Master Plan Review

WHITE FLINT

Approved and Adopted
April 2010

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.

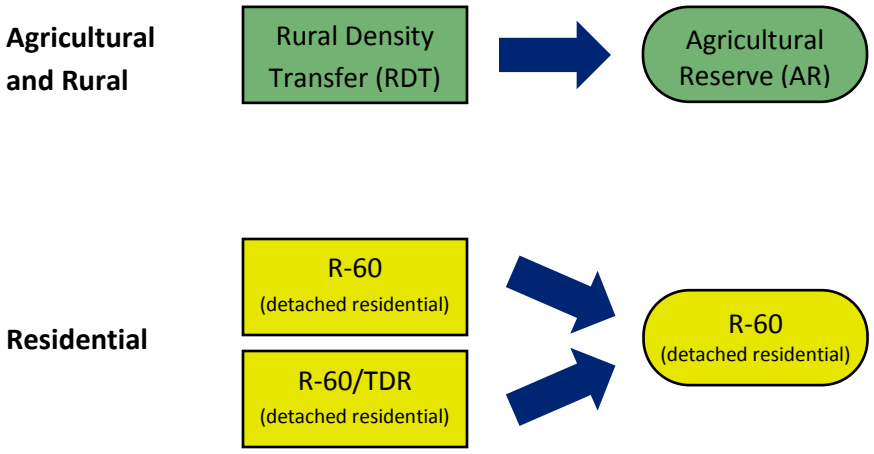
Agricultural, Residential, and Industrial Zone Implementation:

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:



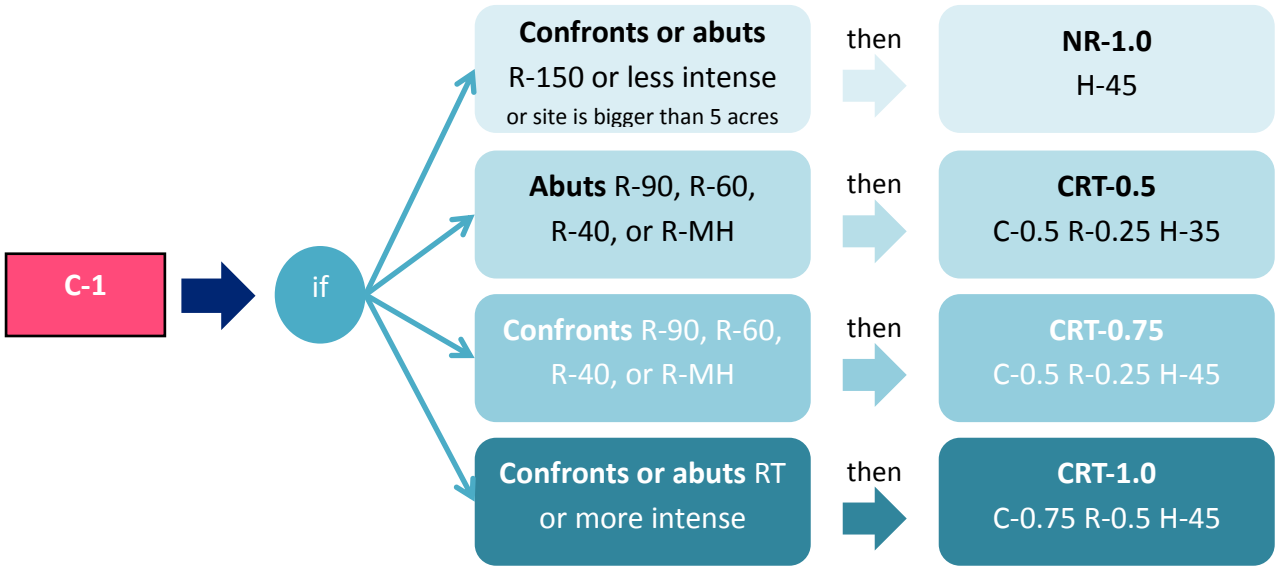
Commercial and Mixed-Use Zone Implementation:

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



PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

The White Flint Sector Plan was adopted in April 2010. The Sector Planning area includes 430 acres and lies entirely within a 3/4 mile radius of the White Flint Metro station. The Sector Plan establishes a vision for White Flint which transforms the existing auto-oriented suburban development pattern into an urban center of residences and businesses where people can walk to work, shops, and transit.

To support the vision established for White Flint, the Master Plan provides recommendations for six different components of the community:

- **Core:** The community, the conference center, and commerce converge to express White Flint's special character. The highest density and tallest buildings at the Metro station will form an identifiable center.
- **Mobility:** White Flint will have a walkable street system. Rockville Pike, transformed into a grand boulevard, will visually tie together the east and west sides of the Sector Plan area. Sidewalks, bikeways, trails, and paths will provide options for pedestrian circulation and connections to the existing and new neighborhoods and surrounding communities.
- **Buildings:** The maximum building height in the White Flint Sector Plan is 300 feet nearest the Metro Station, and is recommended to be 50-250 feet elsewhere in the Sector Plan area. Building heights should reflect existing conditions where existing building heights may be 40 feet or lower. At the edges of the Sector Plan area, building heights must be compatible with surrounding residential neighborhoods.

North Bethesda Market

- **Public Space:** The compact development pattern includes a system of public use spaces where people can gather for events or enjoy recreational activities. The recommended hierarchical public use space system includes the Wall Park, the Central Civic Green, Urban Plazas, Neighborhood Greens, and Private Recreation Space.
- **Compatibility:** New development will decline in height and density from the center and Rockville Pike, providing compatible transitions as it approaches the surrounding neighborhoods.
- **Sustainability:** New development must incorporate environmentally sensitive design to conserve and generate energy and make maximum use of resources and minimize disruption of the natural environment.

ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

The White Flint Planning Area currently has 32 zones: 3 Residential, 4 Commercial, 3 Mixed-Use, 20 Commercial Residential (CR), 1 Industrial, and 1 Planned Development.

Existing Residential:

R-90: Detached Unit, Single Family
R-90/TDR: Detached Unit, Single Family
RT-12.5: Townhouse, Single Family

Existing Commercial

O-M: Office Building, Moderate Intensity
C-T: Commercial Transitional
C-2: General Commercial
C-O: Commercial, Office Building

Existing Mixed-Use:

RMX-3C: Residential Mixed-Use
TS-M: Transit Station, Mixed
TS-R: Transit Station, Residential

Existing Industrial:

I-4: Light Industrial

Existing Planned Development

PD-9: Planned Development

Existing Commercial Residential:

CR-0.5 C-0.25 R-0.25 H-50
CR-0.5 C-0.25 R-0.25 H-50
CR-1.25 C-1.0 R-0.75 H-100
CR-1.5 C-0.25 R-1.5 H-50
CR-2.0 C-1.5 R-0.75 H-100
CR-2.5 C-1.25 R-2.0 H-70
CR-2.5 C-2.0 R-1.25 H-150
CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.5 H-100
CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.5 H-150
CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.5 H-200
CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.5 H-250
CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.5 H-70
CR-3.0 C-2.5 R-1.5 H-150
CR-3.0 C-2.5 R-1.5 H-200
CR-4.0 C-2.0 R-3.5 H-250
CR-4.0 C-3.5 R-2.0 H-250
CR-4.0 C-3.5 R-3.5 H-150
CR-4.0 C-3.5 R-3.5 H-200
CR-4.0 C-3.5 R-3.5 H-250
CR-4.0 C-3.5 R-3.5 H-300

Standard Translation:

The existing R-90 and R-90/TDR will both be consolidated into the proposed R-90 (Residential Medium Density) zone. The existing RT-12.5 will remain. The residential TDR zones will be incorporated in a new TDR Overlay zone.

The existing I-4 zone will be renamed IL (Industrial Light). The existing PD-9 zone will remain PD-9. Additionally, the existing CR (Commercial Residential) zones will remain the same in the proposed zoning code.

The existing Commercial and Mixed-Use zones will translate to the specific proposed EOF (Employment Office), CR (Commercial Residential), CRT (Commercial Residential Town), and CRN (Commercial Residential Neighborhood), zones using both the standard translation criteria and specific Master Plan recommendations. Commercial and Mixed-Use parcels that do not have specific Master Plan recommendations will translate to the proposed zone based on the standard zoning translation table.

NON-STANDARD CONVERSIONS

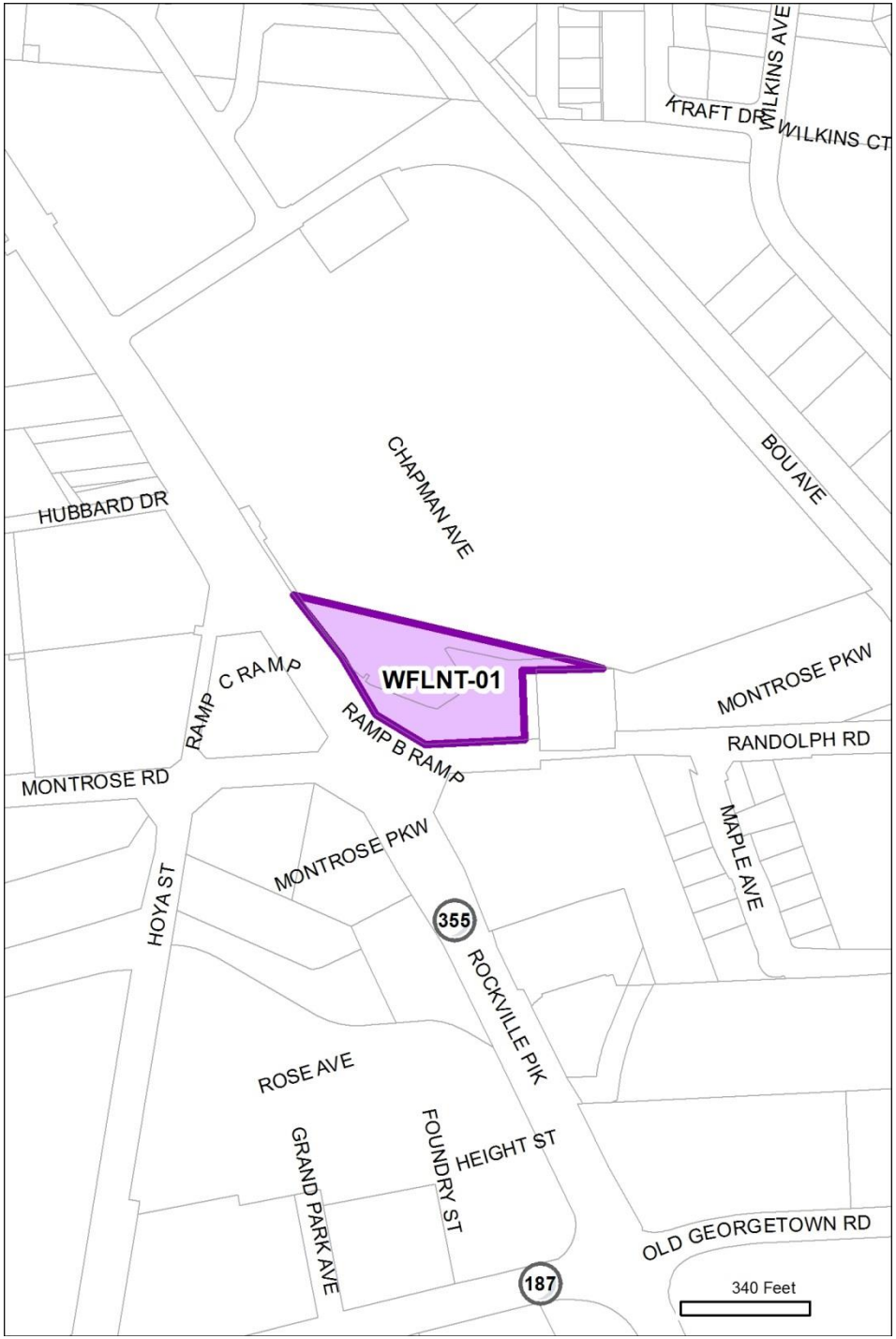
In some cases, properties were not converted using the standard conversions as outlined earlier in the packet.

Generally, this is because the relevant Master or Sector Plan made recommendations regarding the appropriate density, height, or mix of uses on a given site.

In other cases, the text of the zoning ordinance or an overlay zone can affect the development potential of a site, and therefore affect the conversion given as part of the draft proposed DMA.

Additionally, the PHED Committee requested that existing site approvals be reflected in the draft proposed DMA, so non-standard conversions sometimes reflect what projects have been approved for.

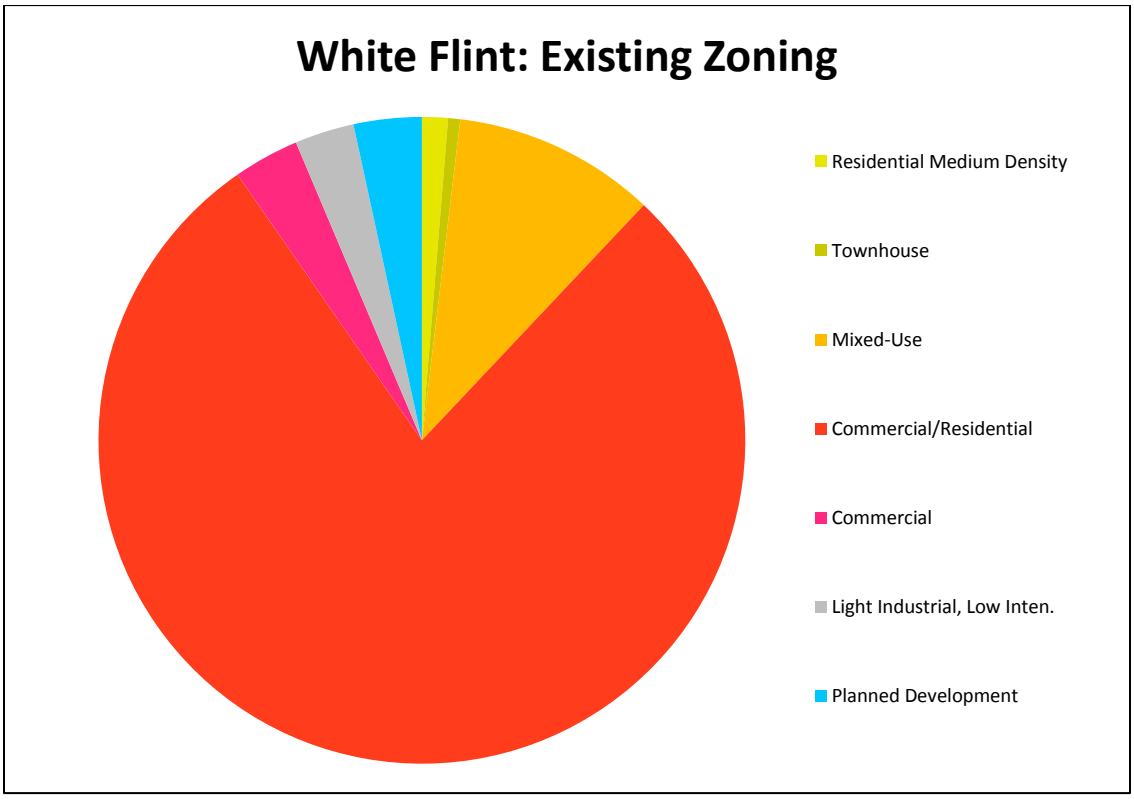
The following pages will give detail on all of the non-standard conversions in this plan area.

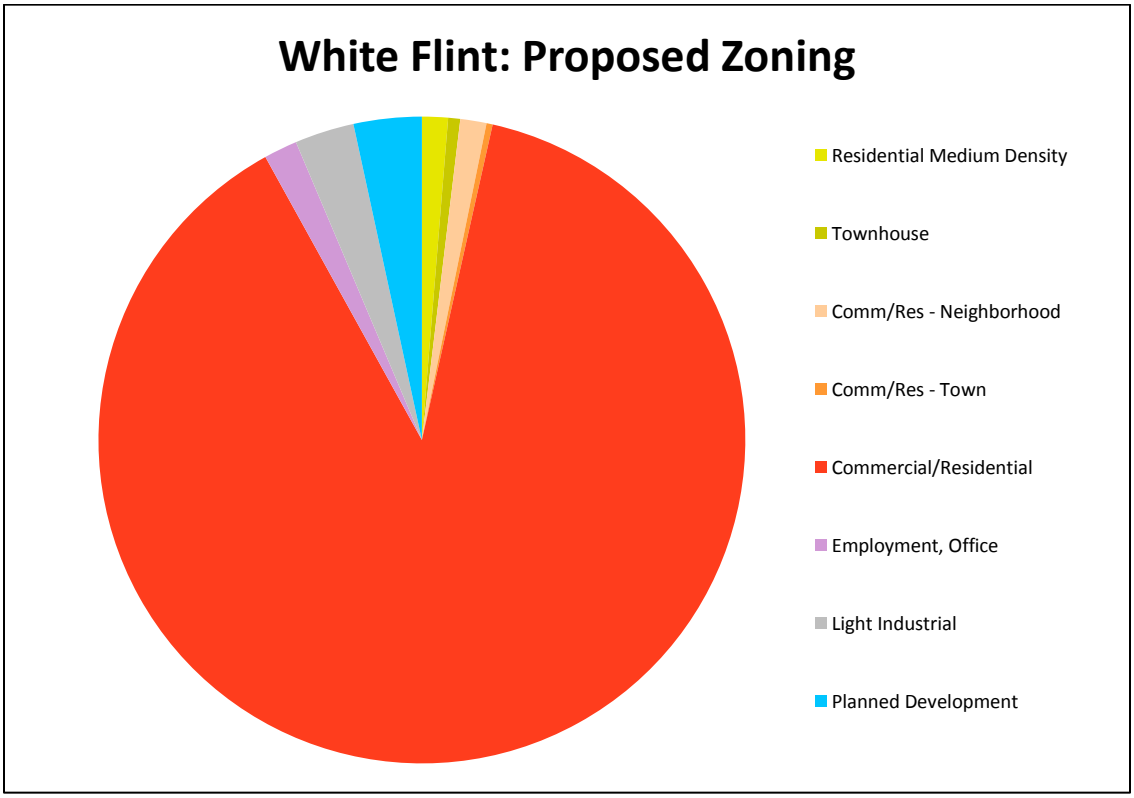


MP Number:		WFLNT-01
Master Plan:		White Flint
Location:		Randolph & Route 355
Existing Zone:		RMX-3C
Standard Conv:		~~CRT-2.0 C-0.5 R-1.5 H-65 T~~
Proposed Conv:		CR-2.0 C-0.5 R-1.5 H-200 T
Modifications	**Zone Group:**	Changed to CR
	Overall FAR:	Standard
	Comm'l FAR:	Standard
	Resid'l FAR:	Standard
	Height:	Increased to 200'
Reason for non-standard conversion:		
Match Development Approvals: *This site is currently approved for development up to 200'.*		
Notes:		
Because the CRT zone is limited to 150' in height, in order to match the approved height of 200', this property needed to be in the CR zone.		

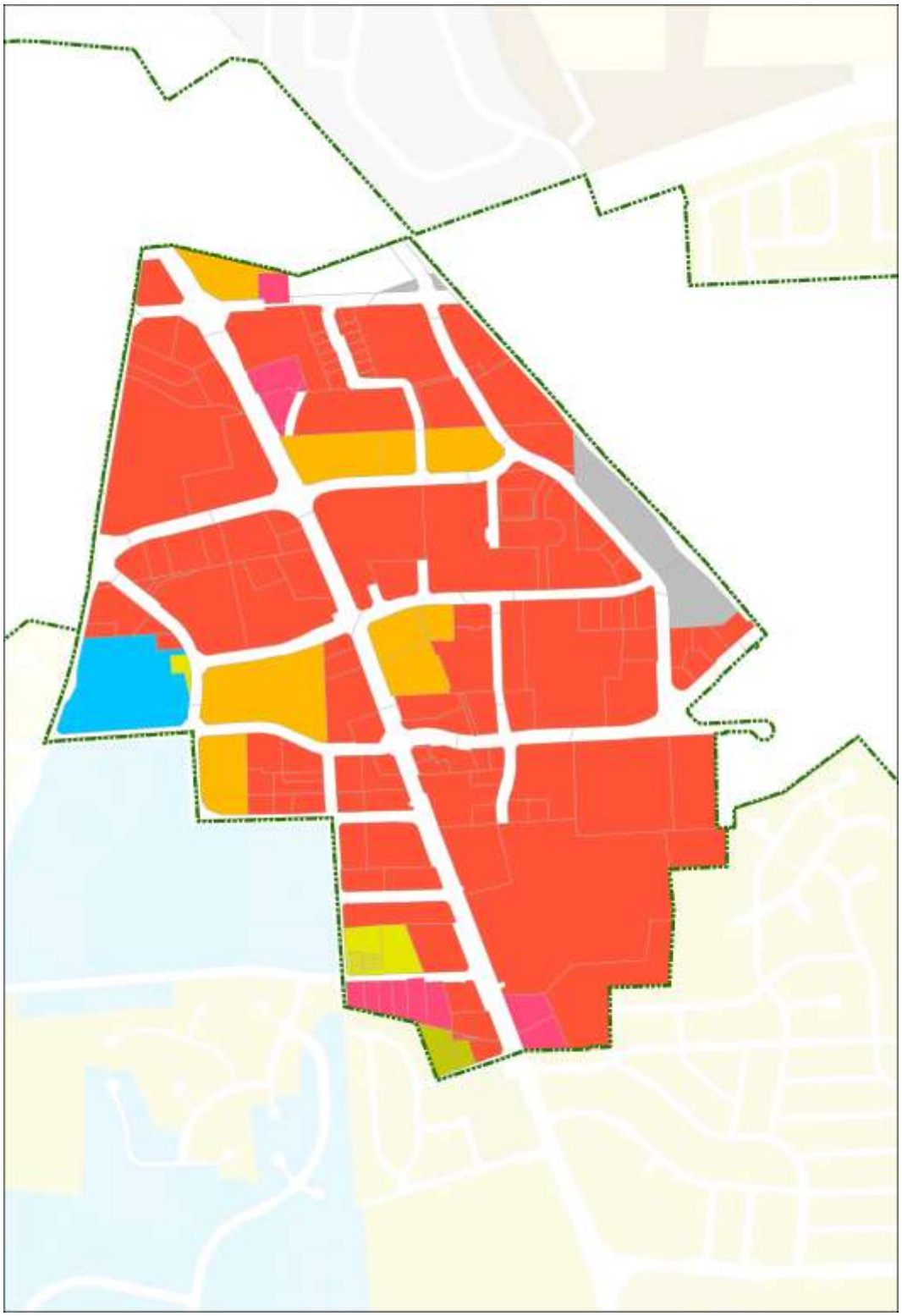
ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

White Flint					
Existing			Proposed		
Zone	Acres	Percent	Zone	Acres	Percent
R-90	0.49	0.15	R-90	4.3	1.29
R-90/TDR	3.81	1.15			
RT-12.5	2	0.6	RT-12.5	2	0.6
CR-0.5 C-0.25 R-0.25 H-50	0.65	0.2	CR-0.5 C-0.25 R-0.25 H-50	0.65	0.19
CR-1.0 C-0.75 R-0.5 H-50	1.35	0.41	CR-1.0 C-0.75 R-0.5 H-50	1.35	0.41
CR-1.25 C-1.0 R-0.75 H-100	1.15	0.35	CR-1.25 C-1.0 R-0.75 H-100	1.15	0.35
CR-1.5 C-0.25 R-1.5 H-50	10.39	3.13	CR-1.5 C-0.25 R-1.5 H-50	10.39	3.13
CR-2.0 C-1.5 R-0.75 H-100	1.78	0.54	CR-2.0 C-1.5 R-0.75 H-100	1.78	0.54
CR-2.5 C-1.25 R-2.0 H-70	4.77	1.44	CR-2.5 C-1.25 R-2.0 H-70	4.77	1.44
CR-2.5 C-2.0 R-1.25 H-150	2.59	0.78	CR-2.5 C-2.0 R-1.25 H-150	2.59	.
CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.5 H-100	6.86	2.07	CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.5 H-100	6.86	2.07
CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.5 H-150	0.61	0.18	CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.5 H-150	0.61	0.18
CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.5 H-200	119.47	36.01	CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.5 H-200	119.47	36.01
CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.5 H-250	4.36	1.31	CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.5 H-250	4.36	1.31
CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.5 H-70	3.61	1.09	CR-3.0 C-1.5 R-2.5 H-70	3.61	1.09
CR-3.0 C-2.5 R-1.5 H-150	2.79	0.84	CR-3.0 C-2.5 R-1.5 H-150	2.79	0.84
CR-3.0 C-2.5 R-1.5 H-200	5.62	1.69	CR-3.0 C-2.5 R-1.5 H-200	5.62	1.69
CR-4.0 C-2.0 R-3.5 H-250	30.4	9.16	CR-4.0 C-2.0 R-3.5 H-250	30.4	9.16
CR-4.0 C-3.5 R-2.0 H-250	10.75	3.24	CR-4.0 C-3.5 R-2.0 H-250	10.75	3.24
CR-4.0 C-3.5 R-3.5 H-150	1.1	0.33	CR-4.0 C-3.5 R-3.5 H-150	1.1	0.33
CR-4.0 C-3.5 R-3.5 H-200	3.71	1.12	CR-4.0 C-3.5 R-3.5 H-200	3.71	1.12
CR-4.0 C-3.5 R-3.5 H-250	1.45	0.44	CR-4.0 C-3.5 R-3.5 H-250	1.45	0.44
CR-4.0 C-3.5 R-3.5 H-300	46.43	13.99	CR-4.0 C-3.5 R-3.5 H-300	46.43	13.99
RMX-3C	3.25	0.98	CR-2.0 C-0.5 R-1.5 H-200 T	3.25	0.98
TS-R	13.81	4.16	CR-2.5 C-1.0 R-2.0 H-200 T	13.81	4.16
TS-M	16.58	5	CR-3.0 C-2.5 R-2.5 H-200 T	16.58	5
C-T	4.34	1.31	CRN-0.5 C-0.5 R-0.25 H-35	4.34	1.31
C-2	1.02	0.31	CRT-2.25 C-1.5 R-0.75 H-75	1.02	0.31
C-O	2.74	0.83	EOF-3.0 H-100	2.74	0.83
O-M	2.81	0.85	EOF-1.5 H-75	2.81	0.05
I-4	9.85	2.97	IL-1.0 H-50	9.85	2.97
PD-9	11.28	3.4	PD-9	11.28	3.4
Grand Total	**331.8**		**Grand Total**	**331.8**	


White Flint: Existing Zoning
Residential Medium Density
Townhouse
Mixed-Use
Commercial/Residential
Commercial
Light Industrial, Low Inten.
Planned Development


White Flint: Proposed Zoning
Residential Medium Density
Townhouse
Comm/Res - Neighborhood
Comm/Res - Town
Commercial/Residential
Employment, Office
Light Industrial
Planned Development

EXISTING ZONING MAP



Existing Zones

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

Townhouse
- RT-12.5

Commercial
- C-T
- C-2
- C-O
- O-M

Mixed-Use
- RMX-3C
- TS-M
- TS-R

Commercial/ Residential
- CR

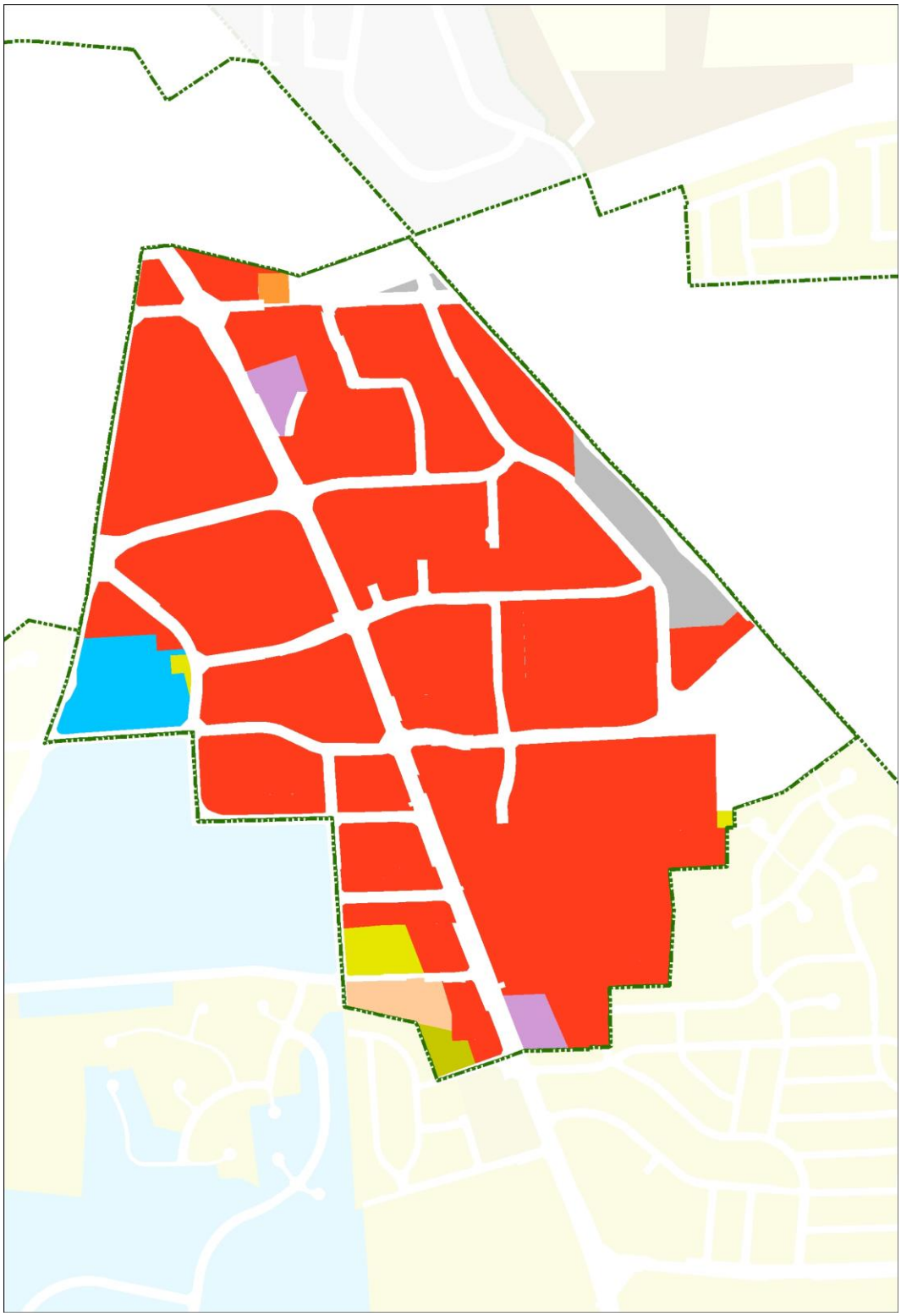
Light Industrial
- I-4

Planned Development
- PD-9

PROPOSED ZONING MAP

Proposed Zones

- **Residential Medium Density**
  R-90
- **Townhouse**
  RT-12.5
- **Comm/Res-Neighborhood**
  CRN
- **Employment, Office**
  EOF
- **Comm/Res-Town**
  CRT
- **Commercial/ Residential**
  CR
- **Light Industrial**
  IL
- **Planned Development**
  PD-9



PLANNING AREA CONTEXT