

# ATTAINABLE HOUSING STRATEGIES



## AT-A-GLANCE



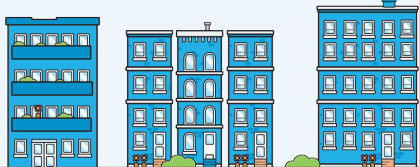
With housing prices skyrocketing in recent years and fewer options to choose from, current and prospective Montgomery County residents are looking elsewhere to live. This trend places the county at an economic disadvantage in the Washington, DC region due to losses in tax revenue and prospective workforce talent. At the request of the Montgomery County Council, the Montgomery County Planning Department developed the Attainable Housing Strategies (AHS) Initiative to recommend ways to increase opportunities for more diverse housing in Montgomery County.

The project's goals were simple: to better meet the county's diverse housing needs, make neighborhoods less exclusionary, and create more opportunities for homeownership. Large apartment buildings don't work in the context of

every neighborhood and more than a third of the county is still zoned exclusively for single-family housing. AHS provides an opportunity to look at our zoning laws and see if there is a middle ground to increase the number of units that can be built while maintaining the scale of many of our neighborhoods.

The project began in 2021 and after analysis and conversations with the community, planners have recommended a set of zoning modifications that would give property owners the option to build structures such as duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, small apartment buildings, and other diverse types of housing to be built within single-family zoned areas in the county. The Montgomery County Planning Board approved these recommendations in June 2024.

# SCALE MATTERS

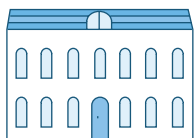
SMALL SCALE	MEDIUM SCALE	LARGE SCALE
Within single family zoned neighborhoods with pattern book conformance.	New optional method of development allowed along growth corridors.	Through the master plan process or creation of a new zone.
Duplexes, Triplexes, Quadplexes	Stacked Flats, Small Apartment Buildings	Mixed-use Live/work Buildings, Stacked Flats, Small Apartment
2-2.5 Stories	3-4 Stories	4 Stories and Above
		



## Small Scale

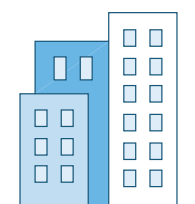
Small scale attainable housing includes house-sized duplexes and multiplexes (triplexes and quadplexes). Small scale attainable housing is what will be found in single family neighborhoods. The Planning Board recommends allowing, by-right with pattern book conformance, small scale attainable housing as follows:

- duplexes everywhere in the R-40, R-60, R-90, and R-200 zones;
- triplexes everywhere in the R-40, R-60, and R-90 zones, and in the R-200 zone within a Priority Housing District; and
- quadplexes in the R-40, R-60, R-90, and R-200 zones within the Priority Housing District



## Medium Scale

Medium scale is a Attainable Housing Optional Method (AHOM) of development that will be found along growth corridors. The Planning Board supports the AHOM and middle density attainable housing. The intent of the AHOM is to allow greater density and development flexibility in exchange for attainability. The Planning Board recommended 1,500 SF as the maximum average unit size and a gross density of 10 units/acre for the R-90 zone, and 13 units/acre for the R-60 zone.



## Large Scale

Large scale attainable housing includes buildings such as four to six story apartment buildings or condos. Large scaled attainable housing will require additional consideration through the master planning process to rezone properties along the county's primary growth corridors.



Small scale attainable housing is what would be allowed in single-family neighborhoods. It refers to multi-unit buildings such as duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes that maintain the general size and scale of single-family homes in existing neighborhoods.

Medium scale and large scale attainable housing structures have at least three to four stories and would be allowed along the county's growth corridors, as defined by *Thrive Montgomery 2050*.



## CONSIDERATIONS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD FORM

We love that you love your neighborhood. The AHS recommendations require new small scale attainable housing comply with elements of a pattern book. The pattern book's main goal is to facilitate the construction of duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes that maintain a house-scale size and form. This guide will graphically illustrate the development standards for the underlying residential zones and provide multiple options for building placement and orientation, massing, frontage design, and parking layout based on a variety of lot configurations and sizes.

### What areas of the county will this apply to?

AHS applies to the county's R-40, R-60, R-90, and R-200 zones. Small scale AHS is recommended to be by right throughout the zones. Medium scale is recommended along the county's growth corridors. Large scale AHS would also be found in growth corridors and would be applied through local area master plans.

### What's next?

Following the Planning Board's approval, the Attainable Strategies Initiative's final report was transmitted to the Montgomery County Council for consideration. During the summer of 2024, the County Council's Planning, Housing, and Parks Committee will hold work sessions to review and possibly refine the recommendations, with the hopes of new legislation to implement the zoning changes being introduced in fall of 2024.

### Will this reduce my home's value?

According to a 2020 study by the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and Opticos Design, areas with a mix of housing types tend to have more stable home values than areas with only single-family houses. AHS was developed to give residents opportunities to not be priced out of the county that they call home.

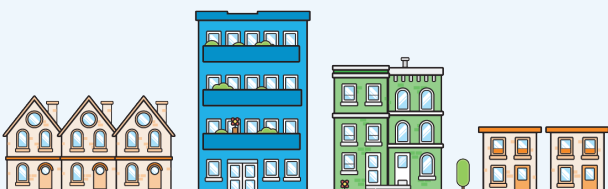
### Is this affordable housing?

No. The prices of the newly built homes will be determined by the market.

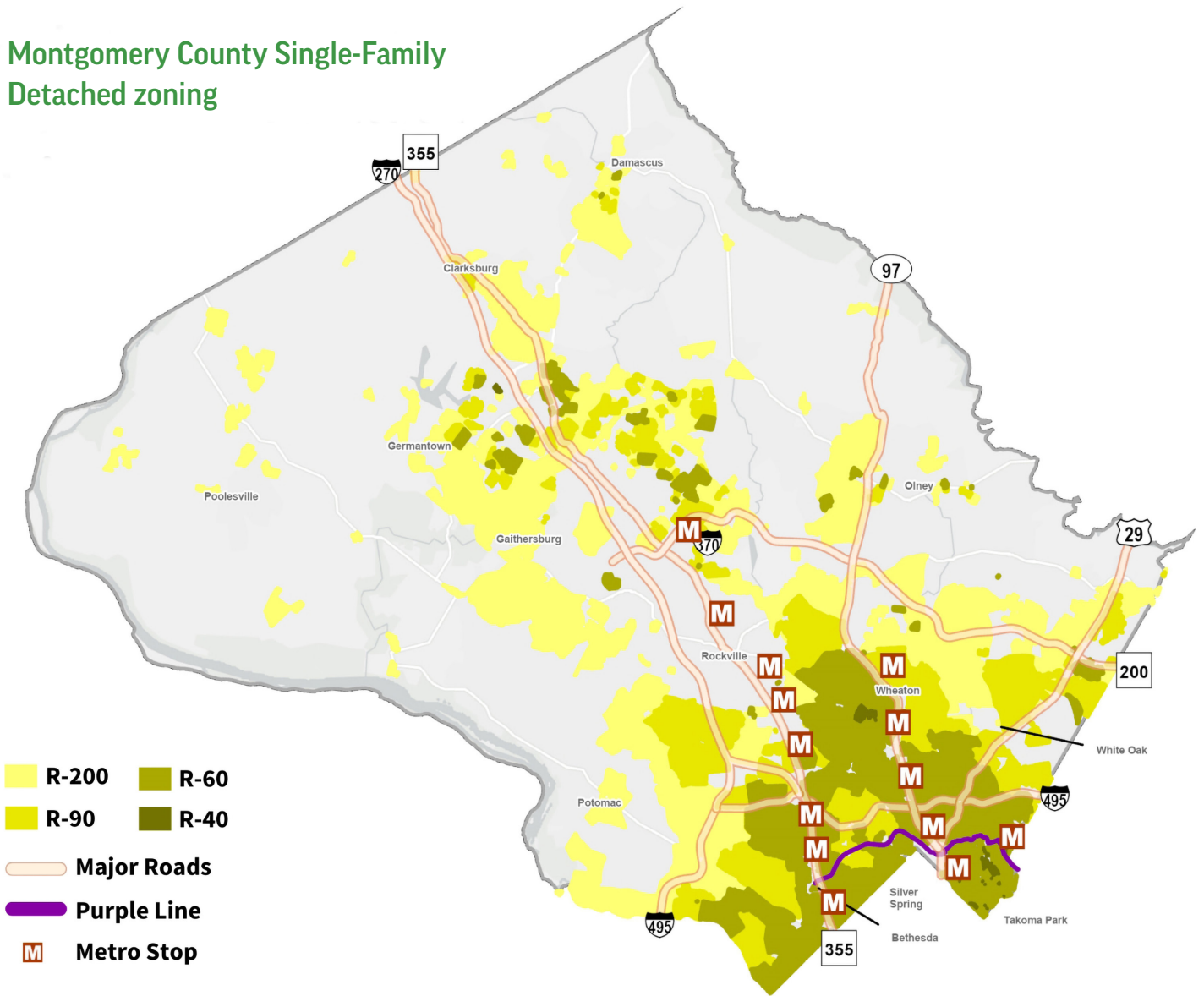
### Will AHS lead to school overcrowding and parking issues in my neighborhood?

Regarding schools, we already have tools to help mitigate this. Montgomery County's Growth and Infrastructure Policy (GIP) ensures our public facilities, like schools, are keeping pace with new development. Attainable housing typologies will also pay impact taxes to help fund infrastructure.

AHS does not eliminate parking. It will continue to allow the market to respond to parking needs. The pattern book will ensure new housing maintains "house-scale" in size, and includes elements like porches, stoops, and lead walks. The pattern book recommendations will also include creative parking solutions that are environmentally appropriate and ensure that car ports and garages don't dominate the site.



# Montgomery County Single-Family Detached zoning



## Small Scale

Duplexes everywhere in the R-40, R-60, R-90, and R-200 zones

Triplexes everywhere in the R-40, R-60, and R-90 zones, and in the R-200 zone within a Priority Housing District

Quadplexes in the R-40, R-60, R-90, and R-200 zones within the Priority Housing District



## Medium Scale

1,500 SF as the maximum average unit size and a gross density of 10 units/acre for the R-90 zone

13 units/acre for the R-60 zone



## Large Scale

Requires additional consideration through the master planning process