

ATTACHMENT # 1

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING ACTIVITY
IN THE DEPARTMENT**

PREPARED BY

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING**

SUMMARY OF HOUSING ACTIVITY IN THE DEPARTMENT

Overview

Montgomery County has long been a nationally recognized leader in affordable housing. The County's 28 year old Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program remains the model for new inclusionary zoning programs nation-wide. The County was one of the first to introduce mixed income housing to create new units as federal financing became increasingly scarce. The County's transferable development rights (TDR) program is one of the most successful in the country, generating housing densities in appropriate areas, while preserving rural open space.

The Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning has had a major role in developing and implementing these programs and other affordable housing initiatives through the master plan and development review processes, while balancing other pressing public needs. Through its planning and zoning roles the Department has worked to weave housing for all its residents and workers into an attractive, livable environment.

In recent years, the challenges have increased. Rapid job growth, dwindling federal funding for housing, declining greenfield development generating less housing and especially fewer MPDUs, and waning supplies of developable land have intensified the need for housing, especially affordable housing.

In response, the Department has contributed to the development of a new housing policy for Montgomery County and is currently pursuing a multi-faceted program to meet these challenges. The blueprint and this series of studies are designed to help appointed and elected officials better understand the County's housing needs. They suggest policies and programs to address the many emerging issues and identify areas for further exploration.

This effort joins other recent Department initiatives to improve the County's housing availability for all of its households. These include:

- Recent changes to the MPDU law to expand the program in a variety of ways, for example to include 35 to 50 unit subdivisions, and to increase the feasibility of MPDUs in the burgeoning number of new high-rise buildings in the County
- An affordable housing chapter in every master plan
- Development of a specific percentage affordable housing goal for master plans

- Text amendments stemming from the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite to facilitate senior housing, such as removing the need for a special exception for this use in multi-family and mixed use zones
- On-going emphasis in the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite to provide for affordable housing
- A study of need for senior housing to better understand and accommodate the County's requirements
- A process to expedite the review process for affordable housing project applications