

## **Thrive Montgomery 2050--Recommended Actions**

*Note: Text in [italics] are the policy recommendations from the draft Plan and are included here for reference only.*

1. Compact Growth: Corridor-Focused Development (G)
2. Complete Communities: Mix of Uses and Forms (C)
3. Design, Arts and Culture: Investing and Building Community (D)
4. Transportation and Communication Networks: Connecting People, Places and Ideas (T)
5. Affordable and Attainable Housing: More of Everything (H)
6. Parks and Recreation for an Increasingly Urban and Diverse Community: Active and Social (P)

### **Compact Growth: Corridor-Focused Development**

*[Concentrate growth in centers of activity along corridors through compact infill development and redevelopment to maximize efficient use of land.*

- *Amend land-use, design, and zoning regulations, including the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations, to remove regulatory barriers and permit corridor-focused compact development. Appropriate densities will vary but should be sufficient to support, at a minimum, the efficient provision of transit service along these corridors.*
- *Improve the environmental sustainability of growth by encouraging infill and redevelopment to curb sprawl and bring areas built out in an era with little or no environmental regulations up to robust standards for stormwater management and other state-of-the-practice environmental standards.]*

#### **Actions:**

- G-1. Update master plans in existing centers of activity to maximize efficient use of land.
- G-2. Develop corridor-focused master plans to comprehensively evaluate and amend zoning of properties by Sectional Map Amendment to encourage corridor-focused compact development.
- G-3. Update the Commercial / Residential and Employment Zones Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines, including the required public benefits, and public benefit categories and criteria to provide incentives for concentrating growth in centers of activity along corridors.

- G-4. Implement recommendations in the county's Climate Action Plan (CAP) within the authority of the M-NCPPC in order to achieve the climate change goals and related objectives of both the CAP and Thrive Montgomery 2050.
- G-5. Develop urban environmental guidelines to incorporate green features in growth areas that will mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change; provide cleaner air and water; add shading and cooling features; and improve human health.
- G-6. Identify areas vulnerable to the negative effects of climate change and develop strategies to mitigate these effects. Prioritize areas with historically disadvantaged and vulnerable populations most likely to be affected by climate change.
- G-7. Assess likely changes in the location and size of floodplains in Montgomery County and develop appropriate recommendations to avoid or mitigate resulting impacts on property, infrastructure and natural resources.
- G-8. Create or choose tools to evaluate the effect of land use options on GHG reduction goals.
- G-9. Evaluate opportunities for siting alternative energy production and storage systems.
- G-10. Review county lighting standards to improve energy efficiency and minimize light pollution.
- G-11. Research and create guidance for innovative development, retrofit and construction designs, and techniques that minimize imperviousness.

***[Promote and prioritize public investment in infrastructure along growth corridors and leverage it to attract future private investment in a compact form.]***

- *Adopt new methods of financing public infrastructure, such as value capture, tax increment financing, and other mechanisms to facilitate investment in areas identified as appropriate for more intensive development and accompanying infrastructure.*
- *Establish high-quality transit infrastructure along growth corridors through capital investment and ensure reliable, frequent service through operational investment.*
- *Leverage federal, state and local incentive programs, publicly owned land and land investment opportunities for corridor infill development and redevelopment.]*

**Actions:**

- G-12. Develop corridor-focused master plans to identify and prioritize public investment through capital projects.

- G-13. Identify underutilized publicly owned land in centers of activity along corridors where infill development, redevelopment, recreation, environmental services, and adaptive reuse can stimulate compact, corridor-focused growth.

*[Limit growth beyond corridors to compact, infill development and redevelopment in complete communities to prevent sprawl. Apply principles of urbanism at an appropriate scale along a rural-to-urban transect as outlined in the Complete Communities chapter.]*

- *Sustainably manage land outside growth corridors and complete communities to increase biodiversity, improve the health of natural habitats, preserve privately-owned forests, protect watersheds and aquifers, and improve water quality while providing expanded opportunities for outdoor recreation, including vigorous physical activity.]*

**Actions:**

- G-14. Identify opportunities for adaptive reuse in suburban communities for stormwater management and flood control.
- G-15. Enhance the quality and connectivity of transportation and green corridors, including connections to centers of activity and complete communities, to expand opportunities for outdoor recreation, vigorous physical activity and social interaction.
- G-16. Link stream valleys, natural lands, parks, open spaces, and tree-lined boulevards throughout the county with a comprehensive network of natural and hard surface trails for physical activity as well as to connect habitats.
- G-17. Identify for protection forests and other natural areas with high value for climate mitigation, resilience, and biological diversity.
- G-18. Establish appropriate forest and non-forest canopy goals and strategies to protect plant and wildlife diversity and human health while accommodating and complementing land use policies such as redevelopment and infill in areas identified as appropriate for growth.
- G-19. Regularly reevaluate policies and practices adopted by the Parks and Planning Departments and other government entities regulating the development and use of public and private land to assess their costs, benefits, and continued effectiveness and relevance in achieving the objectives of Thrive Montgomery 2050. These reviews should consider the implications of changes in technology and scientific understanding; economic factors and market forces; racial and social equity; public health; climate change and other aspects of environmental sustainability; and how regulatory approaches help or hinder progress in implementing or achieving the specific strategies, recommendations, and goals of this plan and related planning guidance.

- G-20. Develop recommendations for native trees that are resilient to climate change and support native wildlife (including pollinators) to use in development and natural area enhancement projects.
- G-21. Develop a long-range forest quality management plan to address fragmentation, deer pressure, invasive threats, and the forest's capacity to withstand and mitigate climate impacts.
- G-22. Develop recommendations to improve the vitality and survivability of planted forests and trees.
- G-23. Develop incentives for developers to restore existing streams and daylight piped streams during the redevelopment process.

*[Preserve and enhance the Agricultural Reserve and manage the areas designated within the footprint for a rural pattern of development for the benefit of the entire county.*

- *Maximize the benefits of the Agricultural Reserve through policies designed to ensure the continued viability of farming as an economically productive and sustainable activity, discourage sprawl, facilitate a broad range of outdoor recreation and tourism activities, conserve land and natural resources, and promote practices that advance environmental quality.*
- *Improve access to the Agricultural Reserve for the public to experience and directly benefit from this valuable resource for locally grown food, outdoor recreation, and tourism.]*

**Actions:**

- G-24. Update policies and plans to acknowledge the evolution of the business of agriculture and develop recommendations to enhance the economic viability of farming, facilitate locally grown food, provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and tourism, and advance environmental quality.
- G-25. Develop policies, regulations, easements and incentives to maintain a critical mass of contiguous farmland to ensure the continued viability of farming and discourage sprawl.
- G-26. Analyze the barriers to accessing the Agricultural Reserve and develop a plan to improve physical access for locally grown food, outdoor recreation, education and tourism.
- G-27. Develop strategies and an action plan to increase the range of outdoor recreation opportunities that are permitted and encouraged in the Agricultural Reserve for the public to experience and benefit from this resource.
- G-28. Analyze the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance, including industrially zoned land, to support an evolving agricultural industry. Identify recommendations for flexibility in accommodating industries and services that

support agriculture including food processing, distribution, sale, consumption, and waste management.

- G-29. Analyze and assess the Transfer of Development Rights and Building Lot Termination programs to evaluate their achievements and limitations in farmland preservation. Develop recommendations for the future of these programs to preserve contiguous farmland and maintain the economic viability of farming.
- G-30. Develop incentives to transition existing commodity farms to the production of table food for local distribution and consumption.
- G-31. Develop a strategic plan that builds upon the Agricultural Reserve to engage culinary entrepreneurs, leading food research organizations and high-tech rural and urban farmers in food-based innovation and self-reliance in food production.

## Complete Communities: Mix of Uses and Forms

*[Identify and integrate elements needed to complete centers of housing, retail, and office development and plan to make 15-minute living a reality for as many people as possible.*

- *Update zoning allocations and standards to encourage the integration of varied uses, building types and lot sizes.*
- *Apply flexible approaches to accommodate infill and redevelopment that improves access to amenities, active transportation, parks and open spaces and a broader range of housing types at the neighborhood scale.*
- *Prioritize neighborhood-level land-use planning as a tool to enhance overall quality of community life and avoid reinforcing outdated land-use patterns.*
- *Allow sufficient densities to make a wide range of uses economically viable in complete communities. Encourage densities sufficient to support convenience retail and other local-serving amenities at the neighborhood level. Provide guidance for accommodating additional density in a context-sensitive manner.*
- *Ensure that complete communities are integrated into their surroundings and supported by a public realm that encourages walking, biking and rolling as well as social interaction through the configuration of its sidewalks, paths, landmarks and gathering spaces.*
- *Adopt planning approaches that prioritize providing more complete communities in service to improving the quality of community life throughout the county.]*

### **Actions:**

- C-1. Initiate complete communities master plans to identify and integrate elements needed to complete centers of activity.
- C-2. Study the application of 15-minute living in the county to determine the neighborhoods and districts in which the concept applies, identify priorities for infill and redevelopment to achieve 15-minute living and develop cost-effective strategies to further 15-minute living for as many people as possible.
- C-3. Update the Montgomery County Zoning Code to integrate elements of a form-based code and provide greater flexibility to accommodate a variety of uses and densities.

*[Encourage co-location and adjacency of all essential and public services, especially along growth corridors and complete communities.*

- *Maximize the utility of existing and new public facilities by extending their reach into the surrounding neighborhoods through active transportation improvements that prioritize walking, biking, rolling and transit use.*
- *Develop standards for colocation of public facilities that promote mixing of uses or services and compact development strategies. Encourage public-private partnerships and ensure that they promote social interaction and physical activity.]*

### **Actions:**

- C-3. Update the County Growth and Infrastructure Policy to encourage co-location and adjacency of public facilities, including schools, to achieve the policies of Thrive Montgomery 2050.

- C-4. Work with relevant county agencies to develop best practices manuals that maximize the public benefits of existing and new public facilities through co-location, redevelopment, consolidation, redistribution, partnerships, and a focus on design excellence.
- C-5. Develop guidance to conduct a racial equity and social justice impact analysis when planning, designing and budgeting for new community facilities such as libraries, recreation centers, schools, parks, and public infrastructure to determine whether the new amenity will be accessible to nearby residents of all backgrounds and will reduce any existing inequities in access.
- C-6. Identify opportunities for adaptive reuse of underutilized urban and suburban land for agriculture to ensure fresh, locally grown food is accessible throughout the county. Update the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance to identify urban and suburban farming as permitted uses.
- C-7. Examine the Urban Agricultural Property Tax Credit to identify opportunities to enhance and expand the tax credit to support urban and suburban farming, providing access to locally grown food as well as opportunities for physical activity and social connections.
- C-8. Revise the Commercial/Residential and Employment Zones Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines to identify urban and suburban farming as a public benefit.
- C-9. Create Health Impact Assessment tools to apply at the community and individual site levels in our Master Plan and Development Review processes to incorporate human health considerations into our planning decisions.
- C-10. Identify barriers that can be eliminated and incentives that can be applied during planning processes to make culturally appropriate food more accessible to all County citizens, building on the work of the Montgomery County Food Council.

*[Retrofit centers of activity and large-scale single-use developments to include a mixture of uses and diversity of housing types and to provide a critical mass of housing, jobs, services and amenities for a vibrant, dynamic complete communities.*

- *Ensure employment uses in economic clusters develop in a mixed-use format along with housing, retail, amenities and transit, and are integrated into the surrounding communities.*
- *Allow creation of co-located subsidized housing, discussed further in the Affordable and Attainable Housing Chapter, for industries that employ large numbers of employees (permanent or seasonal).*
- *Encourage higher density economic and housing cooperatives (live/work areas such as home occupations, artist villages, farmers market/village, tech/life-science startup incubators).]*

**Actions:**

- C-11. Further the Missing Middle Housing Study by identifying options and implementation strategies to increase the variety and density of housing types in single-use developments.
- C-12. Evaluate existing centers of activity and single-use developments and identify recommendations to achieve more complete communities, as well as improve connections to surrounding areas.

## Design, Arts and Culture: Investing and Building Community

*[Use design-based tools to create attractive places with lasting value that encourage social interaction and reinforce a sense of place.*

- *Use codes, design guidelines, pattern based zoning and regulatory tools that focus on the physical form of buildings, streets and spaces to ensure development across the county satisfies the following goals through massing, architecture, landscape and street design.*
- *Replace vague concepts such as “compatibility” with clear standards for form, site layout, setbacks, architecture and the location of parking. Adopt rules for “missing middle” housing types such as tiny houses, cottages, courtyard clusters, duplexes, multiplexes, and small apartment buildings; shared housing, co-housing and accessory dwelling units (ADUs). Amend land use, design and zoning regulations, including the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations, to remove regulatory barriers and facilitate development of these housing types.*
- *Update the zoning code to include basic form-based elements for all zones. Adopt context-sensitive design guidance for all master planning efforts.]*

### **Actions:**

- D-1. Update the zoning code to include basic form-based elements for all zones.
- D-2. Amend land use, design and zoning regulations, including the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations, to remove regulatory barriers and facilitate development of “Missing Middle” housing types such as tiny houses, cottages, courtyard clusters, duplexes, multiplexes, and small apartment buildings; shared housing, co-housing and accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and neighborhood serving retail.
- D-3. Replace vague regulatory concepts such as “compatibility” with clear standards for form, site layout, setbacks, architecture and the location of parking for such buildings.
- D-4. Collaborate with county agencies to develop a “Design Excellence Program” for public buildings such that their site layout and architecture demonstrate principles of sustainability and resilience, inclusive cultural representation and architecture as civic art.
- D-5. Create guidelines that promote cost-effective design strategies for projects with high levels of affordable housing.
- D-6. Update the county’s road code standards to align with the Complete Streets Design Guidelines.

*[Promote design strategies and retrofits to make new and existing buildings more sustainable and resilient to disruption and change.*

- *Encourage state-of-the-practice sustainability features such as net-zero/carbon positive buildings, biophilic design and on-site energy generation for new public buildings and large private developments on sites across the county.*
- *Promote cost-effective infill and adaptive reuse design strategies to retrofit single-use commercial sites such as retail strips, malls and office parks into mixed use developments.*
- *Incentivize the reuse of historic buildings and existing structures to accommodate the evolution of communities, maintain building diversity, preserve naturally occurring affordable space and retain embodied energy of structures.*



- *Establish standards for public facilities that align with infill and redevelopment strategies and acknowledge the county's limited land supply and ambitious climate action goals.*
- *Implement policies to ensure that new buildings and parking structures are adaptable to changing technologies, market preferences and able to mitigate effects of climate change over time.]*

**Actions:**

- D-7. Update the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the zoning code, and Historic Resources Preservation Tax credit to incentivize and facilitate adaptive reuse and/or repurposing of existing buildings.
- D-8. Develop a sprawl repair manual to promote cost effective design strategies and establish regulatory approaches to accommodate retrofitting of single-use commercial sites such as retail strips, malls and office parks into mixed-use developments that are more energy efficient.
- D-9. Develop guidelines and standards for climate-sensitive design principles and materials for new public and private development projects. Ensure these standards include strategies to maximize greenhouse gas reductions in the built environment, including generating clean renewable energy and reducing heat island effect.
- D-10. Collaborate with MCPS, Montgomery Parks and other public agencies to update standards for public facilities that align with infill and redevelopment strategies and acknowledge the county's limited land supply and ambitious climate action goals, utilizing tools such as colocation, in coordination with Montgomery County Growth and Infrastructure Policy (formerly Subdivision Staging Policy).
- D-11. Update the Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines to include incentives for adaptable design.
- D-12. Conduct a study to identify planning policies and regulatory changes required to make aging in place a viable option.

*[Support arts and cultural institutions and programming to celebrate our diversity, strengthen pride of place and make the county more attractive and interesting.*

- *Create an inclusive arts and culture plan that establishes a refreshed vision, sets goals, criteria, and priorities for the county's support of the arts and culture sector and addresses how the county's arts and culture resources are allocated.*
- *Improve access for artists and arts groups to affordable living, working, and presentation spaces with a focus on economic, geographic, and cultural equity.*
- *Promote public art, cultural spaces, and cultural hubs along corridors and in complete communities.*
- *Eliminate regulatory barriers to live-work spaces, home studios, galleries, and other small-scale art-making and creative businesses.*
- *Enable all residents to experience public art daily by incorporating it into the design of buildings, streets, infrastructure and public spaces.*
- *Use new public facilities to demonstrate principles of architecture as civic art and broader cultural representation.*
- *Encourage property owners, non-profit organizations, and government agencies to maximize use of public spaces for artistic and cultural programming, activation, and placemaking. Maintain an annual calendar of events varying in scale, time and location to help guide efforts to improve the reach of diverse programming.*
- *Partner with agencies to strengthen data collection about investments and better align arts-and-culture related policies with Thrive Montgomery 2050's goals of economic competitiveness, social equity and environmental resilience.]*

**Actions:**

- D-13. Support the Arts and Humanities Council in creating inclusive arts and culture plans that establish a refreshed vision, set goals, criteria, and priorities for the county's support of the arts and culture sector and addresses how the county's arts and culture resources are allocated.
- D-14. Update the zoning code to eliminate regulatory barriers to live-work spaces, home studios, galleries, and other small-scale art-making and creative businesses and incentivize the provision of affordable space for arts and cultural uses (rehearsal and workshop space; presentation and exhibition space, etc.).
- D-15. Update the Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines and Art Review Panel review processes to streamline, expand, and clarify options for the provision of public art benefits.
- D-16. Support Montgomery Parks, other county agencies and nonprofits to improve the reach of diverse programming by creating and maintaining an annual consolidated calendar of artistic and cultural programming, activation, and placemaking events varying in scale, time and location.
- D-17. Allocate more funding for public art within county construction projects such as buildings, parks, and transportation infrastructure.
- D-18. Create an "arts space bank" of underused spaces in commercial and institutional buildings and provide equitable access to arts and culture organizations.
- D-19. Partner with local, statewide, and federal cultural heritage organizations to seek grants that promote and preserve historical and cultural sites countywide.
- D-20. Partner with Montgomery County Public Schools to introduce students to Thrive Montgomery 2050 and local land use planning as a part of the standard educational curriculum.
- D-21. Establish a framework for continued data collection of key metrics as outlined in the chapter titled "Design, Arts & Culture: Investing and building community".

## Transportation and Communication Networks: Connecting People, Places and Ideas

*[Develop a safe, comfortable and irresistible network for walking, biking, and rolling.*

- o Expand the street grid in downtowns, town centers, transit corridors, and suburban centers of activity to create shorter blocks.*
- o Stop planning or constructing new highways or major road widenings for cars.*
- o Convert existing traffic lanes and on-street parking to create space for walkways, bikeways, and street buffers with landscaping and street trees.*
- o Prioritize the provision of safe, comfortable, and attractive sidewalks, bikeways, roadway crossings, and other improvements to support walking, bicycling, and transit usage in capital budgets, development approvals and mandatory referrals.*
- o Transform the road network by incorporating complete streets design principles with the goal of eliminating all transportation-related roadway fatalities and severe injuries and supporting the emergence of more livable communities.]*

### **Actions:**

- T-1. Create and maintain a consolidated Transportation Master Plan that: 1) combines and reconciles the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, Bicycle Master Plan and Pedestrian Master Plan, 2) adds elements for equity, safety, universal design, access management, curbside management, transportation demand management, and climate adaptation and resilience, and 3) establishes a comprehensive list of metrics and targets to monitor the performance of the transportation system and creates and maintains the accompanying data sources.
- T-2. Remove master-planned but unbuilt highways and road widenings that are not consistent with this plan, add dedicated transit lanes, upgrade transitways to median-running, and repurpose general-purpose lanes and on-street parking for sidewalks, bikeways, transit lanes, street buffers, street trees, and stormwater management.
- T-3. Develop an Access Management Plan to reduce access points and conflict points for all modes of transportation by developing guidelines for frequent safe crossings, driveway spacing and frequency, restricted intersection corner clearance and median treatments, and network solutions including completing the street grid network and developing an alley network.
- T-4. Develop an Aging Readiness Functional Master Plan to support safe transportation options for the county's aging population and address topics such as transit use, curbside management, and street infrastructure.
- T-5. Develop a Curbside Management Plan that includes strategies and regulations to provide reliable access to homes, jobs, retail opportunities, and public facilities and amenities, including a logistics plan to facilitate increasing volumes of e-commerce-related deliveries.
- T-6. Create guidelines for developing a safety component for master plans focused on eliminating transportation-related fatalities and severe injuries.
- T-7. Create guidelines to transition auto-centric corridors to multimodal complete streets for master plans, capital projects and regulatory reviews.
- T-8. Create guidelines for prioritizing transportation projects to improve walking, bicycling, and transit in Equity Focus Areas.
- T-9. Update the subdivision regulations to require a safety finding in regulatory reviews.
- T-10. Develop block density targets for downtowns, town centers, transit corridors and suburban communities to guide master plan recommendations and regulatory conditions.

- T-11. Implement demonstration programs and projects to encourage innovation and test new ideas before implementing these ideas countywide.
- T-12. Collaborate with MCDOT and SHA to develop a street tree planting program focused on mitigating heat island effect and improving stormwater management within public rights-of-ways.
- T-13. Create strategies to support the travel needs of vulnerable users of the transportation system by improving their access to jobs, food centers, age-restricted housing, health care, and other services.
- T-14. Incorporate universal design principles into the county code, regulations, policies, and guidelines to improve access for seniors and persons with disabilities.
- T-15. Discourage multiple turn lanes in downtowns and town centers.

*[Build a world-class transit system.*

- *Build a network of rail, bus rapid transit, and local bus infrastructure and services that make transit the fastest, most convenient and most reliable way to travel to centers of economic, social and educational activity and opportunity.*
- *Convert existing general purpose traffic lanes to dedicated transit lanes.*
- *Connect historically disadvantaged people and parts of the county to jobs, amenities, and services by prioritizing investments in increasing access to frequent and reliable all-day transit service.*
- *Ensure safe and comfortable access to transit stations via walking, rolling, and bicycling.]*

**Actions:**

- T-16. Form a subregional transportation or transit authority, such as the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, that would include Montgomery County and Prince George's County, among others.
- T-17. Develop short-term and long-term bus transit plans to extend local and regional bus service to underserved communities in Montgomery County, improve reliability, frequency, and span of service and restructure local and regional bus service to integrate with existing and planned rail and BRT.
- T-18. Strengthen the Washington Suburban Transit Commission to play a stronger role in coordinating transportation projects and policy in the region.
- T-19. Expand commuter rail capacity on the MARC Brunswick Line to provide additional station locations in Montgomery County and provide, frequent bidirectional all-day service, seven days a week.
- T-20. Provide dedicated transit lanes that can accommodate heavy rail as part of the replacement of the American Legion Bridge.

*[Adapt policies to reflect the economic and environmental costs of driving alone*

- *Employ pricing mechanisms, such as congestion pricing or the collection and allocation of tolls to support walking, rolling, bicycling, and transit.*
- *Manage parking efficiently by charging market rates and reducing the supply of public and private parking.*
- *Encourage the proliferation of non-polluting vehicles by upgrading government fleets and requiring appropriate infrastructure.]*

**Actions:**

- T-21. Eliminate motor vehicle parking minimums for new development projects in downtowns, town centers, rail and BRT corridors and adjacent communities to encourage travel by walking, bicycling, and transit.
- T-22. Update motor vehicle public parking rates to reflect the market.
- T-23. Apply pricing mechanisms in Montgomery County to foster equity and distribute revenue to promote walking, bicycling, and transit.
- T-24. Develop an implementation plan for transitioning to zero emission fueling in residential and commercial development and public facilities and spaces.
- T-25. Update all county fleets and contracted fleet providers to zero emission vehicles.
- T-26. Develop county incentives to accelerate conversion of privately-owned fleets to sustainable, zero emission vehicles.
- T-27. Prepare a plan to develop, prioritize, and implement flood mitigation measures for existing flood-prone county transportation facilities based on vulnerability assessments and consideration of extreme precipitation events and sea level rise.

*[Develop and extend advanced communications networks*

- *Facilitate construction of high-speed fiber optic and wireless infrastructure and other information and communication technology to supplement transportation links with improved virtual connections.*
- *Focus investment in communications infrastructure and services to connect people and parts of the county that lack convenient access to jobs and educational opportunities*
- *Support teleworking by accelerating deployment of information and communications technology and making working from home easier by facilitating Complete Communities.]*

**Actions:**

- T-28. Implement new Transportation Demand Management policies, programs and strategies that adapt and evolve with prevailing technologies and best practices.
- T-29. Create new Transportation Management Districts (TMDs) in urban and suburban areas, prioritizing higher density activity centers and areas with rail and BRT access.
- T-30. Implement FiberNet, the county's high-speed fiber optic communications network, and support further modernization of information and communications technology infrastructure needed to support equitable access to information services and attract businesses.
- T-31. Develop strategies to facilitate deployment of advanced wireless telecommunications services throughout the county.

## Affordable and Attainable Housing: More of Everything

*[Encourage the production of more housing to better match supply with demand*

- *Expand opportunities to increase residential density, especially along major corridors and in locations where additional housing can near high-capacity transit and to assist in the development of Complete Communities (as described more fully in XX).*
- *Increase the number of income-restricted affordable housing units, especially for our low-income households.*
- *As part of the commitment to the Housing First approach, develop strategies to build deeply affordable housing and provide permanent supportive housing.*
- *Reform building codes to reduce costs by accommodating innovative construction methods and materials including modular prefabricated housing and mass timber.*
- *Prioritize use of public land for co-location of housing and other uses, particularly where government agencies design new facilities or dispose of real property.*
- *Increase regulatory flexibility to incentivize residential infill, redevelopment, and repositioning of office parks, shopping malls, and other underutilized properties.*
- *Provide financial incentives such as Payment in Lieu of Taxes to boost housing production for market rate and affordable housing, especially near transit and in Complete Communities.]*

### **Actions**

- H-1. Expand housing options in detached residential areas near high-capacity transit by modifying the zoning code to allow duplexes, triplexes, and quadruplexes, residential types by-right and with smaller lot areas.
- H-2. Look at market-oriented mechanisms to incentivize affordable housing production, including inclusionary zoning requirements, automatic Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs) or tax abatement requirements.
- H-3. Create and analyze an inventory of available surplus, vacant and underutilized private and public lands for public and private partners to acquire for housing, with special attention to assembling land.
- H-4. Establish incentives to encourage conversion of existing high-vacancy office and retail sites into residential uses through adaptive reuse or redevelopment of the site.
- H-5. Create flexible zoning incentives for conversion of planned and existing office and retail sites to residential uses, including allowing properties to reallocate their non-residential Floor Area Ratio to residential use.
- H-6. Establish a more streamlined process for affordable housing projects, including revisions to the Local Map Amendment, Floating Zone, Conditional Use, and Mandatory Referral processes.
- H-7. Consider using financial tools and zoning incentives to encourage alternative construction types.

- H-8. Provide appropriate financial incentives, such as tax abatements, Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs), and Tax Increment Financing (TIFs) to increase housing production in targeted locations near high-capacity transit.
- H-9. Consider implementing income averaging for the MPDU program to reach broad levels of affordability.
- H-10. Allow for rent increases in Moderately Priced Dwelling Units to be indexed to increases in Area Median Income to help preserve affordability.
- H-11. Explore changes to the recordation tax to generate additional funding for the HIF.

*[Plan for a wide range of housing types and sizes to meet diverse needs.*

- *Facilitate the development of a variety of housing types in every part of the county but especially in areas near transit, employment and educational opportunities.*
- *Support creative housing options including single-room occupancy units (SROs); “missing middle” housing types such as tiny houses, cottages, duplexes, multiplexes, and small apartment buildings; shared housing, co-housing, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), social housing and cooperative housing to help meet housing needs and diversify housing options.*
- *Encourage provision of multi-bedroom units suitable for households with children in multifamily housing.*
- *Integrate people with disabilities, people transitioning from homelessness, and older adults into attainable housing with appropriate amenities and services.]*

## **Actions**

- H-12. Create an affordable housing ombudsman to manage projects with an emphasis on coordination across agencies.
- H-13. Review regulations and policies, including impact taxes and zoning, to remove barriers and encourage the production of creative housing options, including multi-generational housing, single room occupancy, shared housing, cooperative housing, and co-housing.
- H-14. Consider fee waivers, financial assistance, and other incentives to increase ADU production.
- H-15. Explore the possibility of county-offered low-cost financing or financial assistance to homeowners who are willing to enter their ADU into a deed restriction that restricts the rent.
- H-16. Develop incentives and tools to encourage the development of housing units that meet the needs of families, including larger size three-bedroom (or more) units.
- H-17. Consider exempting first-time homebuyers from county-imposed fees and taxes like the recordation tax.
- H-18. Explore establishing a community land trust to create permanent, affordable homeownership opportunities.
- H-19. Create a Housing Functional Master Plan to provide measurable housing goals and strategies for different market segments in Montgomery County as well as an analysis of affordability gaps and impediments to the housing supply.
- H-20. Explore the county’s and the state’s ability to make homeowner’s association (HOA) and condo fees more affordable for residents of affordable units.

- H-21. Work with Prince George's County and the State of Maryland to attain a 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) set-aside for Montgomery and Prince George's County.
- H-22. Enhance implementation of the county's Housing First Initiative, which places people experiencing homelessness into housing as rapidly as possible and provides wraparound services to help them maintain their housing.
- H-23. Explore changes to the zoning code to support the creation of permanent supportive housing units like Single-Room Occupancy (SRO) or Personal Living Quarter (PLQ) units by-right in all residential and mixed-use zones.
- H-24. Develop zoning and financial incentives to designate and build housing for people with disabilities.

*[Promote racial and economic diversity and equity in housing in every neighborhood*

- *Calibrate the applicability of the Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program and other affordable housing programs to provide price-regulated units appropriate for income levels ranging from deeply affordable to workforce.*
- *Develop targeted strategies to minimize gentrification and displacement while promoting integration and avoiding the concentration of poverty.*
- *Refine regulatory tools and financial incentives with the goal of avoiding a net loss of market-rate and income-restricted affordable housing stock without erecting disincentives for the construction of additional units.*
- *Calibrate the applicability of the Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program and other affordable housing programs to provide price-regulated units appropriate for income levels ranging from deeply affordable to workforce.*
- *Identify and allocate additional revenue for the Housing Initiative Fund (HIF) to meet the needs of low-income households.*
- *Expand existing programs designed to increase access to homeownership, especially among low-income residents, people of color, and young adults; create new programs and entities such as community land trusts to maintain long term affordable home ownership opportunities.*
- *Improve collection of data on neighborhood change to monitor and address involuntary displacement, disinvestment, and related phenomena.]*

**Actions**

- H-25. Create, maintain, update, and analyze a comprehensive inventory of housing properties at-risk for affordability loss by type, location, and risk profile to enhance preservation pipeline management, prioritization, and resource allocation decisions.
- H-26. Consider implementing Housing Affordability Strategy plans for small areas with expiring subsidies or existing market-rate affordable housing that allow for the enhancement and preservation of long-term housing affordability through the provision of additional density and zoning changes.



- H-27. In the case of redevelopment, create strategies to retain naturally occurring affordable housing and existing housing types that are typically not constructed in the marketplace including 3+ bedroom units for families.
- H-28. Create an interactive monitoring database that maps indicators of neighborhood change including gentrification and displacement, and concentration of poverty and segregation.
- H-29. Create a “No Net Loss” of Affordable Housing Floating Zone in targeted areas like the Purple Line corridor.

## Parks and Recreation for an Increasingly Urban and Diverse Community: Active and Social

### Actions:

P-1. Incorporate and elaborate on specific actions identified here and other planning exercises into the 2022 Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) plan and all subsequent PROS plans.

*[Focus on creating high quality urban parks]*

- *Prioritize acquisition of land for parks in urban centers and other intensively developed places along growth corridors and in complete communities using the Legacy Urban Space CIP commitment and Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan (EPS Plan) as a starting point.*
- *Offer programs in urban parks to encourage usage, extend time spent in parks and make these spaces centers of activity.*
- *Implement the Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan (EPS Plan) to ensure that densely populated parts of the county enjoy walkable access to a full range of park experiences.*
- *Integrate privately-owned public spaces (POPS) with the park/recreation system to supplement publicly-owned and managed gathering spaces and athletic facilities, using a range of ownership and management approaches to public space.*
- *Coordinate land use and park planning to ensure complete communities have access to a range of park types through a combination of public and privately-owned facilities.*

### Actions:

P-2. Implement the Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan (EPS Plan) to ensure that densely populated parts of the county enjoy walkable access to a full range of park experiences.

P-3. Revise the Recreation Guidelines to ensure that they accurately reflect the availability and accessibility of recreational amenities throughout the County.

P-4. Work with the Planning Department to utilize and reference the EPS Design Guidelines while creating master plans and during the development review process.

P-5. Measure the progress of the Legacy Urban Space Program and other dedicated funding sources in increasing park acreage in the most densely populated areas of the County.

- P-6. Prioritize park activation programs – specifically in urban parks and equity focus areas – to expose residents to a variety of unique park experiences and make these spaces centers of activity.
- P-7. Strengthen the role of Privately-Owned Public Spaces (POPS) such that they can perform as public spaces while leveraging private investment.
- P-8. Ensure that the Parks Department is a leading voice in creating strong recommendations for both public and privately-owned parks in Master/Sector and/or Functional Plans.

*[Use park and recreation facilities/programs to promote active lifestyles]*

- *Include active recreation as an integral element in park planning and design.*
- *Encourage active recreation as a key component of POPS in all parts of the county.*
- *Provide park/recreation facilities and programs designed to encourage residents of all ages/cultures to engage in vigorous physical activity.*
- *Integrate park trails and paths into transportation planning and better use them to connect residents to jobs and centers of activity.*

**Actions:**

- P-9. Update and implement the Countywide Park Trails Master Plan with an emphasis on connecting trails to neighborhoods through connector trails, trailheads, and extending existing trails. Emphasize trail connections to neighboring jurisdictions to support regional connectivity.
- P-10. Amend the CIP to allow more flexibility so the department can be more agile in its service delivery.

*[Ensure that parks and recreation opportunities are accessible and equitably distributed]*

- *Amend the EPS Plan study area to incorporate more refined analysis of equity in its methodology.*
- *Use equity measures in developing capital budgets for park and recreation facilities.*
- *Gather data on – and address – barriers to participation in park and recreation programs*
- *Improve accessibility of park and recreation facilities via walking, biking and transit.*

**Actions:**

- P-11. Amend the EPS study area to incorporate the equity focus areas and other innovative equity tools in its methodology.
- P-12. Work with transportation agencies to provide bus routes to increase transit access to parks.

- P-13. Apply innovative technologies to calibrate service delivery strategies to the needs of the County's changing demographic and cultural trends.
- P-14. Develop a Racial and Social Equity Plan incorporating data driven tools such as the Equity Focus Areas and EPS to ensure that race and demographics do not predetermine the quantity and quality of parks or programming in different parts of the County.
- P-15. Create a trail connections plan to identify and prioritize missing linkages between park trail facilities and to neighborhoods to eliminate gaps in service.

*[Make social connection a central objective for parks and recreation]*

- *Design park, recreation, and related infrastructure and services around building community, creating opportunities for interaction, and making parks and recreational amenities a central element of complete communities.*
- *Connect neighborhoods and people to parks with a world-class trail network.*
- *Include food/beverage in planning and programming parks and recreational facilities.*
- *Provide park amenities that appeal to visitors with different interests/physical abilities.*

**Actions:**

- P-16. Apply design guidelines, such as the EPS Plan's "Designing Public Spaces," to encourage the delivery of public spaces that are inclusive, welcoming, accessible, comfortable, safe and promote a platform for community gathering and enjoyment.
- P-17. Expand the community gardens program to serve more residents, especially in underserved and high-density areas.
- P-18. Promote the creation of multi-use, accessible, and multi-generational facilities when designing parks.
- P-19. Enhance opportunities for food and beverage offerings in parks, particularly in the more urban parts of the County.
- P-20. Develop a Blueprint for World Class Trails in Montgomery County that identifies opportunities to 1. improve connectivity, 2. enhance the existing trail network, 3. develop signature projects, and 4. otherwise deliver a wide range of exceptional trail experiences to visitors and residents with varying interests and levels of fitness.

*[Update park facility standards and acquisition strategies to align with infill development and adaptive reuse. Coordinate with county agencies to encourage the simultaneous accommodation of multiple needs, including recreation, education, community-building, and*

*resource stewardship through - co-location, adaptive reuse, co-programming and other forms of combined or shared uses of public land, buildings and related infrastructure.]*

## **ACTIONS:**

- P-21. Continue to refine park facility standards, land acquisition strategies, and other key policies during PROS updates to integrate parks more effectively into the fabric of intensively developed communities.
- P-22. Coordinate with county agencies to encourage the simultaneous accommodation of multiple needs, including recreation, education, community-building, and resource stewardship through - co-location, adaptive reuse, co-programming and other forms of combined or shared uses of public land, buildings and related infrastructure.
- P-23. Cooperate with government and private sector property owners to identify opportunities for park and recreation facilities on underutilized land or in unconventional locations such as rooftops, parking garages, and unused public rights-of-way.

*[Maintain high standards of environmental stewardship in park management and operations]*

- *Reaffirm the Parks Department's commitment to resource conservation, stewardship, and sustainability practices such as innovative stream and habitat restoration projects.*
- *Selectively acquire additional land where needed to protect sensitive natural resources, improve water quality, increase tree cover, enhance wildlife corridors, curb invasive species, and achieve other environmental goals.*
- *Create a resiliency plan to improve the ability of park and recreation facilities and natural resources to withstand the effects of climate change.*

## **Actions:**

- P-24. Create a resiliency plan to improve parks' ability to withstand the effects of climate change. This plan should align with the Climate Action Plan and the Sustainability Plan.
- P-25. Prioritize ecological restoration practices (e.g. stream restoration, native stream buffer plantings, habitat enhancements, and wetland creation) in the stream valleys of the County's most developed watersheds.
- P-26. Develop and pursue a priority list of natural resource-based land acquisition targets that protect sensitive watersheds, preserve unique and rare habitats, complete critical wildlife corridor connections, and connect communities to natural areas.
- P-27. Ensure environmental and sustainability services improve public health, allow for opportunities for nature interpretation and education, and corrects environmental justices within equity and/or densely populated areas.

P-28. Develop coordinated strategies with other agencies, neighboring jurisdictions, and relevant stakeholders to target meaningful stormwater treatment opportunities before stormwater reaches parkland. Identify and eliminate point source (piped) stormwater discharge into stream channels on parkland through state-of-the-art stormwater management, outfall enhancements and mitigation techniques.

P-29. Assess the department's analytical tools and standards for resource management to ensure that they reflect state-of-the-practice understanding of the most effective and efficient means of achieving stewardship goals.

*[Integrate parks/rec/public spaces into economic development strategies and land use planning to attract employers and workers, build social connections, encourage healthy lifestyles, and create vibrant places, especially as part of complete communities]*

**Actions:**

P-30. Explore the creation of alternative funding tools such as the Bethesda Overlay Zone and resulting Park Impact Payment to support the acquisition and development of parks in urban areas.

P-31. Use strategic marketing plans that promote programs, trails, and parks targeting multiple demographics, increasing community engagement, and advocacy for the park system.