Next Steps for AHS

**June
2024**

Brief the PHP Committee.

**July
2024**

PHP Committee work sessions for deeper review of the AHS recommendations and policy guidance.

**Fall
2024**

Potential introduction and review of a Zoning Text Amendment implementing elements of AHS recommendations.

Thank You!

Duplex Zones

