

# HOUSING PLAN

## **Goal:**

*Provide a mix of housing types in Olney, and increase opportunities for affordable housing and housing for the elderly in southern Olney.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the County's General Plan, the Olney area is considered a suburban housing resource. Although the single-family detached house is the predominant housing type making up 73 percent of all dwelling units, Olney has a variety of housing types including townhouses and multi-family garden apartments. Townhouses at 23 percent constitute the second largest type and exceed the Countywide average of almost 18 percent. Multi-family dwelling units account for about 4 percent of Olney's housing stock. Most of the townhouses and apartments are located around the Town Center in higher density zones such as PD-7, PD-9, R-30, and RT-12.5. Townhouses are also located in other locations in the Northeast and Southwest Quadrants, mostly as a result of the transfer of development rights from the Agricultural Reserve in Olney. In 1980, there were only 592 townhouses. By 1997, the number of townhouses had increased to 2,450 units, and there were 380 multi-family units.

Olney's high quality of life makes it a very attractive location for housing. This desirability results in higher housing values. The average cost of a new single-family house in Olney in 2001 was \$555,196 compared to the County's \$436,928. The average price of an existing house in Olney for the same period was \$346,000 (Countywide it was \$289,000). The average for an existing townhouse in Olney was \$183,950 compared to the County's \$155,800.

## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

The Montgomery County Housing Policy defines affordable housing as any general housing, or elderly housing, offered for sale or rent at a price equal to or less than that affordable to a household with an annual income of less than 65 percent of the County's median income. The County's median household income in 2002 was \$78,647.

Affordable housing depends upon public programs and initiatives to keep up with the demand. One of the cornerstones of the County's housing policy is the Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program adopted by the County in 1974 to increase the supply of moderately priced housing in Montgomery County. Originally designed for developments of 50 or more units, the program now requires that developments of 35 units or more, in areas zoned for lots of less than one acre, provide a minimum of 12.5 percent of the units to moderate-income households. The units may be multi-family or single-family and for either sale or rent. They remain in the program for 10 years. To be eligible, a household generally must be below 65 percent of the median income for each household size. Some of the MPDUs remain within the affordable range even after they are no longer price controlled, because they are generally smaller than market rate units with fewer amenities.

As of 1999, there are approximately 421 affordable housing units in Olney. Of these, 191 are price-controlled privately owned MPDUs, 129 are owned by the County's Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) and other non-profit entities, and the remaining units were built with some other form of public subsidy either as regular family units or elderly housing. Two areas around the Town Center with affordable units are the Town Center Place on Morningwood Drive and Tamarron Apartments on Appomattox Avenue. Other units are scattered around in southern Olney as part of large subdivisions that have a mix of single-family and multi-family units. Two affordable elderly housing projects are: Marian Assisted Living on Georgia Avenue south of Gold Mine Road and Andrew Kim House on MD 108 near the Olney Theater.

The share of affordable housing for different planning areas in the County varies. It also fluctuates over time as new affordable units are created and older units age and move out of the programs that made them affordable. Goshen and the rural area with 0.4 percent each have the lowest amount of affordable housing as part of their overall housing stock whereas Germantown with 8.1 percent has the highest. Olney is in the lower half of this range, 3.8 percent.

This Plan supports the County housing policy of creating an adequate supply of affordable housing, including elderly housing, throughout the County for those living and working in Montgomery County, and identifies areas suitable for affordable housing. It recommends zoning and land use changes that have the potential to create more than 230 affordable housing units. Recommended zoning changes for large, vacant and redevelopable properties such as the Mess property, Norbeck Country Club property, and some properties in the Southeast Quadrant could provide moderately priced housing units if they are subject to the MPDU law. The Golden Bear area, bounded by Georgia Avenue, Norbeck Road and the Intercounty Connector (ICC) right-of-way, is suitable for rezoning to higher densities with the potential for MPDUs. The County-owned property on Bowie Mill Road is also suitable for affordable housing. All or a portion of the County-owned property of approximately 11 acres on Emory Lane could also be considered for affordable housing if it is not needed for the ICC. These properties have the potential to produce more than 85 MPDUs in the Master Plan Area outside the Town Center. In addition, the MPCS's 18.5-acre school site on Cashell Road, currently reserved for Oakdale Junior High School, would be suitable for affordable housing if it is not needed for a school use.

In the Town Center, the proposed land use and zoning changes have the potential to create up to 300 housing units. Although the larger shopping center properties are more likely to accommodate housing in mixed-use redevelopment projects, smaller properties may also be able to develop as residential or mixed-use developments with housing. At 15 percent MPDUs, the proposed 300 units in the Town Center could have up to 45 MPDUs. In addition, the Plan supports the proposed elderly housing project of approximately 100 affordable housing on the Finneyfrock property, located on the east side of Georgia Avenue and north of MD 108.

**Recommendations:**

1. **Allow mixed-use development with residential units in the Town Center. Provide flexibility in development standards to encourage mixed-use developments to use full bonus provisions of the MPDU law.**
2. **Support new affordable housing as part of the cluster developments on large properties in the Southeast Quadrant in accordance with Chapter 25-A of the County Code.**
3. **Rezone the area south of the ICC right-of-way to allow higher density residential development with MPDUs.**
4. **Use the 32-acre County-owned site on Bowie Mill Road for housing.**
5. **Support an affordable elderly housing project of approximately 100 units on the Finneyfrock property in the Town Center.**

**SENIOR HOUSING**

The population of persons aged 65 and older is steadily growing in Montgomery County. While the majority of the senior population prefers to remain in their current homes, a variety of options in senior housing exists to meet the various levels of care and range of incomes for the elderly choosing to live in senior housing. Olney currently has approximately 153 units of elderly housing within the Master Plan area. A senior housing development of approximately 100 affordable units is proposed on the Finneyfrock property in the Town Center (Olney Manor). In addition, there are large developments of senior housing just outside of the Olney Planning Area. Leisure World, an active adult community of 4,750 units is located nearby in the Aspen Hill planning area. Friends House on Quaker Lane off Norwood Road in Sandy Spring has approximately 100 units. Brooke Grove, another elderly housing complex of 665 units is located in both the Olney and Sandy Spring planning areas.

**Senior Housing Facilities in the Olney Area**

Project	Address	Type	Unit Type			
			Ind.	Assisted	Nursing	Total
Marian Assisted Living	19209 Georgia Avenue	Mixed income	0	44	0	44
Town Center Place	3500 Morningwood Drive		8	0	0	8
Ammahl Home for the Elderly	16700 Batchellors Forest Road	Group home, Market rate	11			11

Project	Address	Type	Unit Type			
			Ind.	Assisted	Nursing	Total
Winter Growth, Inc.	18110 Prince Philip Drive	Group home, Market rate	14			14
Andrew Kim House	Olney-Sandy Spring Road	Mixed income	76			76
<b>TOTAL</b>			109	44	0	153
Brooke Grove*	Brooke Road	Mixed income	402**	105	158	665
<b>Grand Total</b>			511	149	158	818

\*Brooke Grove Campus is located in both the Olney and Sandy Spring planning areas. 158 nursing units include 48 units in Sharon Nursing Home on the campus. The campus currently has only nursing and assisted living units.

\*\*402 units listed as independent in this table are proposed for future construction.

The proposed senior housing on the Finneyfrock property on Georgia Avenue and other such projects are expected to increase the inventory and variety of senior housing in Olney. The Tower Company site in the Small's Nursery subdivision at the northwest corner of Norbeck Road and Georgia Avenue and the Silo-Inn property on the west side Georgia Avenue near Emory Church Road are suitable locations for additional elderly housing projects. Future special exceptions on some of the vacant and redevelopable sites in and around the planning area would also add to the inventory of elderly housing in Olney.

**Recommendations:**

- 1. Support the proposed elderly housing on the Finneyfrock property in the Town Center.**
- 2. Support elderly housing projects of appropriate densities on the Tower Company's site near the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Norbeck Road and the Silo-Inn property on Georgia Avenue.**