

# Master Plan Review

# KENSINGTON -WHEATON

Approved and Adopted May 1989



# 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 is expected to vote on the proposal at the end of February.

## 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



# KENSINGTON-WHEATON

## PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

The Master Plan for the communities of Kensington-Wheaton was approved and adopted in May 1989. The Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan emphasizes the importance of protecting the residential community from the non-residential activities of the Wheaton Central Business District. To ensure community preservation, the Plan recommends maintaining the low to medium-density residential character of the area, protecting residential neighborhoods along major highways with a landscaping approach called “green corridors”, and encouraging the revitalization of the commercial area at Randolph and Veirs Mill Road through public and private means.

The Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan is also focused on diversifying transportation modes available in the region. To support its transportation objective the Plan recommends creation of a multi-use trail system that can be used for both recreation and commuting purposes. The Plan also proposes sites additional need for park-and-ride lots to support Metrorail use in the area.

The Master Plan makes additional recommendations for its community facilities and services. The Plan recommends examining ways to address the needs of the community’s elderly, disabled, and other special populations. The Plan proposes that the area from Wheaton Plaza to University Towers become a demonstration area for improvements that will serve the disabled.



*Kensington Farmer's Market*

# ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

The Kensington-Wheaton Planning Area currently has 19 zones: 5 Commercial and 14 Residential.

## **Existing Residential:**

RE-2: Detached Unit, Single-Family  
R-200: Detached Unit, Single-Family  
R-150: Detached Unit, Single-Family  
R-90: Detached Unit, Single-Family  
R-60: Detached Unit, Single Family  
R-60/TDR: Detached Unit, Single-Family  
R-40: Detached Unit, Single-Family  
RT-8: Townhouse, Single-Family  
RT-10: Townhosue, Single-Family  
RT-12.5: Townhouse, Single-Family

RT-15: Townhouse, Single-Family  
R-30: Multi-Family, Low Density  
R-20: Multi-Family, Medium Density  
R-10: Multi-Family, High Density

## **Existing Commercial:**

C-1: Convenience Commercial  
C-2: General Commercial  
C-4: Limited Commercial  
C-T: Commercial, Transitional  
O-M: Office Building, Moderate Intensity

The RE-2 will remain. The R-200 and R-150 will combine to form the R-200 (Residential Low Density) zone. The existing R-60 and R-60/TDR will combine to form the proposed R-60 (Single-Family, Medium-Density) zone. The existing R-40 and R-90 will remain. The residential TDR zones will be included in a new TDR overlay zone.

The existing RT-8, RT-10, RT-12.5, and RT-15 will remain RT (townhouse) respectively. The R-30, R-20, and R-10 will remain.

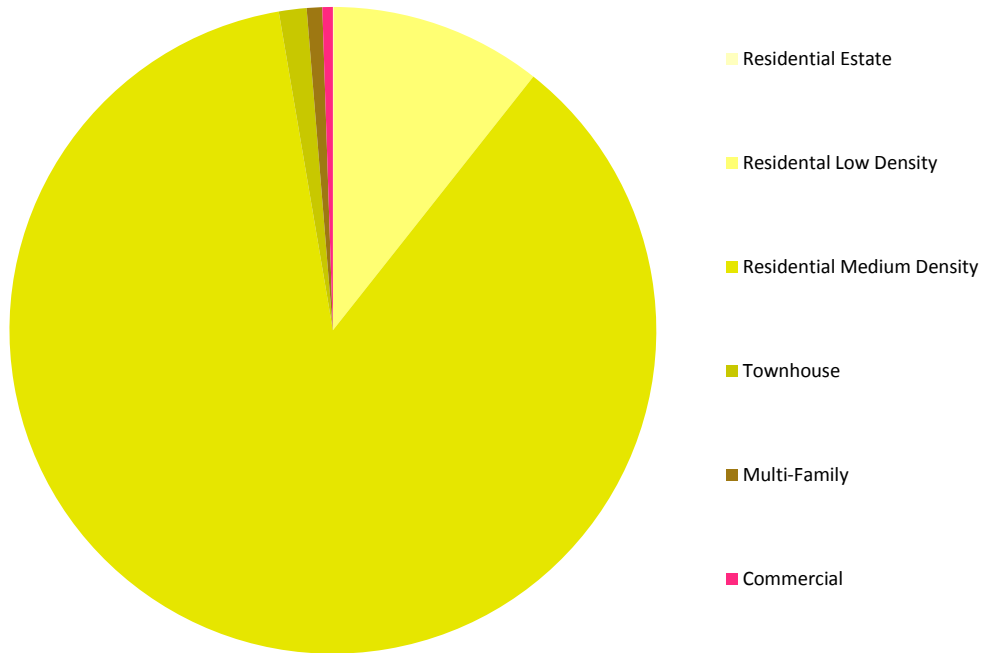
The existing O-M zone has typically consisted predominantly of office uses and will translate to the proposed EOF (Employment Office) zone. The existing C-T zone will translate to the proposed CRN (Commercial Residential Neighborhood) zone. The existing C-1, C-2, and C-4 zones are translated to either NR (Neighborhood Retail) or CRT (Commercial Residential Town) zones, based on the location and context for each of the parcels located in these three zones. Each parcel will be translated according to the standardized translation, with the overall goal to retain currently allowed heights and densities and maintain context sensitivity.

# ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

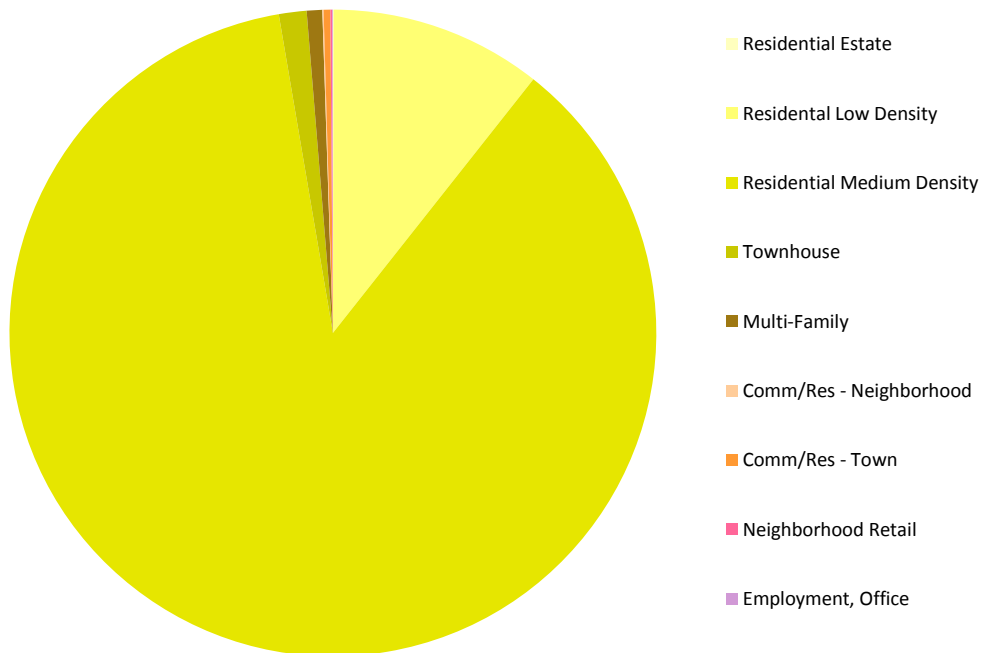
Kensington-Wheaton					
Existing			Proposed		
RE-2	2.36	0.04	RE-2	2.36	0.04
R-200	570.83	9.43	R-200	642.29	10.60
R-150	71.45	1.18			
R-90	1,977.09	32.64	R-90	1,977.09	32.64
R-60	3,188.19	52.64	R-60	3,194.90	52.75
R-60/TDR	6.71	0.11			
R-40	77.41	1.28	R-40	77.41	1.28
RT-8	7.94	0.13	RT-8	7.94	0.13
RT-10	14.14	0.23	RT-10	14.14	0.23
RT-12.5	33.27	0.55	RT-12.5	33.27	0.55
RT-15	28.47	0.47	RT-15	28.47	0.47
R-30	11.71	0.19	R-30	11.71	0.19
R-20	31.75	0.52	R-20	31.75	0.52
R-10	3.45	0.06	R-10	3.45	0.06
C-T	3.68	0.06	CRN-0.5 C-0.5 R-0.25 H-35	3.68	0.06
C-1	21.40	0.35	NR-1.0 H-45	5.48	0.09
			CRT-1.0 C-0.75 R-0.5 H-45	15.92	0.26
C-2	2.78	0.05	CRT-2.0 C-1.5 R-0.75 H-45	2.78	0.05
C-4	1.55	0.03	CRT-0.75 C-0.75 R-0.5 H-40	1.55	0.03
O-M	2.12	0.04	EOF-1.5 H-75	2.12	0.04
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6,056.57</b>		<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6,056.57</b>	

# ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

## Kensington/Wheaton: Existing Zoning

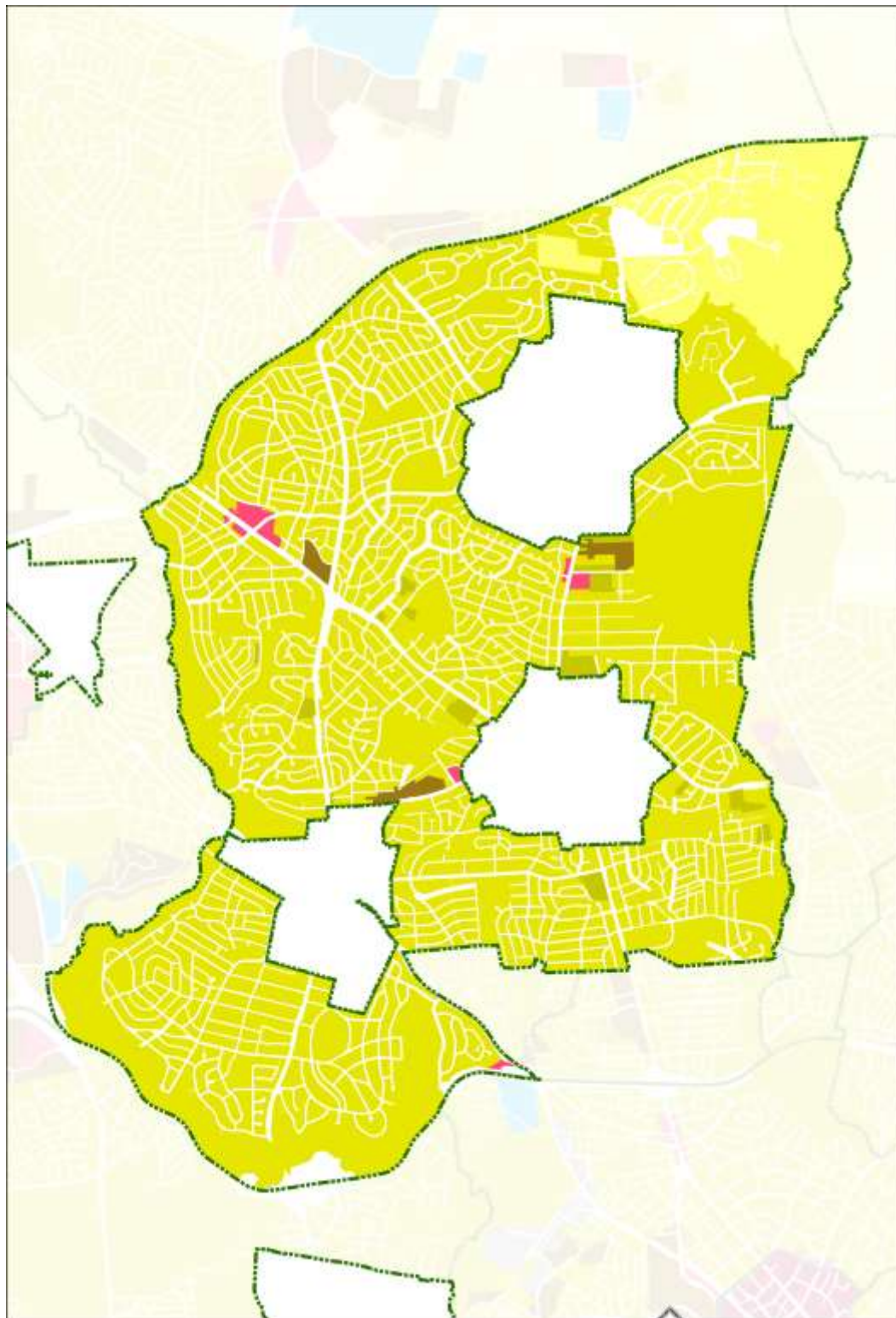


## Kensington/Wheaton: Proposed Zoning





# EXISTING ZONING MAP



## Existing Zones

- Residential Estate**  
RE-2

---

- Residential Low Density**  
R-150  
R-200

---

- Residential Medium Density**  
R-40  
R-60  
R-60/TDR  
R-90

---

- Townhouse**  
RT-8  
RT-10  
RT-12.5  
RT-15

---










- Multi-Family**  
R-10  
R-20  
R-30

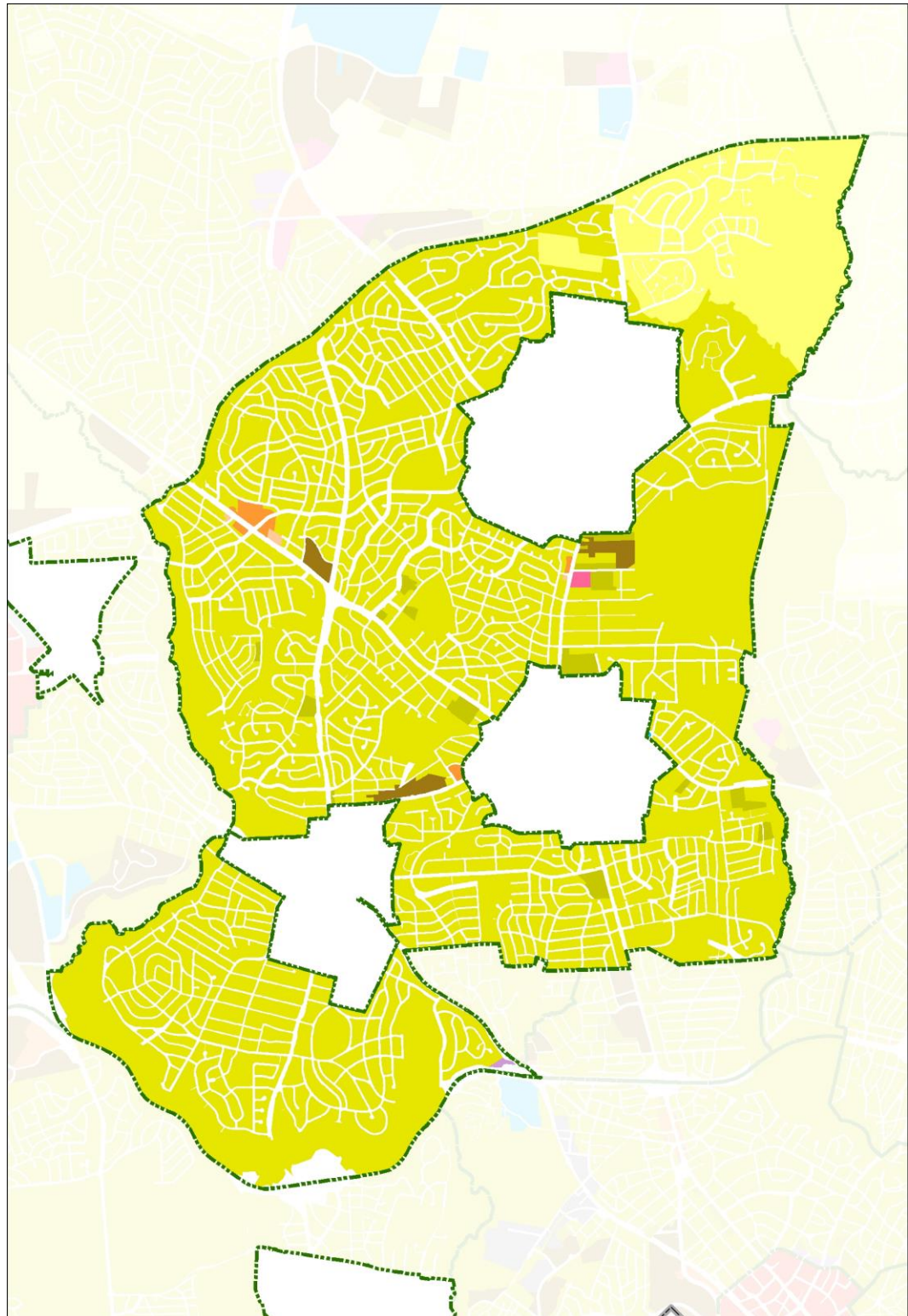
---

- Commercial**  
C-1  
C-2  
C-4  
C-T  
O-M

# PROPOSED ZONING MAP

## Proposed Zones

	<b>Residential Estate</b> RE-2
	<b>Residential Low Density</b> R-200
	<b>Residential Medium Density</b> R-40 R-60 R-90
	<b>Townhouse</b> RT-8 RT-10 RT-12.5 RT-15
	<b>Multi-Family</b> R-10 R-20 R-30
	<b>Comm/Res-Neighborhood</b> CRN
	<b>Comm/Res-Town</b> CRT
	<b>Neighborhood Retail</b> NR
	<b>Employment, Office</b> EOF





## PLANNING AREA CONTEXT

