

# Master Plan Review

## BETHESDA -CHEVY CHASE

Approved and Adopted  
April 1990



# BACKGROUND

In 2007, the Montgomery County Council directed the Planning Department to undertake a comprehensive zoning ordinance rewrite. Last rewritten in 1977, the current 1,200 + page code is viewed as antiquated and hard to use with standards that have failed to keep pace with modern development practices.

With only about four percent of land in the County available for greenfield development, the new zoning code can play a crucial role in guiding redevelopment to areas like surface parking lots and strip shopping centers. An updated zoning code is important for achieving the kind of growth Montgomery County policymakers and residents want.

Initial sections of the new code were drafted by Code Studio, a zoning consultant. These drafts were subsequently analyzed and edited by planners based on feedback from the Zoning Advisory Panel (a citizen panel appointed by the Planning Board to weigh in on the project's direction), county agency representatives, residents and other stakeholders. In September 2012, planning staff began the release of a draft code in sections accompanied by a report highlighting changes from the current code. The staff drafts were reviewed at length by the Planning Board.



The Planning Board held worksessions and public hearings between September of 2012 and May of 2013. On May 2, they transmitted their draft to the County Council. The Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee held worksessions during the summer and sent the draft to the full Council in December 2013. The full Council held worksessions in January 2014 and adopted the text of the new code in March. Work on the proposed map amendment continues.

## ZONE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

An important aspect of the Zoning Rewrite process is the potential simplification of 123 existing zones into about 30 proposed zones. While some of the proposed zones are a direct one-to-one translation of existing zones, others are the result of combining existing zones with similar standards. Additionally, existing zones that are not currently mapped or are no longer used in the County have been eliminated from the proposed code. Through the implementation process, Montgomery County aims to simplify the number of zones, eliminate redundancy, and clarify development standards. A full translation table for all zones can be found in the documents section of our website: [www.zoningmontgomery.org](http://www.zoningmontgomery.org).

## Agricultural, Residential, and Industrial Zone Implementation:

For agricultural and rural zones, the existing zones will be translated to proposed zones on a one-to-one basis, with the exception of the Low Density Rural Cluster zone which is not currently used in the County and will be eliminated.

Many of the existing residential zones will remain the same. Other residential zones will be combined with existing zones that have similar development standards. The R-4Plex zone, which is not currently mapped anywhere in the county, will be removed from the proposed code.

Implementation of Industrial zones will combine similar zones (Rural Service, I-1, and R+D) into the proposed Industrial Moderate (IM) zone. The existing heavy industrial zone (I-2) will be renamed as the Industrial Heavy (IH) zone.

### Examples:



## Commercial and Mixed-Use Zone Implementation:

Parcels located in the existing Commercial, Mixed-use, Central Business District (CBD), and Transit Station zones will be translated into one of the proposed Commercial/Residential (CR) or Employment (E) Zones using a two-tiered process.

First, decisions about specific parcels in these zones were based on recommendations within the Master Plan. Planning staff reviewed each Master Plan in the County. When the Master Plan provided specific recommendations about allowed density, height, or mix of uses for individual commercial or mixed-use parcels, those recommendations were used to build the formula of the proposed zone. This ensures consistency with currently allowed density and height, and helps codify Master Plan recommendations in a parcel-specific manner.

Second, if the Master Plan did not make specific recommendations, the current zone changed to a proposed zone on a one-to-one basis or the proposed zone was determined using a specific standardized decision tree (*see example below*). The standardized decision tree translates existing zones by considering each specific parcel's proximity to single-family neighborhoods or other factors. The goal of the implementation decision tree is to retain currently allowed heights and densities and maintain context sensitivity.

### Example: C-1 Convenience Commercial



# BETHESDA-CHEVY CHASE

## PLAN VISION

The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan was approved and adopted in April 1990. The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Plan is designed to achieve seven goals: Perpetuate and enhance the Planning Area's high quality life, achieve a balanced level of future employment development, provide for a balanced housing supply, protect the high quality residential communities, achieve a significant shift of new travel from auto to transit and other mobility alternatives, protect the Planning Area's natural resources and environmental qualities, and contribute to a strong sense of community.

## PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

### Development Levels

- Maintain the relative level of households compared to jobs to reduce the pressures of commuting into the area.
- Share new employment development between Sector Plans and the Federal Employment centers.
- Locate new employment and residential development in existing centers near Metro stations.
- Continue to recognize the importance of biomedical and medically-oriented development in the area, but place less emphasis on large-scale office projects.
- Support existing businesses, including those that meet community retail and service needs.
- Support increased housing density and housing types in Sector Plan areas and where compatible with nearby properties.



*National Institute of Health*

### Land Use and Zoning

- Reconfirm the existing single-family land use and zoning as appropriate. Recommend single-family attached use on some larger sites.

# ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Planning Area currently has 12 zones: 9 Residential, and 3 Commercial.

## **Existing Residential:**

R-200: Detached Unit, Single-Family  
R-200/TDR: Detached Unit, Single-Family  
R-60: Detached Unit, Single-Family  
R-60/TDR: Detached Unit, Single-Family  
R-90: Detached Unit, Single-Family  
R-90/TDR: Detached Unit, Single-Family  
RT-12.5: Townhouse, Single-Family  
R-30: Multi-Family, High-Rise  
R-H: Multi-Family, High-Rise Planned

## **Existing Commercial:**

C-1: Convenience Commercial  
C-T: Commercial, Transitional  
H-M: Hotel-Motel

The existing R-200 and R-200/TDR will combine to form the proposed R-200 zone, the R-60 and R-60/TDR will both combine into the R-60 zone, and the R-90 and R-90/TDR will combine into the R-90 zone. The existing townhouse zone, RT-12.5 will remain RT-12.5 (Townhouse). The existing multi-family R-30 and R-H zones will remain.

The existing C-T zone will translate to the proposed CRN zone. The existing C-1 zone will translate to the proposed NR zone (Neighborhood Retail) and CRT (Commercial Residential Town) based on the location and context for each of the parcels. Each parcel's proximity to detached residential neighborhoods was considered in the translation decision, with the overall goal to retain currently allowed heights and densities and maintain context sensitivity.

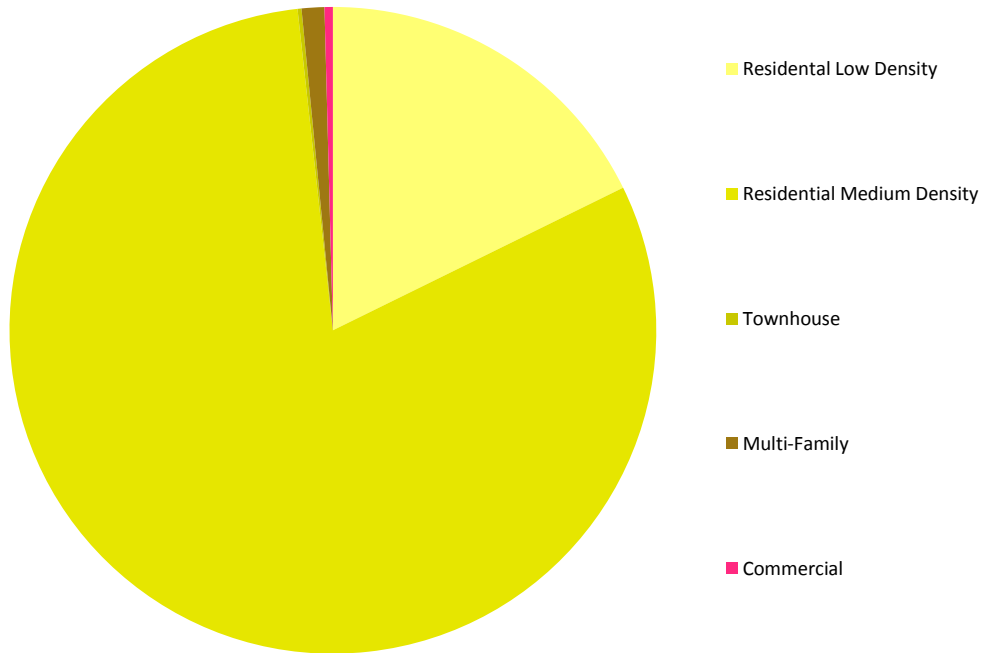
The existing H-M zone will translate to the proposed CR (Commercial Residential) zone to accommodate the allowed height.

# ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

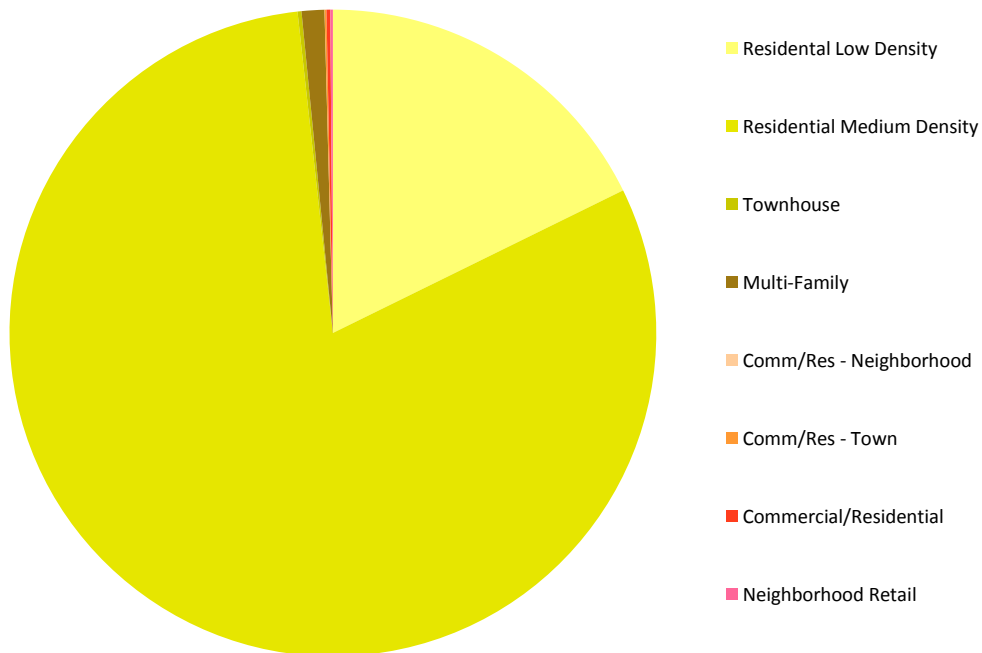
Bethesda - Chevy Chase					
Existing			Proposed		
Zone	Acres	Percent	Zone	Acres	Percent
R-200	1,681.44	17.79	R-200	1,684.45	16.98
R-200/TDR	3.02	0.03			
R-60	4,939.38	51.99	R-60	4,969.63	52.31
R-60/TDR	30.26	0.32			
R-90	2,664.58	28.05	R-90	2,680.08	28.21
R-90/TDR	15.5	0.16			
RT-12.5	18.72	0.2	RT-12.5	18.72	0.2
R-30	65.71	0.69	R-30	65.71	0.66
R-H	42.14	0.44	R-H	42.14	0.44
C-1	21.23	0.22	CRT-0.5 C-0.5 R-0.25 H-35	6.05	0.06
			CRT-0.75 C-0.5 R-0.25 H-45	2.77	0.03
			NR-1.0 H-45	12.40	0.13
C-T	0.35	0	CRN-0.5 C-0.5 R-0.25 H-35	0.35	0
H-M	17.79	0.19	CR-1.0 C-1.0 R-0.5 H-160	17.79	0.18
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>9,500.10</b>		<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>9,500.10</b>	

# ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

## Bethesda/Chevy Chase: Existing Zoning

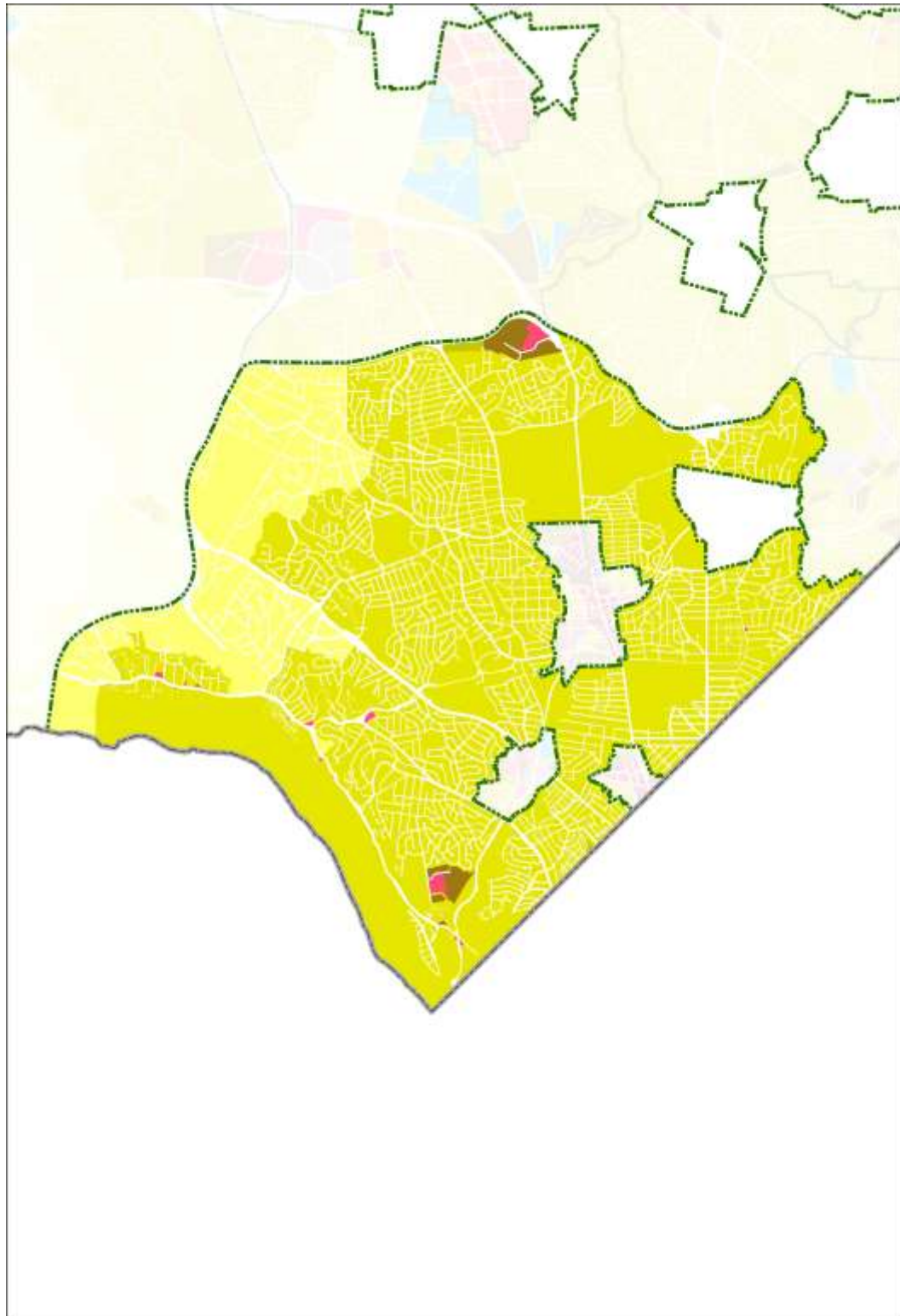


## Bethesda/Chevy Chase: Proposed Zoning





# EXISTING ZONING MAP



## Existing Zones

- Residential Low Density**  
R-200  
R-200/TDR

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- Residential Medium Density**  
R-60  
R-60/TDR  
R-90  
R-90/TDR

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- Townhouse**  
RT-12.5

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- Multi-Family**  
R-30  
R-H

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- Commercial**  
C-T  
C-1  
H-M

# PROPOSED ZONING MAP

## Proposed Zones

- Residential  
Low Density**  
R-200

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- Residential  
Medium Density**  
R-60  
R-90

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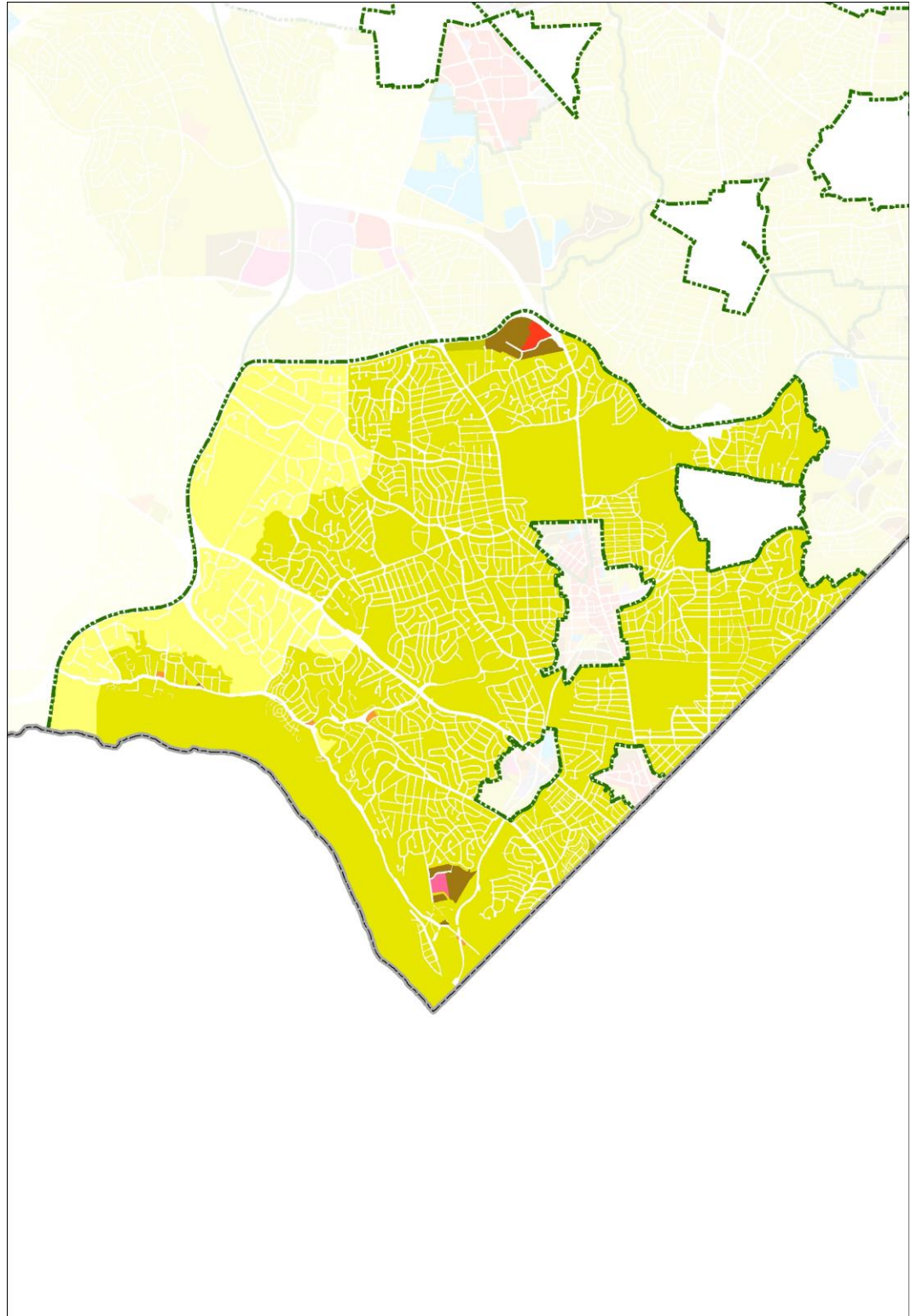
- Townhouse**  
RT-12.5

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- Multi-Family**  
R-30  
R-H

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- Comm/Res-  
Neighborhood**  
CRN
- Comm/Res-  
Town**  
CRT
- Commercial/  
Residential**  
CR
- Neighborhood  
Retail**  
NR



# PLANNING AREA CONTEXT

