

September 2021



Dear Housing eLetter subscribers,

There is a lot that is happening with housing in Montgomery County! With the Montgomery County Planning Board's August recess coming to an end, [Attainable Housing Strategies](#) Work Sessions are picking back up. We wanted to share important resources and information with you to keep you in the loop. In this eLetter, we are:

- Recapping the Planning Board's first two Attainable Housing Strategies Work Sessions from July
- Providing the Attainable Housing Strategies Work Session schedule for this fall
- Previewing the Planning Board's Attainable Housing Strategies Work Session on September 9
- Highlighting how Thrive Montgomery 2050 addresses income-restricted affordable housing

## Recap of First two Planning Board Attainable Housing Strategies Work Sessions

The Montgomery Planning Board held two work sessions on the Attainable Housing Strategies initiative on July 8 and 22. The Planning Board made the following decisions during these sessions:

- **Definition and scale:** The Planning Board was supportive of the goals of the initiative following a refinement that added more direct language and included a focus on economic development. The Planning Board also supported a definition of attainable housing that includes a focus on the intent of attainable housing.
- **Thrive Growth map:** The Planning Board was not supportive of connecting the AHS recommendations to the Thrive Growth map, given that it is not yet adopted. Instead the boundary of zoning blocks will be used.
- **Applicable Residential Zones:** The Planning Board recommended allowing, by-right, house scale:
  - duplexes in the R-40, R-60, R-90, and R-200 zones;
  - triplexes in the R-40, R-60, and R-90 zones; and
  - quadplexes in the Priority Housing District.
- **Priority Housing District:** The Planning Board was supportive of defining the Priority Housing District, in which quadplexes would be allowed and parking requirements would be reduced. The Board defined the Priority Housing District using a straight-line buffer of 1-mile from Red line, Purple Line, and MARC stations, plus 500 ft from a BRT Corridor plus River Road and Connecticut Avenue.
- **Attainable Housing Optional Method (AHOM):** The Planning Board was supportive of the idea of the AHOM and middle density attainable housing, but asked staff to come back with options for applicable geography.
- **Existing Optional Methods:** The Planning Board agreed to update the existing MPDI and

- **Existing Optional Methods:** The Planning Board agreed to update the existing IM, DO and Cluster Optional Methods of Development to allow the use of triplex and quadplex buildings.
- **Pattern Book:** The details of the Pattern Book are still being worked out, including regulatory vs. advisory, types of housing it applies to, and geographic applicability.
- **Product Type:** Per guidance from the Planning Board, staff will produce draft Zoning Text Amendments to transmit to the County Council for introduction. The ZTAs would detail the recommendations as edits to Chapter 59 of County Code.

## Attainable Housing Strategies Work Session schedule

There are four Attainable Housing Strategies Work Sessions scheduled for this fall during the following Planning Board meetings:

- September 9
- October 7
- October 21
- November 4

The community is invited to submit written comments to the Planning Board via email at [mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org). You can consult the Planning Board's [agenda](#), posted 10 days before the meeting for more information. [Watch the meeting online via live stream or review previous meetings on demand.](#)

## Preview of Attainable Housing Strategies Planning Board Work Session #3

The third Attainable Housing Strategies Planning Board Work Session will take place on September 9. During the session, Montgomery Planning staff plan to discuss and seek Planning Board agreement or direction on the following:

- Defining new concepts for the zoning code
- Development standards for new housing products in the standard method (by-right)
- Potential role of a Pattern Book

You can view the [staff report](#) and watch the meeting [online via live stream](#) on the Planning Board website.

## How does Thrive Montgomery 2050 address income-restricted affordable housing?





As mentioned in [the Thrive Explained blog post on the topic](#), while much has been said about Thrive Montgomery 2050's proposal to encourage more Missing Middle Housing types, this recommendation is one of many in the plan. [Thrive Montgomery 2050](#) contains wide-ranging policies that address both income-restricted and naturally occurring affordable housing and attainable housing. These policies require the refinement or creation of new financial, zoning, and or policy tools.

Specific examples from the [Planning Board Draft](#) of Thrive Montgomery 2050 that address income-restricted and naturally occurring affordable housing include:

- Calibrate the applicability of the Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program and other affordable housing programs to provide price-regulated units appropriate for income levels ranging from deeply affordable to workforce.
- Identify and allocate additional revenue for the Housing Initiative Fund (HIF) to meet the needs of low-income households.
- Refine regulatory tools and financial incentives with the goal of avoiding a net loss of market-rate and income-restricted affordable housing stock without erecting disincentives for the construction of additional units.
- Expand existing programs designed to increase access to homeownership, especially among low-income residents, people of color, and young adults; create new programs and entities such as community land trusts to maintain long term affordable homeownership opportunities.

Thrive Montgomery 2050 is currently with the Montgomery County Council's Planning, Housing, and Economic Development ([PHED](#)) [Committee](#). This committee held three work sessions in July, and it will conduct a series of four additional Thrive Montgomery 2050 Work Sessions on:

- September 20
- September 27
- October 4
- October 11

For more information on this update to the General Plan, please visit [Thrive Montgomery 2050's Housing](#) webpage.

## Questions, comments?

Contact Montgomery Planning staff:

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## About Montgomery Planning Housing

Montgomery Planning is committed to supporting the development of various housing types to meet the needs of our growing and increasingly diverse population through various plans, initiatives, studies, and events. This eletter includes news and updates from Montgomery Planning on items related to housing in Montgomery County.

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