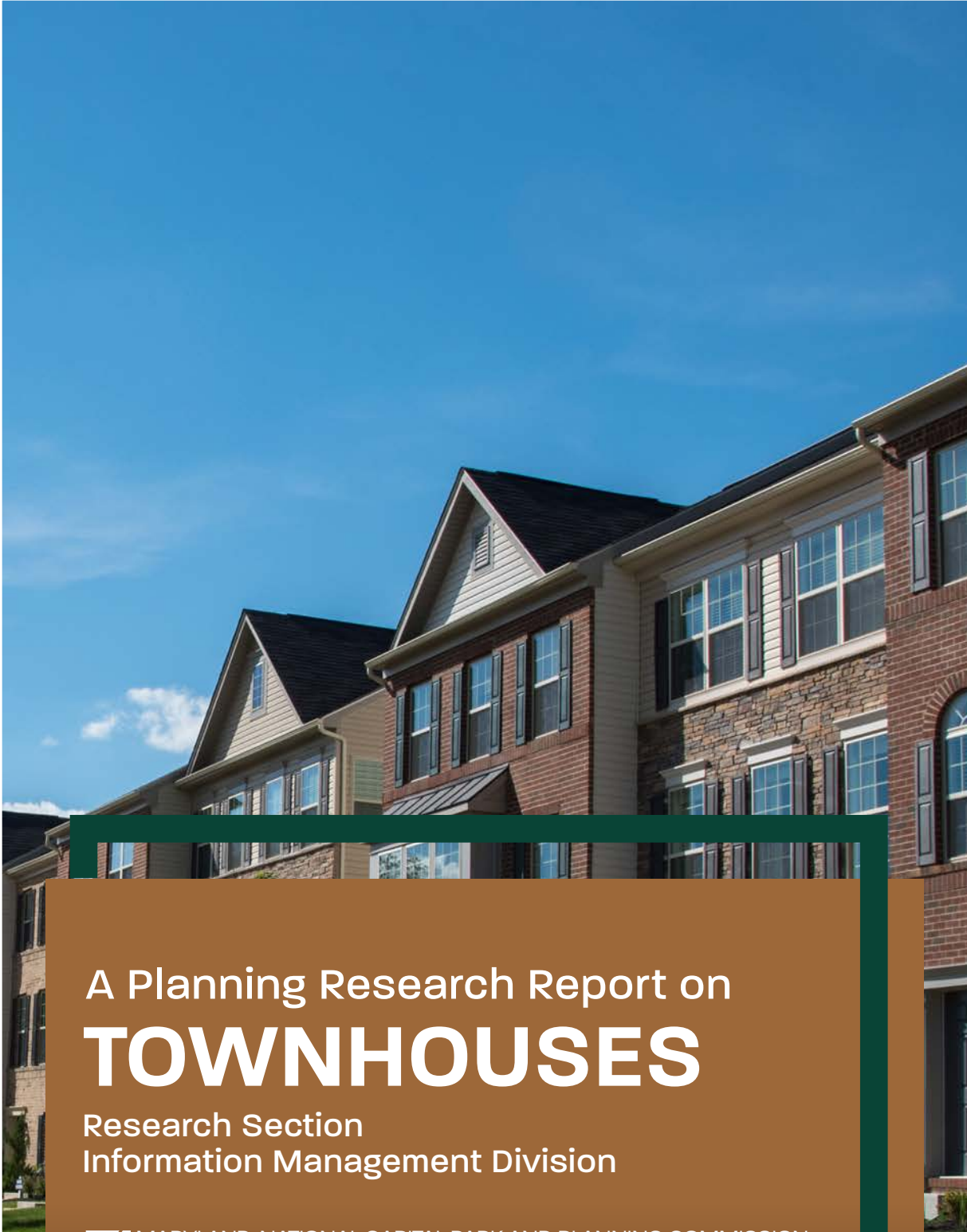


SUMMER 2023



A Planning Research Report on
TOWNHOUSES

Research Section
Information Management Division



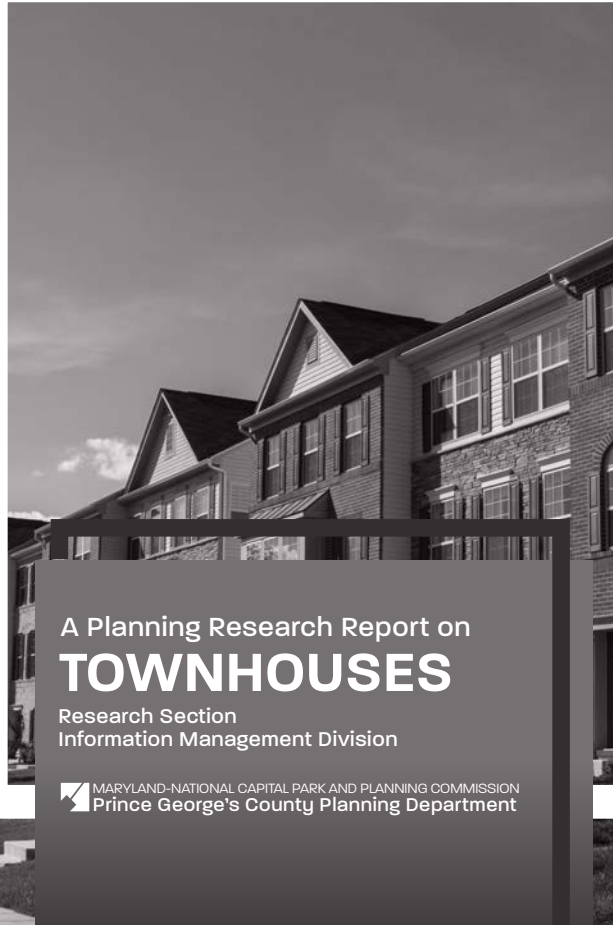
MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
Prince George's County Planning Department

Abstract

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This planning research report on townhouses serves as a reference document for legislative initiatives, by analyzing townhouse development trends, locations, and physical and financial characteristics in Prince George's County.

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Executive Summary

This Townhouse Report analyzes the inventory, timing, amount, prices, values, and location of townhouse development(s) throughout Prince George's County. This Report is intended to support legislative or regulatory mechanisms to achieve the County's General Plan 2035 goals. Development and land use planning related to townhouse development in neighboring counties in Maryland and Virginia are also summarized for reference.

This Report serves as a reference document for legislative initiatives, by analyzing townhouse development trends, locations, and physical and financial characteristics in Prince George's County. The County Zoning Ordinance's definitions for townhouses are used in this Report.

The key findings in this Report are summarized as follows:

- There were 359,163 residential units in the County as of 2022. Development for those units collectively occupies 93,950 acres (146.8 square miles).
- Single-family detached (SFD) houses have been predominant. The total number and proportion of both townhouses and multifamily housing to the County's total units have been roughly close to each other since 1994. As of 2022, 59.9 % of the units were single-family, 20.26% were townhouses, and 19.4% were multifamily.
- There were 59,878 townhouse units as of 2022. Over time, the absolute number of townhouses has increased. However, its percent share of total housing units has remained at roughly 19%.
- The year 2017 represented a turning point for townhouses. The absolute number and percentage share of new townhouses exceeded the single-family detached housing. Beginning in 2019 and continuing through 2022 there were two to three times more townhouses built relative to single-family homes.
- District 6 had the largest number of townhouse units. District 7 ranked second. District 3 had the smallest number of townhouses.
- The majority of existing townhouses are outside the General Plan 2035 Centers. This also is true for new townhouse construction and approved townhouse development.
- Within the General Plan 2035 Centers, Neighborhood Centers ranked first in the number of townhouses. Town Centers had the largest number of new or approved townhouses. Density is higher inside the centers than outside, except for 2011 and 2012.
- The average size of townhouses has increased by approximately 63.39% between the decade of the 1970s and the decade of the 2010s. On the single-family detached side, the growth during the same period was 112.89%. The average size of the latter was significantly larger than the former.
- Between 2010 and 2022, the proportion of new townhouse construction to total new housing construction oscillated but gradually increased except for 2022. The share of single-family detached decreased. The percentage of multifamily housing swayed notably but became considerably predominant in 2022.
- Between 2010 and 2022, new sales and resale prices for townhouses were consistently lower than those for single-family detached. New single-family and townhouses prices rose at a somewhat similar rate. For resales, the former has a much higher growth in prices than the latter.
- Townhouses are permitted in a number of zones. These zones comprise less than 8% of all land in the County and are smaller than that of single-family detached housing. Among the zones, the Residential, Single-Family-Attached zone is the largest.

Part I:
Townhouse
Definitions

The Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance's definitions for townhouses in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th paragraphs in this Townhouse Definitions Section are applied in this entire Report.

The County Zoning Ordinance defines a townhouse as: "a building containing four or more dwelling units that are attached horizontally through, and entirely separated by, common walls, with each dwelling unit occupying space from the lowest floor to the roof of the building and located on a separate townhouse lot."¹

The Zoning Ordinance further defines two-family, three-family, and single-family attached (SFA) homes. The two-family, or duplex, is "a building containing two dwelling units. Units may be located side by side in a horizontal configuration or stacked one above the other in a vertical configuration, sharing common vertical solid walls extending from the grade to the roof, or horizontal floors and ceilings."

The three-family, or triplex, is a "building containing three dwelling units. Units may be located side by side in a horizontal configuration or stacked one above the other in a vertical configuration, sharing common vertical walls or horizontal floors and ceilings." The single-family attached is a "dwelling which is attached by means of a solid, common wall to one or more other dwellings."

To further differentiate housing types between single-family detached and attached, the County Zoning Ordinance defines single-family detached as, "A single detached building on a lot, other than a manufactured home dwelling, which contains a single dwelling unit and that sits on a permanent foundation."

The following diagrams and images illustrate dimensions of various housing types. In the diagrams, the red dots indicate setbacks and heights, which are the bulk regulations for the zones.

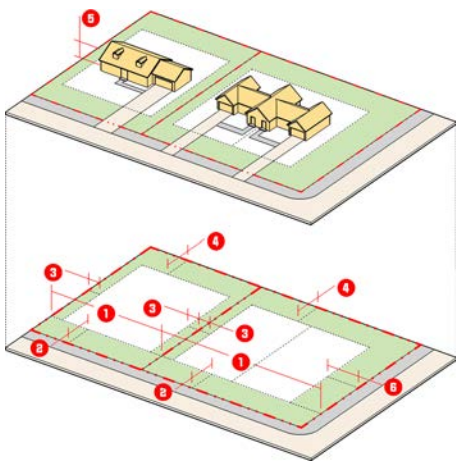


Diagram 1. Duplex Dimension

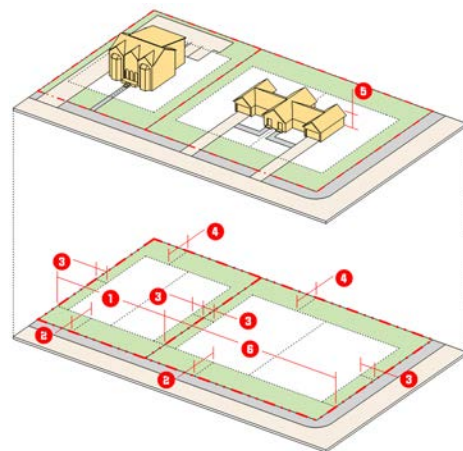


Diagram 2. Duplex or Triplex Dimension

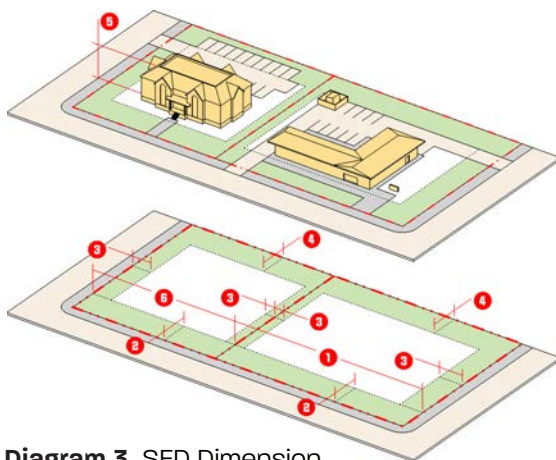


Diagram 3. SFD Dimension

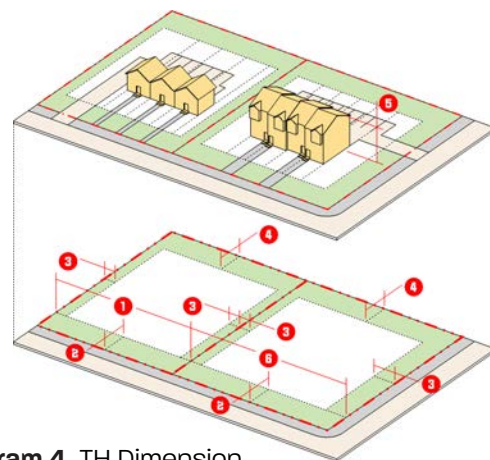


Diagram 4. TH Dimension

1 Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, & Landscape Manual (27-2500), <https://online.encodeplus.com/reg/princegeorgescounty-md/doc-viewer.aspx#secid-57>



Figure 1. Two Over Two townhouses

PHOTO: Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning

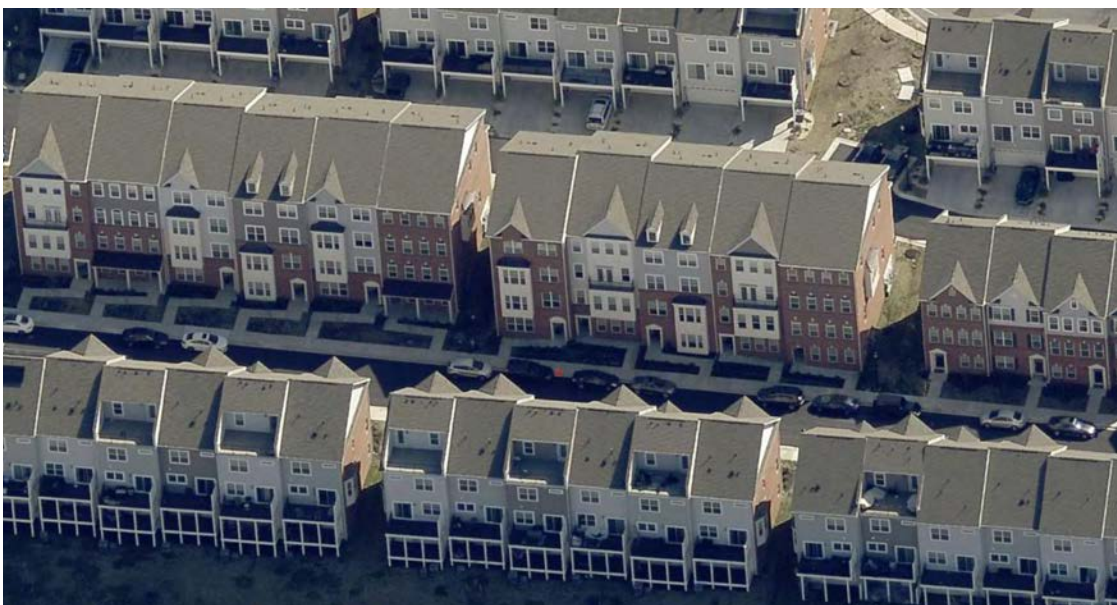


Figure 2. Two Over Two townhouses

PHOTO: Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning

In this Report, the abbreviations are used to describe three housing types as follows:

- SFD: single-family detached.
- TH: townhouses, single-family attached, duplex, or triplex.
- MF: Multifamily including condominiums or apartments.

There are various definitions on townhouses for land use, real estate, or data tabulation purposes for governmental programs. All other definitions from the U.S. Census Bureau, the American Planning Association, and the private sector are quoted in the Appendix of this Report for reference purposes only. In this Report, staff uses the terms dwelling and housing units interchangeably. They are fundamentally the same.



Part II:
Current
Conditions

HOUSING INVENTORY AND TRENDS

Chart 1 and its companion **Table 1a** illustrate that the total number of townhouses has been significantly lower than the single-family detached. So has been multifamily housing. The proportion of both townhouses and multifamily to total housing units has been roughly close to each other since 1994.

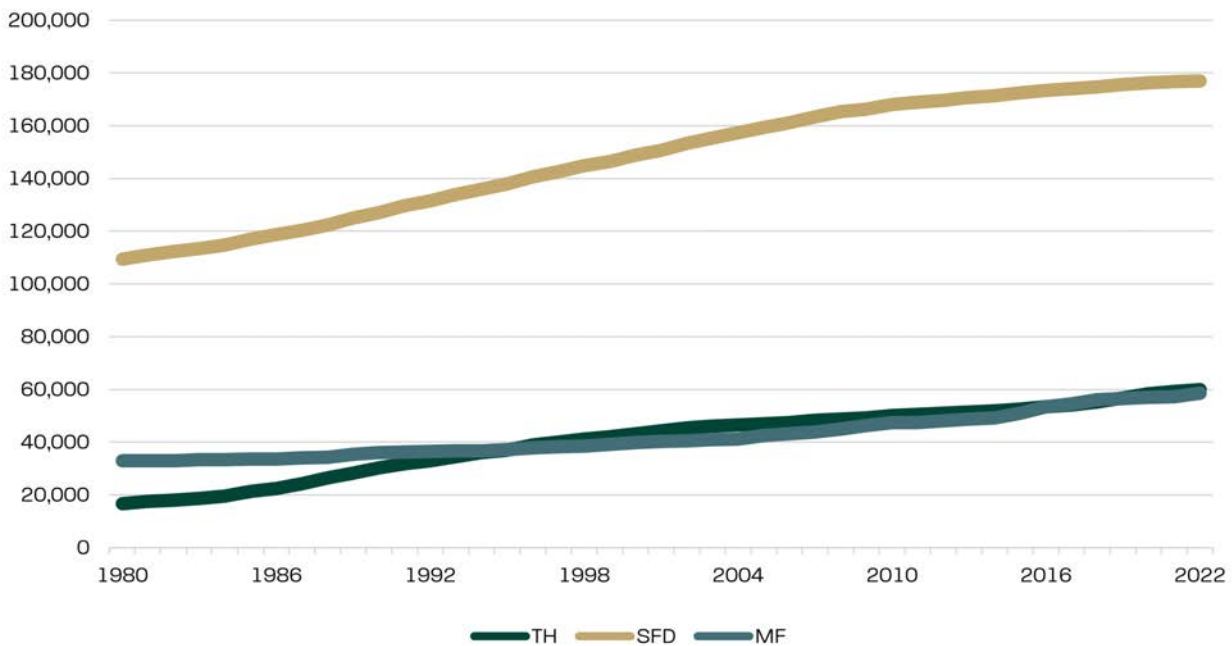
In addition, single-family detached (SFD) houses have been predominant as compared to multifamily (MF) and townhouses in the County.

The number of total townhouses in the County has continued to increase from time to time, although the proportion of townhouses to total units has been significantly smaller than the single-family detached. The proportion of townhouses to total housing units has been inconstant between 16% and 20%.

It is important to note that from 1980 to 2022 there have been only eight (8) years when the number of townhouse units built exceeded the number of single-family units built (**Table 1a**). Since 2017, however, the pattern changes substantially in the yearly growth in townhouses relative to the increase in single-family detached.

Information included in **Table 1a** and **Chart 1** was created and updated in ArcGIS using records from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT). There are roughly 66,000 housing units that include no information for the building year. Among them, 99.48%, or 65,611, are multifamily units, 336 units are single-family detached, and four units are townhouses. The data for the period between 2010 and 2022 were corrected by reviewing aerial imageries requested by the County Council in March 2023 for an unrelated project. The corrected data from March yielded one townhouse unit and 2,400 multifamily units and they are included in this report.

Chart 1. Total Housing Units by Type, 1980 - 2022



SOURCE: Prince George's County Planning Department

Table 1a. Total Housing Units by Type, 1980-2022

Year	Number of Units				Percent Total Units			Yearly Change			
	TH	SFD	MF	Total	TH	SFD	MF	TH	SFD	MF	Total
1980	16,613	109,517	32,864	158,994	10.45%	68.88%	20.67%	-	-	-	-
1981	17,566	110,969	32,864	161,399	10.88%	68.75%	20.36%	953	1,452	0	2,405
1982	18,064	112,386	32,864	163,314	11.06%	68.82%	20.12%	498	1,417	0	1,915
1983	18,560	113,374	33,308	165,242	11.23%	68.61%	20.16%	496	988	444	1,928
1984	19,642	114,836	33,373	167,851	11.70%	68.42%	19.88%	1,082	1,462	65	2,609
1985	21,335	116,860	33,490	171,685	12.43%	68.07%	19.51%	1,693	2,024	117	3,834
1986	22,425	118,820	33,688	174,933	12.82%	67.92%	19.26%	1,090	1,960	198	3,248
1987	24,136	120,290	34,040	178,466	13.52%	67.40%	19.07%	1,711	1,470	352	3,533
1988	26,341	122,428	34,190	182,959	14.40%	66.92%	18.69%	2,205	2,138	150	4,493
1989	28,285	124,905	35,434	188,624	15.00%	66.22%	18.79%	1,944	2,477	1,244	5,665
1990	30,295	127,097	36,086	193,478	15.66%	65.69%	18.65%	2,010	2,192	652	4,854
1991	31,829	129,696	36,274	197,799	16.09%	65.57%	18.34%	1,534	2,599	188	4,321
1992	32,947	131,515	36,463	200,925	16.40%	65.45%	18.15%	1,118	1,819	189	3,126
1993	34,490	133,949	36,653	205,092	16.82%	65.31%	17.87%	1,543	2,434	190	4,167
1994	35,943	135,963	36,805	208,711	17.22%	65.14%	17.63%	1,453	2,014	152	3,619
1995	36,949	137,905	37,187	212,041	17.43%	65.04%	17.54%	1,006	1,942	382	3,330
1996	38,855	140,620	37,802	217,277	17.88%	64.72%	17.40%	1,906	2,715	615	5,236
1997	40,090	142,722	38,203	221,015	18.14%	64.58%	17.29%	1,235	2,102	401	3,738
1998	41,179	144,861	38,491	224,531	18.34%	64.52%	17.14%	1,089	2,139	288	3,516
1999	42,080	146,366	39,175	227,621	18.49%	64.30%	17.21%	901	1,505	684	3,090
2000	43,239	148,799	39,720	231,758	18.66%	64.20%	17.14%	1,159	2,433	545	4,137
2001	44,267	150,684	40,302	235,253	18.82%	64.05%	17.13%	1,028	1,885	582	3,495
2002	45,350	153,268	40,387	239,005	18.97%	64.13%	16.90%	1,083	2,584	85	3,752
2003	45,989	155,357	40,895	242,241	18.98%	64.13%	16.88%	639	2,089	508	3,236
2004	46,445	157,275	41,217	244,937	18.96%	64.21%	16.83%	456	1,918	322	2,696
2005	46,913	159,422	42,539	248,874	18.85%	64.06%	17.09%	468	2,147	1,322	3,937
2006	47,473	161,109	43,276	251,858	18.85%	63.97%	17.18%	560	1,687	737	2,984
2007	48,238	163,407	43,918	255,563	18.88%	63.94%	17.18%	765	2,298	642	3,705
2008	48,796	165,248	44,893	258,937	18.84%	63.82%	17.34%	558	1,841	975	3,374
2009	49,235	166,286	46,386	261,907	18.80%	63.49%	17.71%	439	1,038	1,493	2,970
2010	50,151	168,037	47,504	265,692	18.88%	63.25%	17.88%	916	1,751	1,118	3,785
2011	50,600	168,973	47,504	267,077	18.95%	63.27%	17.79%	449	936	0	1,385
2012	50,965	169,663	47,990	268,618	18.97%	63.16%	17.87%	365	690	486	1,541
2013	51,396	170,616	48,667	270,679	18.99%	63.03%	17.98%	431	953	677	2,061
2014	51,935	171,355	49,209	272,499	19.06%	62.88%	18.06%	539	739	542	1,820
2015	52,612	172,424	51,010	276,046	19.06%	62.46%	18.48%	677	1,069	1,801	3,547
2016	53,352	173,294	53,360	280,006	19.05%	61.89%	19.06%	740	870	2,350	3,960
2017	54,053	173,947	54,608	282,608	19.13%	61.55%	19.32%	701	653	1,248	2,602
2018	55,288	174,794	56,171	286,253	19.31%	61.06%	19.62%	1,235	847	1,563	3,645
2019	56,804	175,604	56,628	289,036	19.65%	60.76%	19.59%	1,516	810	457	2,783
2020	58,235	176,256	56,979	291,470	19.98%	60.47%	19.55%	1,431	652	351	2,434
2021	59,188	176,753	57,210	293,151	20.19%	60.29%	19.52%	953	497	231	1,681
2022	59,878	177,062	58,638	295,578	20.26%	59.90%	19.84%	690	309	1,428	2,427
9990	3	336	63,246	63,585							
Total	59,881	177,398	121,884	359,163							

SOURCES: 1. Prince George's County Planning Department
2. Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections, and Enforcement

Table 1b and Map 1 display existing townhouses throughout the County with reference to locations of the Plan 2035 centers. The majority of townhouse units are outside the Plan 2035 centers; among those centers, neighborhood centers have the largest number of townhouses (17,280 units), followed by the regional transit districts (13,871 units). The local transit centers and town centers have 10,204 units and 6,675 units, respectively. The campus centers have no townhouses but contain a great deal of multifamily housing for University of Maryland students.

As shown in **Table 1a**, there are a total of 359,163 residential units in the County. Development for those units collectively occupies 93,950 acres. Townhouses, multifamily buildings, and single-family units amount to 7.65% (7,192 acres), 5.91% (5,550 acres), and 86.44% (81,207.37 acres), respectively. The total land area for existing housing development accounts for 30.14% of the County’s land area at 278,378.98 acres (a measurement on ArcGIS).

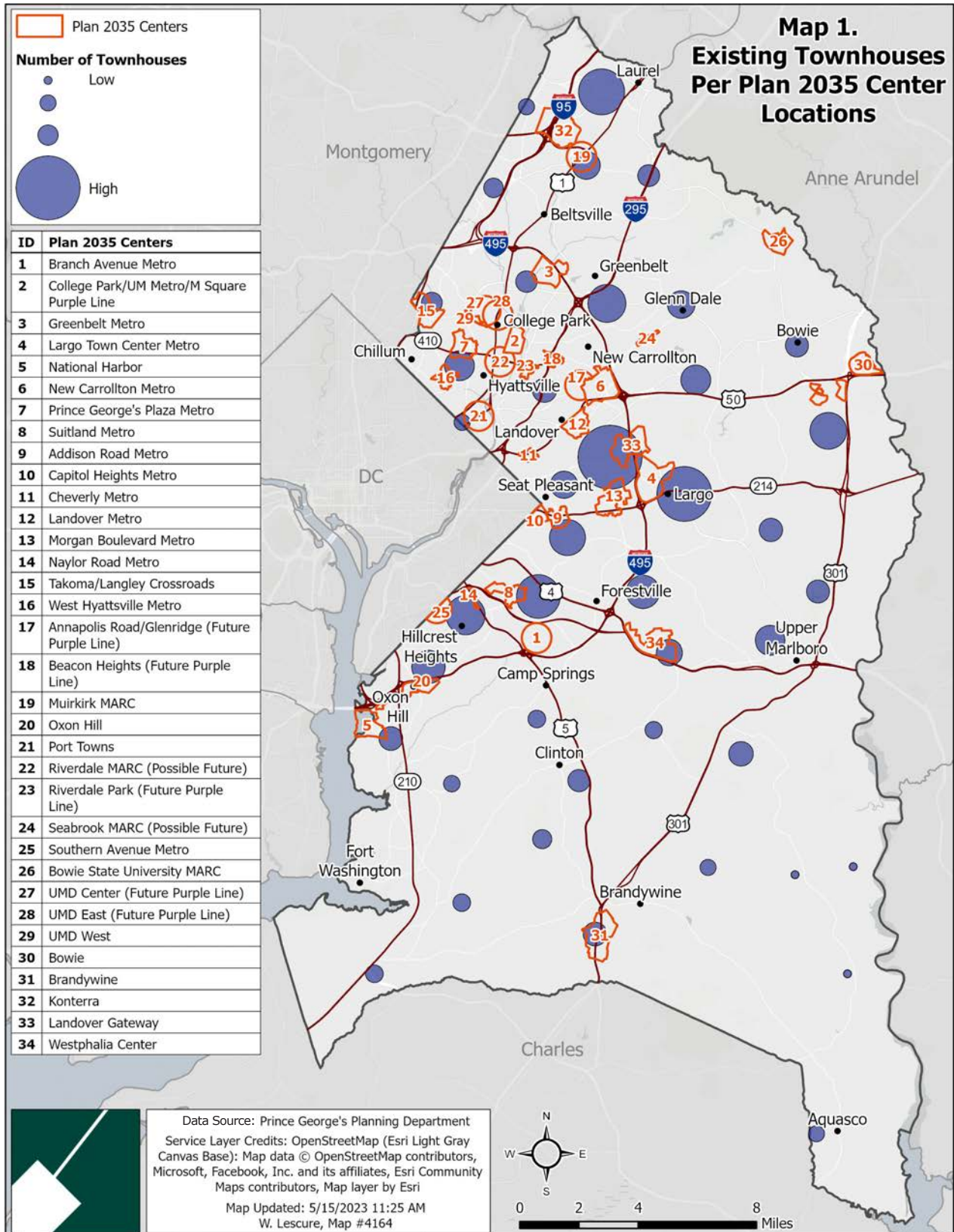
Map 2 exhibits the number and location of existing townhouses by County Council district. District 6 has the largest number of townhouse units, District 7 ranks second, and District 3 has the smallest number of townhouses. The number of townhouses is not correlated with the number of population counts in each District.

Table 1b. Total Townhouse Units by Type by Plan 2035 Center, 2010-2022

Year	Campus Center	Local Transit Center	Neighborhood Center	Regional Transit District	Town Center	Outside Centers	Total
2010	18	542	967	663	57	47,904	50,151
2011	18	569	1,012	667	57	48,277	50,600
2012	18	614	1,012	741	57	48,523	50,965
2013	18	650	1,085	782	57	48,804	51,396
2014	18	676	1,202	853	93	49,092	51,934
2015	18	676	1,257	903	205	49,552	52,611
2016	18	676	1,317	955	428	49,957	53,351
2017	18	686	1,351	1,000	613	50,384	54,052
2018	18	784	1,433	1,109	804	51,139	55,287
2019	18	966	1,530	1,324	871	52,094	56,803
2020	18	1,030	1,654	1,463	923	53,146	58,234
2021	18	1,114	1,730	1,509	973	53,844	59,188
2022	18	1,221	1,730	1,902	1,537	55,206	61,614

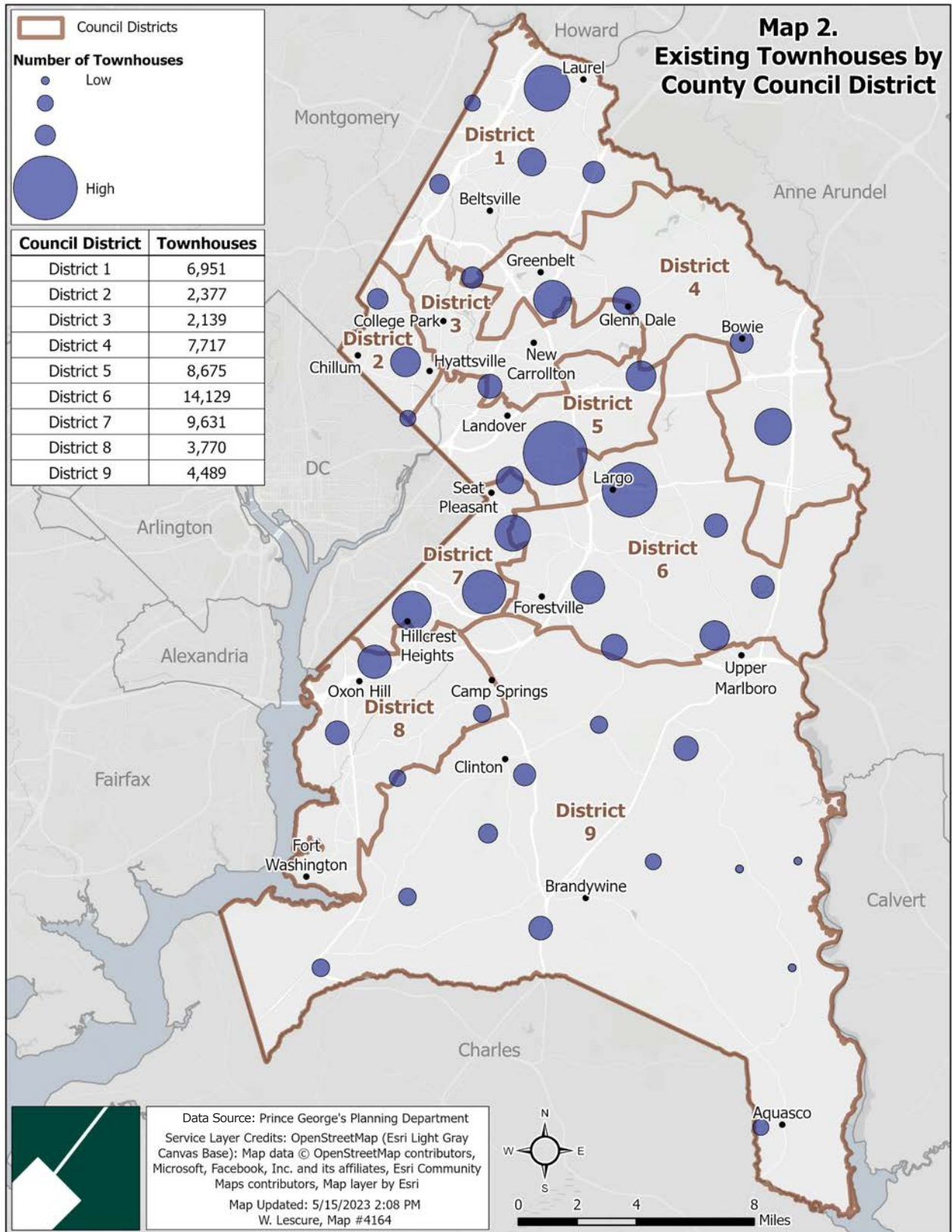
SOURCES: 1. Prince George’s County Planning Department
 2. Prince George’s County Department of Permitting, Inspections, and Enforcement

Map 1. Existing Townhouses per Plan 2035 Center Locations



SOURCE: M-NGPPC

Map 2. Existing Townhouses by County Council District



SOURCE: M-NCPPC

NEW HOUSING CONSTRUCTION

Between 2010 and 2022, new housing construction fluctuated, reflecting economic conditions nationwide. **Table 2a** indicates new housing units by type during this period as well as the proportion of the number of new units by housing type to the total housing units for each year. By 2017, the percentage of new townhouses built consistently exceeded the percentage of single-family units built.

Between 2010 and 2022, the proportion of new townhouse construction to total new housing construction oscillated but gradually increased except for 2022. The share of single-family detached decreased. The percentage of multifamily housing swayed notably but became considerably predominant in 2022.

Since 2019, townhouses comprised the greatest percentage of all new housing units at over 50%. The changes in housing types may reflect emerging demographic trends and characteristics and also policy and regulation changes for land use planning and development (see Parts IV, V, and VI). The number and percentage totals of multifamily units vary depending on large development completion dates.

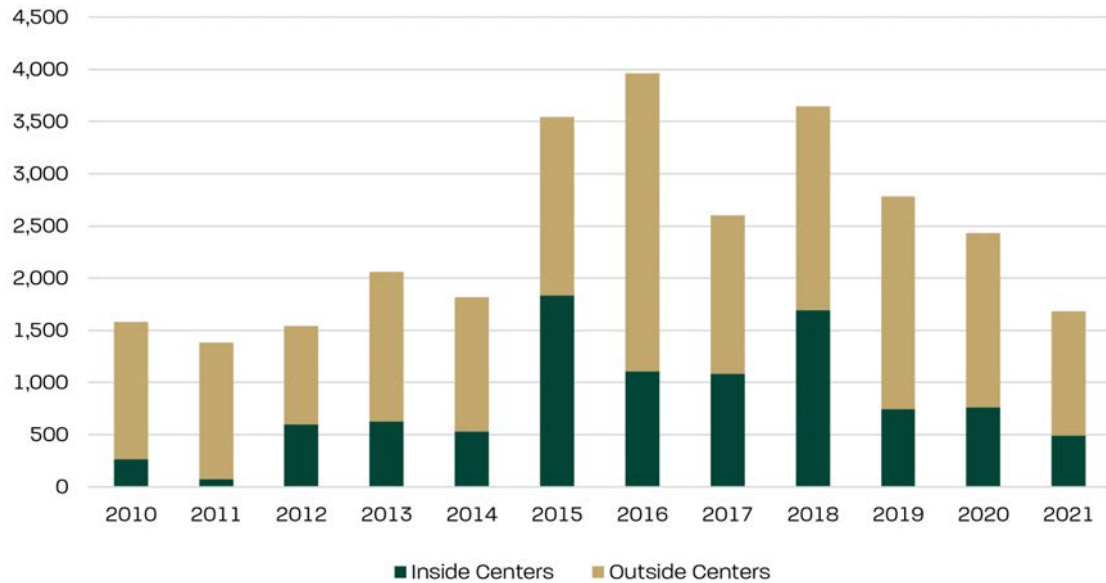
Chart 2 and Table 2b exhibit that the majority of new townhouses and single-family detached units were built outside Plan 2035 centers. Multifamily housing units were built inside Plan 2035 centers with the exception of 2010, 2014, 2016, 2019, and 2022.

Table 2a. New Housing Units by Type by Year, 2010-2022

Year	Housing Type			Total	Percent Total Units		
	TH	SFD	MF		TH	SFD	MF
2010	411	787	385	1,583	25.96%	49.72%	24.32%
2011	449	936	0	1,385	32.42%	67.58%	0.00%
2012	365	690	486	1,541	23.69%	44.78%	31.54%
2013	431	953	677	2,061	20.91%	46.24%	32.85%
2014	539	739	542	1,820	29.62%	40.60%	29.78%
2015	677	1,069	1,801	3,547	19.09%	30.14%	50.78%
2016	740	870	2,350	3,960	18.69%	21.97%	59.34%
2017	701	653	1,248	2,602	26.94%	25.10%	47.96%
2018	1,235	847	1,563	3,645	33.88%	23.24%	42.88%
2019	1,516	810	457	2,783	54.47%	29.11%	16.42%
2020	1,431	652	351	2,434	58.79%	26.79%	14.42%
2021	953	497	231	1,681	56.69%	29.57%	13.74%
2022	690	309	1,428	2,427	28.43%	12.73%	58.84%
Total	10,138	9,812	11,519	31,469	32.22%	31.18%	36.60%

SOURCES: 1. Prince George's County Planning Department
2. Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections, and Enforcement

Chart 2. New Housing Construction by Plan 2035 Center, 2010-2021



SOURCE: Prince George's County Planning Department

Table 2b. New Housing Units by Type by Year by Plan 2035 Center, 2010-2022

Inside General Plan 2035 Centers					Outside General Plan 2035 Centers					Inside Minus Outside			
Year	TH	SFD	MF	Total	Year	TH	SFD	MF	Total	Year	TH	SFD	MF
2010	108	1	155	264	2010	303	786	230	1,319	2010	(195)	(785)	(75)
2011	75	1	0	76	2011	374	935	0	1,309	2011	(299)	(934)	0
2012	119	0	478	597	2012	246	690	8	944	2012	(127)	(690)	470
2013	150	0	477	627	2013	281	953	200	1,434	2013	(131)	(953)	277
2014	250	25	256	531	2014	289	714	286	1,289	2014	(39)	(689)	(30)
2015	217	110	1,510	1,837	2015	460	959	291	1,710	2015	(243)	(849)	1,219
2016	335	59	715	1,109	2016	405	811	1,635	2,851	2016	(70)	(752)	(920)
2017	274	34	774	1,082	2017	427	619	474	1,520	2017	(153)	(585)	300
2018	480	3	1,212	1,695	2018	755	844	351	1,950	2018	(275)	(841)	861
2019	558	25	163	746	2019	958	785	294	2,037	2019	(400)	(760)	(131)
2020	377	33	351	761	2020	1,054	619	0	1,673	2020	(677)	(586)	351
2021	256	19	219	494	2021	697	478	12	1,187	2021	(441)	(459)	207
2022	312	76	676	1,064	2022	378	233	752	1,363	2022	(66)	(157)	(76)
Total	3,511	386	6,986	10,883	Total	6,627	9,426	4,533	20,586	Total	(3,116)	(9,040)	2,453

SOURCES: 1. Prince George's County Planning Department
2. Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections, and Enforcement

SALES PRICE AND ASSESSED VALUE

Sales Prices

Table 3 shows that new SFD and TH prices rose at a relatively similar rate, which was 66.42% or 69.09% respectively. For resales, SFD has a much higher growth in prices than TH's, which was at 90.25% or 56.77% likewise.

Zonda, a housing market research tool and the source for sales prices for this report, includes townhouses, duplexes, and condominiums in the single-family attached housing group.²

The “Closing Price Average” of **Table 3** indicates that new sales or resale prices for the single-family attached were consistently lower than those for single-family detached. Lower price points for townhouses are typically due to lower costs for land and materials as compared to the single-family detached. Additionally, prices for new sales, regardless of whether the units are attached or detached, have been considerably higher than resale prices.

There were fewer sales of townhouses (including single-family attached) than sales of single-family homes from 2010 to 2022. Moreover, single-family homes have continued to fetch the highest average sale price, with the prices for both new and resale single-family detached on the rise from 2010 to 2022. The average sale price of a new townhouse has increased significantly while townhouse resales have demonstrated a downward trend. Newer townhouses in particular showed a rising sale price in this period.

As for closings that are included in the bottom section of **Table 3**, the trends and patterns are obvious. New sale closings for the single-family attached, or townhouse units were fewer than the single-family detached units between 2010 and 2016. Since 2017, the trend has reversed, indicating that new sales closings for townhouses were greater than new sales closings for single-family detached. National economic conditions or land use planning policies and regulations may have contributed to this phenomenon.

The number of closings for detached unit resales was significantly higher than the closings for single-family attached homes. It signifies that the majority of the housing market activity has been on the resale side of both attached and detached.

Assessed Values

Information for this section is based on SDAT data that include all residential properties, regardless of the year built. All median assessed values (which include land and improvement values) would be the most recent. The average assessed value in the County was \$304,234. The respective assessed values for attached (\$217,367), detached (\$318,433), and townhouses were \$258,267. The predominance of detached units affects the overall average.

While the SDAT information separates the attached units from townhouses, this report groups both as “townhouses.” Similar to the Zonda definition, various classifications of townhouses may skew data analyses to some extent.

² Zonda, Our Approach, <https://zondahome.com/advisory/residential-for-sale/>

Table 3. Average Sales Prices by Year by Housing Type

Closing Price Average								
Year	New Sale			Resale			New Sale - Resale	
	SFA/TH	SFD	SFA/TH-SFD	SFA/TH	SFD	SFA/TH-SFD	SFA/TH	SFD
2010	\$307,912	\$435,258	(\$127,346)	\$194,279	\$236,554	(\$42,275)	\$113,633	\$198,704
2011	\$334,436	\$428,649	(\$94,213)	\$153,592	\$217,990	(\$64,398)	\$180,844	\$210,659
2012	\$344,473	\$425,539	(\$81,066)	\$126,429	\$213,378	(\$86,949)	\$218,044	\$212,161
2013	\$331,839	\$444,182	(\$112,343)	\$141,677	\$230,111	(\$88,434)	\$190,162	\$214,071
2014	\$368,385	\$458,805	(\$90,420)	\$162,766	\$254,867	(\$92,101)	\$205,619	\$203,938
2015	\$373,987	\$491,274	(\$117,287)	\$179,472	\$270,906	(\$91,434)	\$194,515	\$220,368
2016	\$390,203	\$524,895	(\$134,692)	\$202,247	\$286,364	(\$84,117)	\$187,956	\$238,531
2017	\$401,376	\$555,450	(\$154,074)	\$209,412	\$307,537	(\$98,125)	\$191,964	\$247,913
2018	\$400,795	\$591,676	(\$190,881)	\$228,627	\$315,587	(\$86,960)	\$172,168	\$276,089
2019	\$409,913	\$598,846	(\$188,933)	\$236,651	\$334,461	(\$97,810)	\$173,262	\$264,385
2020	\$417,959	\$623,589	(\$205,630)	\$262,776	\$376,018	(\$113,242)	\$155,183	\$247,571
2021	\$451,935	\$676,504	(\$224,569)	\$288,471	\$425,592	(\$137,121)	\$163,464	\$250,912
2022	\$512,428	\$735,964	(\$223,536)	\$304,567	\$450,041	(\$145,474)	\$207,861	\$285,923
Change	66.42%	69.09%	-	56.77%	90.25%	-	-	-

Closings								
Year	New Sale			Resale			New Sale - Resale	
	SFA/TH	SFD	SFA/TH-SFD	SFA/TH	SFD	SFA/TH-SFD	SFA/TH	SFD
2010	215	435	(220)	1,277	2,883	(1,606)	(1,062)	(2,448)
2011	339	669	(330)	2,332	5,428	(3,096)	(1,993)	(4,759)
2012	454	797	(343)	1,939	5,416	(3,477)	(1,485)	(4,619)
2013	497	950	(453)	2,425	5,866	(3,441)	(1,928)	(4,916)
2014	496	852	(356)	1,972	5,164	(3,192)	(1,476)	(4,312)
2015	510	836	(326)	2,171	5,379	(3,208)	(1,661)	(4,543)
2016	618	900	(282)	2,666	6,151	(3,485)	(2,048)	(5,251)
2017	769	637	132	3,658	8,392	(4,734)	(2,889)	(7,755)
2018	1,214	706	508	4,015	7,725	(3,710)	(2,801)	(7,019)
2019	1,387	801	586	4,322	7,789	(3,467)	(2,935)	(6,988)
2020	1,480	615	865	4,325	7,583	(3,258)	(2,845)	(6,968)
2021	1,209	597	612	5,559	8,747	(3,188)	(4,350)	(8,150)
2022	1,143	463	680	4,248	7,033	(2,785)	(3,105)	(6,570)

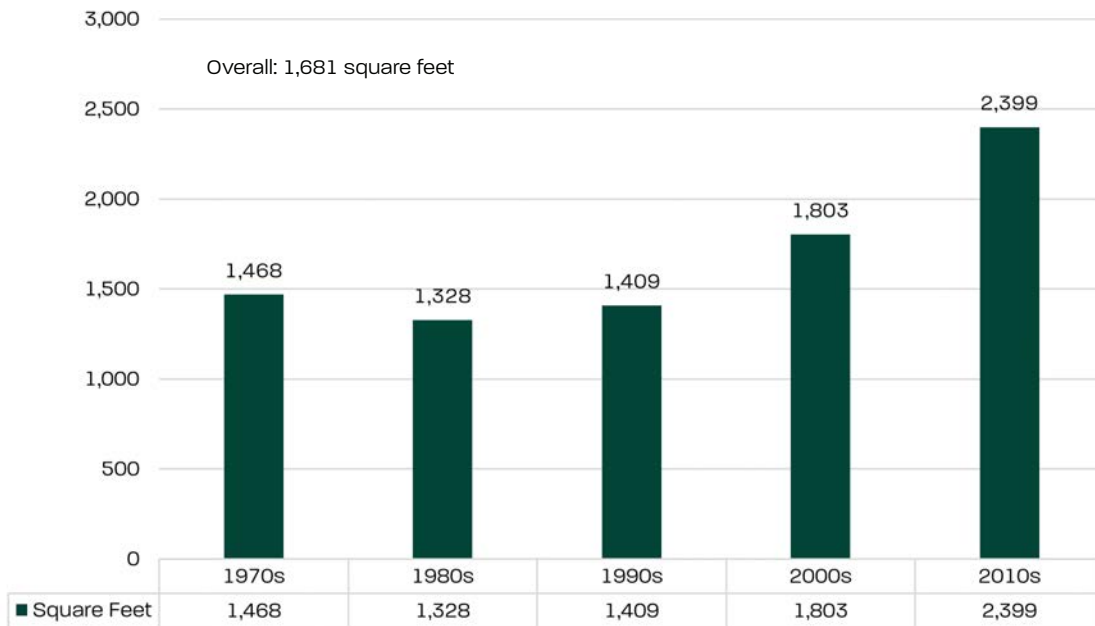
SOURCE: Zonda - Housing Market Research Tools. "-" denotes a minus sign.

TOWNHOUSE DEVELOPMENT

Average Square Feet

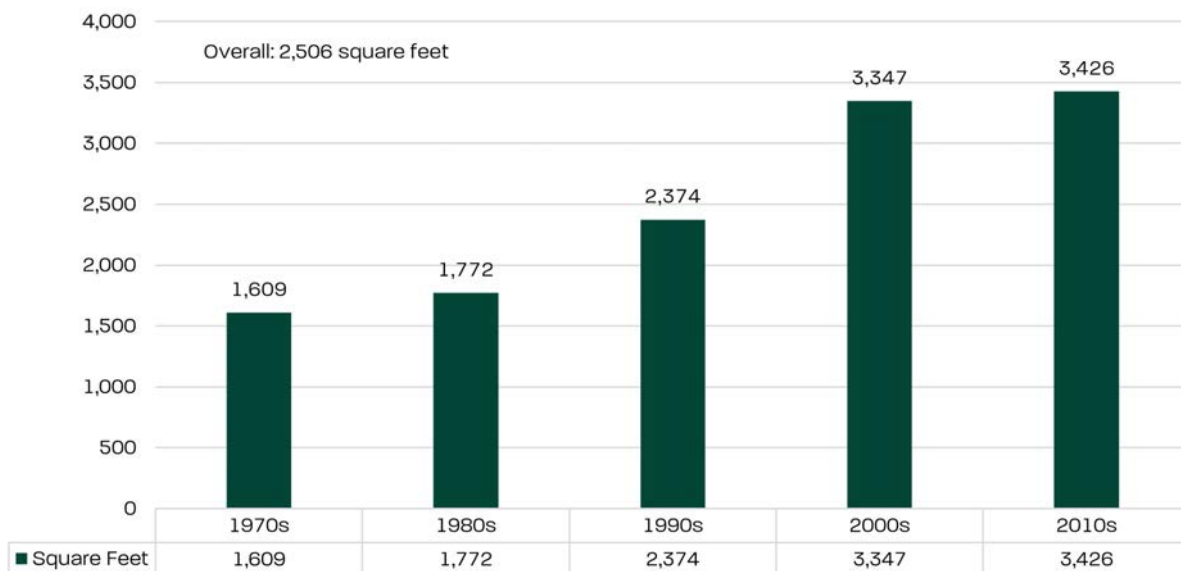
Chart 3a exhibits the average square feet of townhouses that has increased by 63.39% between the 1970s and 2010s. On the single-family detached side (**Chart 3b**), the growth in the average square feet during the same period was 112.89%. The average size of the latter was significantly larger than the former. The author denotes that the vertical (value) axis on **Charts 3a** and **3b** differs, which also indicates that the single-family detached has the larger size than the townhouses.

Chart 3a. The Average Size of Townhouses, 1970s to 2010s



SOURCE: Prince George's County Planning Department

Chart 3b. The Average Size of Single-Family Homes, 1970s to 2010s



SOURCE: Prince George's County Planning Department

Density Inside or Outside Plan 2035 Centers

Chart 4 illustrates townhouse density inside and outside Plan 2035 centers between 2010 and 2021. Density is higher inside, rather than outside the centers for all years except 2011 and 2012. The overall density inside the centers was 26.62 dwelling units per acre (du/ac). The density outside the centers was 22.03 (du/ac).

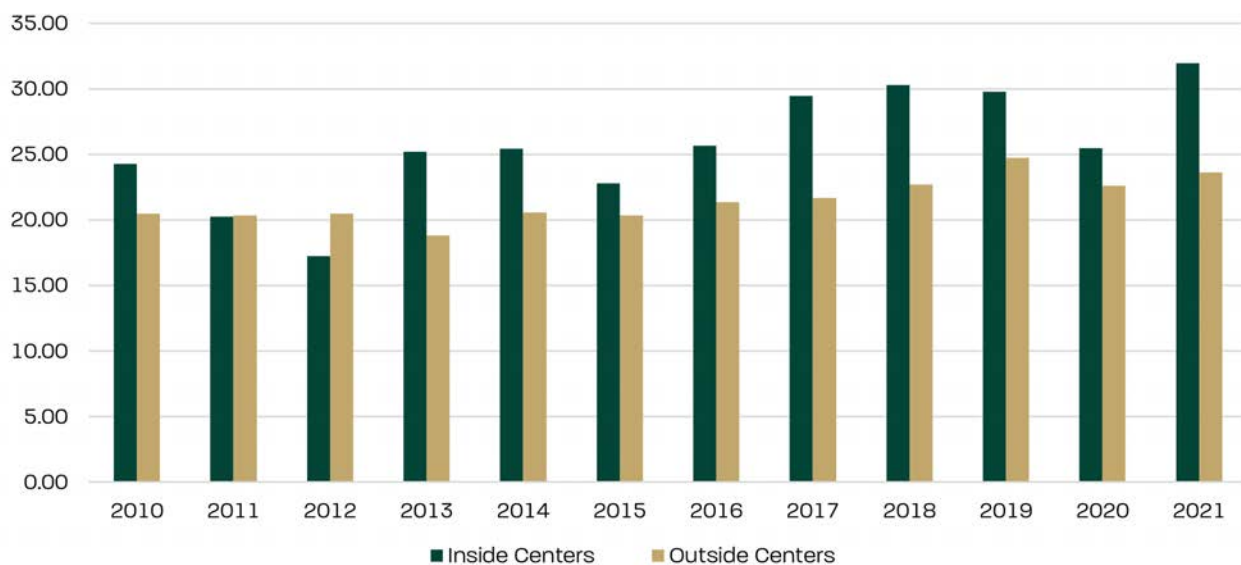
Within Plan 2035 centers, the density was the highest in neighborhood centers (40.38 du/ac), followed by the density inside local transit centers (28.46 du/ac), town centers (25.10 du/ac), and regional transit districts (20.76 du/ac).

Table 4a provides the year and location of types of new housing units from 2010 to 2022 within Plan 2035 centers. During that period, Town Centers had the most townhouses (1,106 units), followed by regional transit districts (904 units), neighborhood centers (767 units), and local transit centers (734 units). There are no townhouses in campus centers. **Map 3** illustrates the spatial distribution of townhouses with respect to Plan 2035 center locations.

Average Construction Time

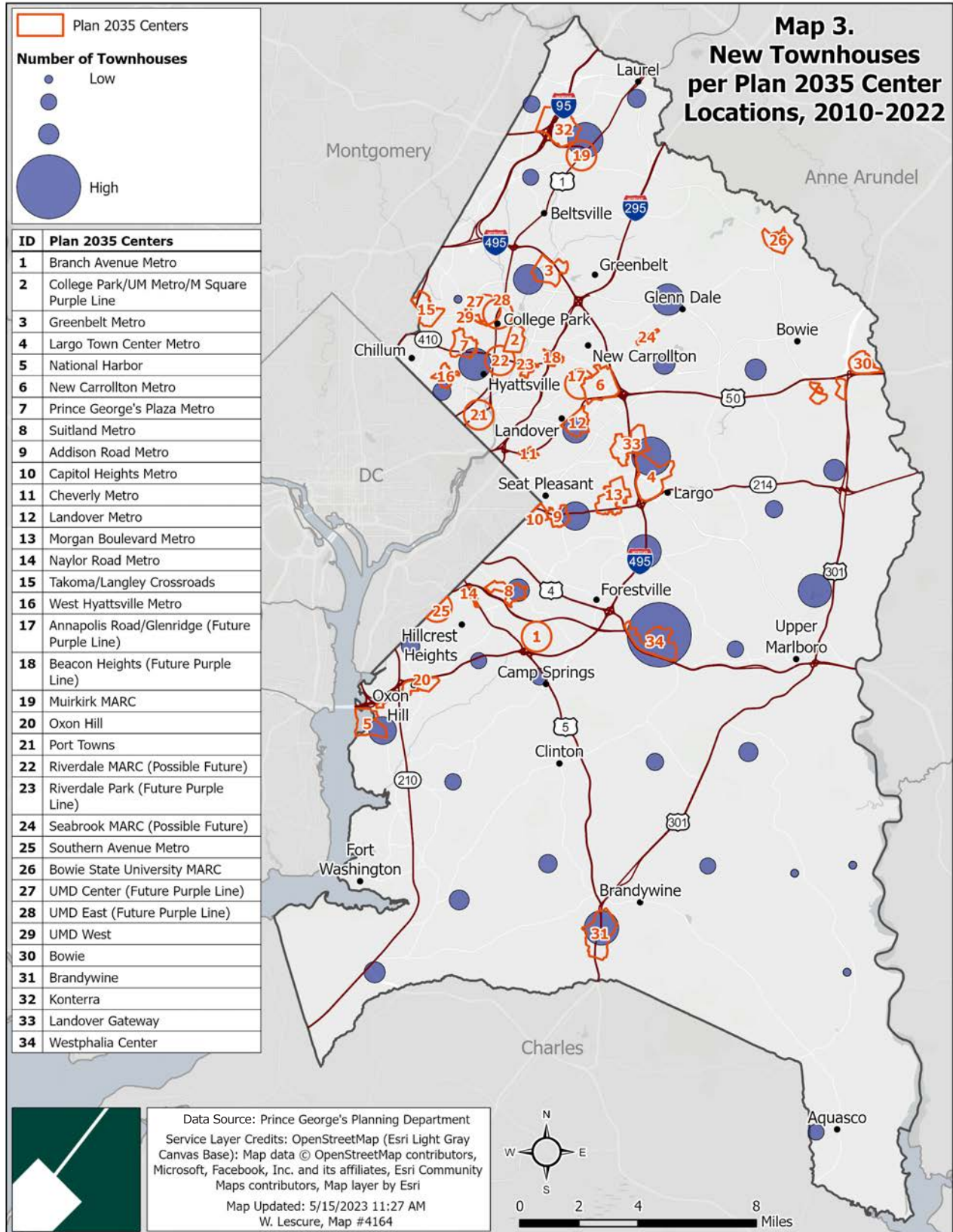
This report examines townhouses that were constructed since 2014—the year the County Council adopted Plan 2035. On average, it took approximately seven months to construct a townhouse development, according to the County Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement (DPIE). Data availability was another reason that this period (since 2014) was selected. It is worth noting that some townhouse subdivisions may not be fully built at this point. The calculations for the average are based on the “use & occupancy” date available in the DPIE building permit file.

Chart 4. Townhouse Density (Units per Acre), 2010-2021



SOURCE: Prince George’s County Planning Department. No data available for 2022.

Map 3. New Townhouses per Plan 2035 Center Locations - 2010-2022



SOURCE: M-NCPPC

Table 4a. New Housing Units by Type by Year by Plan 2035 Center, 2010-2022

Year	TH	SFD	MF	Total
2010	108	1	155	264
Campus Center	0	1	0	1
UMD East (Future Purple Line)	0	1	0	1
Local Transit Center	55	0	0	55
Morgan Boulevard Metro	55	0	0	55
Neighborhood Center	8	0	0	8
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	8	0	0	8
Regional Transit District	22	0	155	177
Branch Avenue Metro	22	0	155	177
Town Center	23	0	0	23
Brandywine	23	0	0	23
2011	75	1	0	76
Local Transit Center	27	0	0	27
Morgan Boulevard Metro	27	0	0	27
Neighborhood Center	44	0	0	44
Muirkirk MARC	8	0	0	8
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	36	0	0	36
Regional Transit District	4	1	0	5
Branch Avenue Metro	0	1	0	1
National Harbor	4	0	0	4
2012	119	0	478	597
Local Transit Center	45	0	478	523
Addison Road Metro	9	0	0	9
Morgan Boulevard Metro	36	0	478	514
Regional Transit District	74	0	0	74
Branch Avenue Metro	5	0	0	5
National Harbor	69	0	0	69
2013	150	0	477	627
Local Transit Center	36	0	0	36
Addison Road Metro	23	0	0	23
Morgan Boulevard Metro	13	0	0	13
Neighborhood Center	73	0	477	550
Muirkirk MARC	27	0	433	460
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	46	0	44	90
Regional Transit District	41	0	0	41
National Harbor	41	0	0	41
2014	250	25	256	531
Local Transit Center	26	0	256	282
Addison Road Metro	26	0	0	26
UMD West	0	0	256	256
Neighborhood Center	117	2	0	119
Muirkirk MARC	21	2	0	23
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	96	0	0	96
Regional Transit District	71	0	0	71
National Harbor	71	0	0	71
Town Center	36	23	0	59
Brandywine	0	10	0	10
Landover Gateway	36	13	0	49
2015	217	110	1,510	1,837
Campus Center	0	0	230	230
UMD East (Future Purple Line)	0	0	230	230
Neighborhood Center	55	11	0	66
Annapolis Road/Glenridge (Future Purple Line)		1	0	1
Muirkirk MARC	55	7	0	62
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	0	3	0	3
Regional Transit District	50	0	1,280	1,330
Branch Avenue Metro	0	0	417	417
Largo Town Center Metro	0	0	318	318
National Harbor	50	0	262	312
Prince George's Plaza Metro	0	0	283	283
Town Center	112	99	0	211
Brandywine	44	21	0	65
Landover Gateway	68	78	0	146
2016	335	59	715	1,109
Campus Center	0	0	418	418
UMD East (Future Purple Line)	0	0	418	418
Neighborhood Center	60	12	0	72
Muirkirk MARC	60	9	0	69
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	0	2	0	2
Southern Avenue Metro	0	1	0	1
Regional Transit District	52	0	297	349
National Harbor	46	0	0	46
Prince George's Plaza Metro	6	0	0	6
Suitland Metro	0	0	297	297
Town Center	223	47	0	270
Brandywine	54	0	0	54
Landover Gateway	96	47	0	143
Westphalia Center	73	0	0	73
2017	274	34	774	1,082
Campus Center	0	1	0	1
UMD East (Future Purple Line)	0	1	0	1
Local Transit Center	10	0	0	10
Landover Metro	10	0	0	10
Neighborhood Center	34	10	0	44
Muirkirk MARC	34	2	0	36
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	0	8	0	8
Regional Transit District	45	0	774	819
Largo Town Center Metro	0	0	469	469
National Harbor	10	0	0	10
New Carrollton Metro	0	0	300	300
Prince George's Plaza Metro	35	0	5	40
Town Center	185	23	0	208
Brandywine	43	0	0	43
Landover Gateway	63	23	0	86
Westphalia Center	79	0	0	79

Year	TH	SFD	MF	Total
2018	480	3	1,212	1,695
Local Transit Center	98	0	0	98
Landover Metro	98	0	0	98
Neighborhood Center	82	1	147	230
Muirkirk MARC	46	0	0	46
Port Towns	0	0	147	147
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	36	1	0	37
Regional Transit District	109	0	1,065	1,174
Branch Avenue Metro	0	0	516	516
Largo Town Center Metro	20	0	0	20
National Harbor	32	0	219	251
Prince George's Plaza Metro	57	0	330	387
Town Center	191	2	0	193
Brandywine	47	0	0	47
Landover Gateway	34	2	0	36
Westphalia Center	110	0	0	110
2019	558	25	163	746
Campus Center	0	2	0	2
UMD East (Future Purple Line)	0	2	0	2
Local Transit Center	182	0	0	182
Landover Metro	182	0	0	182
Neighborhood Center	96	7	0	103
Muirkirk MARC	72	7	0	79
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	24	0	0	24
Regional Transit District	213	0	0	213
Largo Town Center Metro	64	0	0	64
National Harbor	16	0	0	16
Prince George's Plaza Metro	28	0	0	28
Suitland Metro	105	0	0	105
Town Center	67	16	163	246
Bowie	0	0	140	140
Brandywine	4	14	0	18
Landover Gateway	4	2	23	29
Westphalia Center	59	0	0	59
2020	377	33	351	761
Campus Center	0	4	0	4
UMD East (Future Purple Line)	0	4	0	4
Local Transit Center	64	0	0	64
Landover Metro	64	0	0	64
Neighborhood Center	122	5	0	127
Muirkirk MARC	122	2	0	124
Port Towns	0	1	0	1
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	0	2	0	2
Regional Transit District	139	0	351	490
National Harbor	38	0	0	38
Prince George's Plaza Metro	0	0	351	351
Suitland Metro	101	0	0	101
Town Center	52	24	0	76
Brandywine	33	24	0	57
Westphalia Center	19	0	0	19

Year	TH	SFD	MF	Total
2021	256	19	219	494
Campus Center	0	1	0	1
UMD East (Future Purple Line)	0	1	0	1
Local Transit Center	84	1	219	304
Addison Road Metro	0	1	0	1
Landover Metro	4	0	0	4
Morgan Boulevard Metro	6	0	0	6
Naylor Road Metro	0	0	219	219
West Hyattsville Metro	74	0	0	74
Neighborhood Center	76	1	0	77
Muirkirk MARC	76	0	0	76
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	0	1	0	1
Regional Transit District	46	0	0	46
National Harbor	35	0	0	35
Suitland Metro	11	0	0	11
Town Center	50	16	0	66
Brandywine	44	16	0	60
Westphalia Center	6	0	0	6
2022	312	76	676	1,064
Local Transit Center	107	0	0	107
West Hyattsville Metro	107	0	0	107
Regional Transit District	38	1	354	393
Branch Avenue Metro	0	1	0	1
Greenbelt Metro	0	0	354	354
National Harbor	38	0	0	38
Town Center	167	75	322	564
Brandywine	117	50	216	383
Landover Gateway	0	0	97	97
Westphalia Center	50	25	9	84
Grand Total	3,511	386	6,986	10,883

SOURCES: 1. Prince George's County Planning Department
2. Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections, and Enforcement

Disclaimer: The compilation, analysis, and tabulation are based on the best information available to staff.



Part III:
Approved
Development

This report includes approved detailed site plans, specific design plans, and preliminary plans (which are distinct from the two former plan types).

Table 4b depicts approved housing development by type in various Plan 2035 centers.

Table 4b. Approved Housing by Type by Year by Plan 2035 Center, 2010-2022

Year	TH	SFD	MF	Total
2010	376	0	687	1,063
Local Transit Center	323	0	171	494
Addison Road Metro	0	0	171	171
Landover Metro	323	0	0	323
Neighborhood Center	0	0	198	198
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	0	0	198	198
Regional Transit District	53	0	318	371
Branch Avenue Metro	53	0	0	53
Largo Town Center Metro	0	0	318	318
2011	1,153	2	927	2,082
Local Transit Center	0	0	256	256
UMD West	0	0	256	256
Neighborhood Center	0	2	0	2
Annapolis Road/Glenridge (Future Purple Line)	0	2	0	2
Regional Transit District	0	0	406	406
Prince George's Plaza Metro	0	0	406	406
Town Center	1,153	0	265	1,418
Westphalia Center	1,153	0	265	1,418
2012	380	0	926	1,306
Campus Center	0	0	287	287
UMD East (Future Purple Line)	0	0	287	287
Local Transit Center	323	0	0	323
Landover Metro	323	0	0	323
Regional Transit District	57	0	639	696
Prince George's Plaza Metro	57	0	639	696
2013	682	0	1,894	2,576
Campus Center	0	0	10	10
UMD East (Future Purple Line)	0	0	10	10
Neighborhood Center	126	0	855	981
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	126	0	855	981
Regional Transit District	556	0	1,029	1,585
Branch Avenue Metro	0	0	497	497
Largo Town Center Metro	0	0	532	532
New Carrollton Metro	556	0	0	556

Year	TH	SFD	MF	Total
2014	348	7	592	947
Campus Center	0	0	445	445
UMD East (Future Purple Line)	0	0	445	445
Neighborhood Center	0	7	147	154
Port Towns	0	0	147	147
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	0	7	0	7
Town Center	348	0	0	348
Westphalia Center	348	0	0	348
2015	484	0	1,550	2,034
Local Transit Center	358	0	0	358
Landover Metro	358	0	0	358
Regional Transit District	126	0	1,550	1,676
Largo Town Center Metro	0	0	1,198	1,198
Prince George's Plaza Metro	126	0	352	478
2016	191	0	2,013	2,204
Neighborhood Center	0	0	90	90
Port Towns	0	0	90	90
Regional Transit District	0	0	1,783	1,783
Branch Avenue Metro	0	0	1	1
National Harbor	0	0	1,782	1,782
Town Center	191	0	140	331
Bowie	0	0	140	140
Brandywine	191	0	0	191
2017	1,351	39	4,350	5,740
Campus Center	0	0	393	393
UMD East (Future Purple Line)	0	0	393	393
Local Transit Center	209	0	630	839
Capitol Heights Metro	26	0	330	356
West Hyattsville Metro	183	0	300	483
Neighborhood Center	426	0	1,897	2,323
Muirkirk MARC	188	0	0	188
Oxon Hill	0	0	187	187
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	238	0	1,710	1,948
Regional Transit District	84	0	1,103	1,187
College Park/UM Metro/M Square Purple Line	0	0	440	440
Largo Town Center Metro	84	0	352	436
Prince George's Plaza Metro	0	0	311	311
Town Center	632	39	327	998
Brandywine	212	39	72	323
Landover Gateway	261	0	169	430
Westphalia Center	159	0	86	245

Year	TH	SFD	MF	Total
2018	863	72	2,881	3,816
Local Transit Center	52	0	0	52
Morgan Boulevard Metro	52	0	0	52
Neighborhood Center	8	0	334	342
Oxon Hill	0	0	187	187
Port Towns	0	0	147	147
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	8	0	0	8
Regional Transit District	0	1	1,775	1,776
Branch Avenue Metro	0	0	801	801
Largo Town Center Metro	0	1	350	351
New Carrollton Metro	0	0	285	285
Prince George's Plaza Metro	0	0	339	339
Town Center	803	71	772	1,646
Bowie	0	0	388	388
Brandywine	212	39	384	635
Westphalia Center	591	32	0	623
2019	0	0	2,618	2,618
Neighborhood Center	0	0	862	862
Riverdale MARC (Possible Future)	0	0	862	862
Regional Transit District	0	0	1,756	1,756
College Park/UM Metro/ M Square Purple Line	0	0	451	451
Largo Town Center Metro	0	0	379	379
New Carrollton Metro	0	0	546	546
Prince George's Plaza Metro	0	0	380	380
2020	1,709	114	3,558	5,381
Campus Center	0	0	808	808
UMD East (Future Purple Line)	0	0	808	808
Neighborhood Center	2	0	0	2
Oxon Hill	2	0	0	2
Regional Transit District	131	0	1,736	1,867
Greenbelt Metro	0	0	354	354
Largo Town Center Metro	0	0	532	532
Prince George's Plaza Metro	131	0	850	981
Town Center	1,576	114	1,014	2,704
Bowie	0	0	435	435
Brandywine	0	0	243	243
Westphalia Center	1,576	114	336	2,026

Year	TH	SFD	MF	Total
2021	975	34	1,735	2,744
Campus Center	0	0	128	128
UMD East (Future Purple Line)	0	0	128	128
Local Transit Center	0	0	293	293
West Hyattsville Metro	0	0	293	293
Neighborhood Center	0	0	224	224
Beacon Heights (Future Purple Line)	0	0	224	224
Regional Transit District	200	0	602	802
New Carrollton Metro	0	0	286	286
Prince George's Plaza Metro	200	0	316	516
Town Center	775	34	488	1,297
Brandywine	170	0	488	658
Westphalia Center	605	34	0	639
2022	468	0	859	1,327
Regional Transit District	0	0	859	859
Largo Town Center Metro	0	0	269	269
New Carrollton Metro	0	0	320	320
Suitland Metro	0	0	270	270
Town Center	468	0	0	468
Bowie	249	0	0	249
Konterra	219	0	0	219
Grand Total	8,980	268	24,590	33,838

SOURCES: 1. Prince George's County Planning Department
2. Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections, and Enforcement

Disclaimer: The compilation, analysis, and tabulation are based on the best information available to staff.

Similar to **Table 4a**, **Table 5 (a and b)** characterizes the year and Plan 2035 center location in which the largest number of townhouses is concentrated. The breakdowns are: 5,946 units in town centers, 1,265 units in local transit centers, 1,207 in regional transit districts, and 562 in neighborhood centers. There are no approved townhouses in campus centers. **Map 4** plots the clusters of townhouses approved after 2010 and shows whether they are located inside or outside Plan 2035 centers.

Table 5a displays that since 2010, multifamily housing has been leading in terms of the percentage in total units for the past seven years. Moreover, the share of approved townhouses units from 2010 to 2022 was higher than for single-family detached, except for 2019. As for approved housing inside or outside Plan 2035 centers (**Table 5b**), the patterns and trends were similar to those for new housing construction, as illustrated in **Table 2b** (see Part II), in which the number of housing units approved for development outside Plan 2035 centers was larger than the number approved for development inside the centers.

It is helpful to understand that while housing units may be approved for development, they may not yet be constructed. Hence, there may not be a correlation between **Tables 2a** (new housing built) and **5a** (approved housing). The same is true for **Tables 2b** and **5b**.

The density for approved townhouse development is not included in this report because a great deal of approved development is mixed-use and either includes various residential types or plays an integral role in nonresidential uses.

Table 5a. Approved Housing by Type by Year, 2010-2022

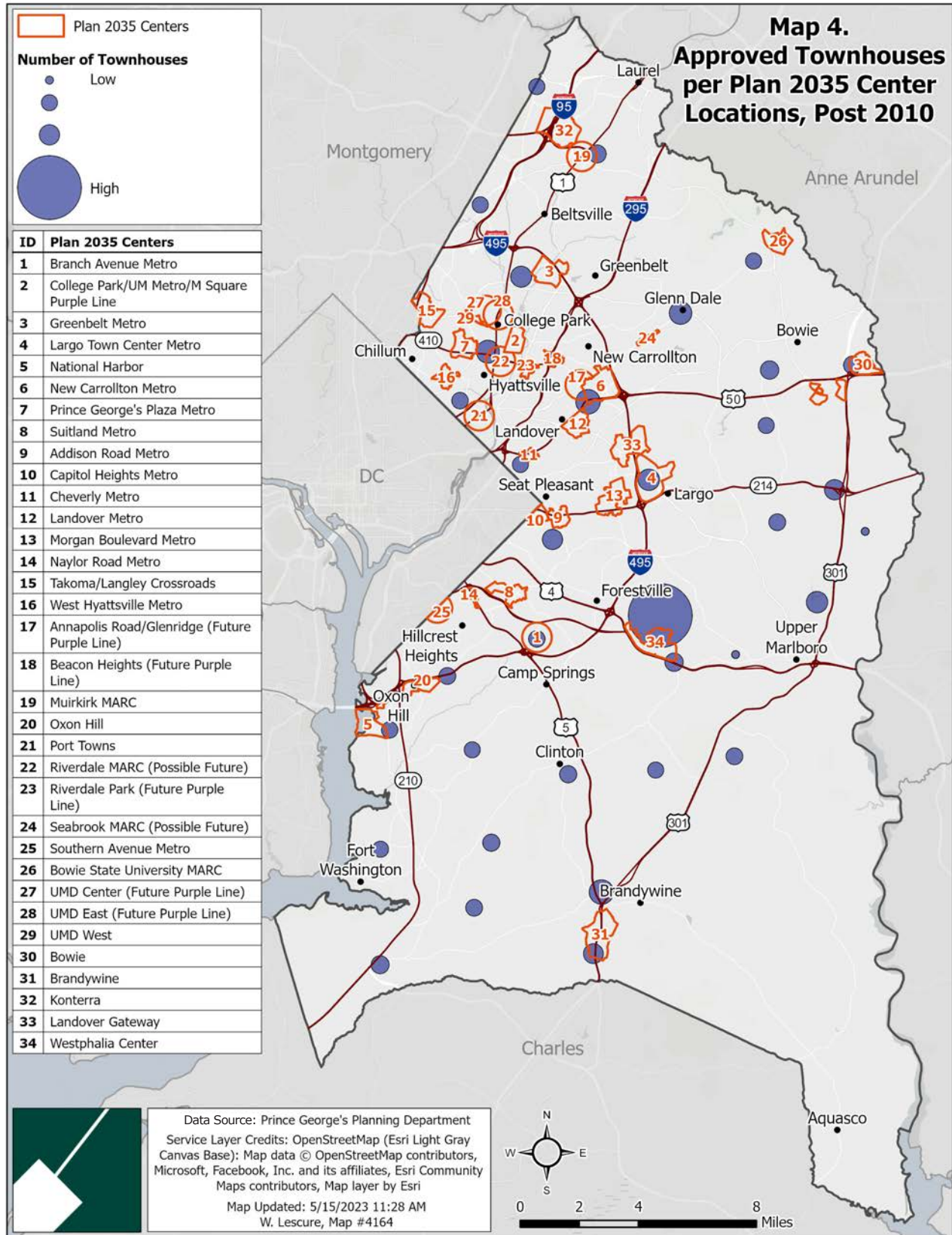
Year	Housing Type				Percent Total Units		
	TH	SFD	MF	Total	TH	SFD	MF
2010	1,856	852	1,167	3,875	47.90%	21.99%	30.12%
2011	1,171	287	1,854	3,312	35.36%	8.67%	55.98%
2012	1,336	839	1,053	3,228	41.39%	25.99%	32.62%
2013	1,348	272	2,882	4,502	29.94%	6.04%	64.02%
2014	822	157	1,282	2,261	36.36%	6.94%	56.70%
2015	942	235	2,472	3,649	25.82%	6.44%	67.74%
2016	2,069	753	2,825	5,647	36.64%	13.33%	50.03%
2017	3,233	856	5,355	9,444	34.23%	9.06%	56.70%
2018	4,215	1,018	3,482	8,715	48.36%	11.68%	39.95%
2019	1,160	1,274	4,230	6,664	17.41%	19.12%	63.48%
2020	3,640	1,752	4,451	9,843	36.98%	17.80%	45.22%
2021	3,120	380	2,701	6,201	50.31%	6.13%	43.56%
2022	1,681	6	2,882	4,569	36.79%	0.13%	63.08%
Total	26,593	8,681	36,636	71,910	36.98%	12.07%	50.95%

Table 5b. Approved Housing Units by Type by Year by Plan 2035 Center Location, 2010-2022

Year	Inside General Plan 2035 Centers				Outside General Plan 2035 Centers				Inside Minus Outside		
	TH	SFD	MF	Total	TH	SFD	MF	Total	TH	SFD	MF
2010	376	0	687	1,063	1,480	852	480	2,812	(1,104)	(852)	207
2011	1,153	2	927	2,082	18	285	927	1,230	1,135	(283)	0
2012	380	0	926	1,306	956	839	127	1,922	(576)	(839)	799
2013	682	0	1,894	2,576	666	272	988	1,926	16	(272)	906
2014	348	7	592	947	474	150	690	1,314	(126)	(143)	(98)
2015	484	0	1,550	2,034	458	235	922	1,615	26	(235)	628
2016	191	0	2,013	2,204	1,878	753	812	3,443	(1,687)	(753)	1,201
2017	1,351	39	4,350	5,740	1,882	817	1,005	3,704	(531)	(778)	3,345
2018	863	72	2,881	3,816	3,352	946	601	4,899	(2,489)	(874)	2,280
2019	0	0	2,618	2,618	1,160	1,274	1,612	4,046	(1,160)	(1,274)	1,006
2020	1,709	114	3,558	5,381	1,931	1,638	893	4,462	(222)	(1,524)	2,665
2021	975	34	1,735	2,744	2,145	346	966	3,457	(1,170)	(312)	769
2022	468	0	859	1,327	1,213	6	2,023	3,242	(745)	(6)	(1,164)
Total	8,980	268	24,590	33,838	17,613	8,413	12,046	38,072	(8,633)	(8,145)	12,544

SOURCES: 1. Prince George's County Planning Department
 2. Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections, and Enforcement
 Disclaimer: The compilation, analysis, and tabulation are based on the best information available to staff.

Map 4. Approved Townhouses per Plan 2035 Center Locations - Post 2010



SOURCE: M-NOPPC



Part IV:
Planning
Policies

THE GENERAL PLAN 2035

The County's General Plan 2035 was adopted in 2014 to achieve a long-term vision for Prince George's County. "It strategically capitalizes on our local and regional strengths and focuses our resources on targeted areas best suited to mature into strong economic engines [and] leverage our investments..." The economic engines "will strengthen our existing neighborhoods; realize the potential of other transit-rich centers; [and] preserve our environmentally sensitive and rural areas".³

Plan 2035 identifies 34 centers as the focal point for future investment for residential neighborhood and business communities. Plan 2035 outlined the center classification system in its Table 16. Townhouses are permitted in all 34 centers, including regional transit districts (9), town centers (5), campus centers (3), local transit centers (9), and neighborhood centers (9).



PHOTO: M-NCPPC

As outlined in the County's General Plan 2035, 34 centers have been identified as focal points of future investment for residential neighborhood and business communities.



PHOTO: M-NCPPC

The Towne Square at Suitland Federal Center is a mixed-use project in a General Plan 2035 Center that includes townhouses.

³ Plan 2035, https://www.mncppcapps.org/planning/publications/BookDetail.cfm?item_id=279&Category_id=1

ADOPTED MASTER PLANS OR SECTOR PLANS

This section summarizes master plans or sector plans that the County has adopted since 2014. Key policies pertinent to townhouses are included in the summary.⁴

2022 Approved Bowie-Mitchellville and Vicinity Master Plan

In this master plan, townhouses and multifamily buildings, are proposed as part of the mixed-use project to support a regional transit district (MARC-Bowie Station), a campus center (Bowie State University), and the redevelopment of the Free State Shopping Center.

2022 Approved Adelphi Road-UMGC-UMD Purple Line Station Area Sector Plan

This sector plan envisions a mixed-use development around the campus center and local transit center at the edge of the University of Maryland. Townhouses may be constructed as part of the development, “creating a step-down in building heights to adjacent neighborhoods, where feasible.”

2018 Approved Greater Cheverly Sector Plan

This sector plan encourages “development that provides for residential housing choice, affordability, and diversity with varying housing types, densities, and designs including multifamily, two-family, three-family, and townhouse dwellings; small lot, single-family detached dwellings; live/work units; and accessory apartments.”

2017 Approved East Riverdale-Beacon Heights Sector Plan

“Plan 2035 envisions mid-rise and low-rise apartments and condominiums, townhouses, and small-lot single-family housing similar to what already exists in the sector.” This sector plan introduces “townhouse and single-family attached development, where appropriate, to provide additional infill housing options and incorporate townhouses into mixed-use redevelopments.” Townhouse and single-family attached development can be a transitional land use and as “an opportunity to provide additional affordable housing options.”

2016 Approved Prince George’s Plaza Transit District Development Plan

This Transit Oriented Plan “encourages high-rise and mid-rise apartments, condominiums, and townhouses, consistent with the Regional Transit District Growth Management Goal. It recommends “incorporating a mix of housing types, including multifamily units, townhouses, two over twos, and single-family houses, attractive to a range of homebuyers and renters....”

2015 Approved College Park-Riverdale Park Transit District Development Plan

As one of the Plan 2035’s regional transit districts, this area is recommended for a nonresidential mix and desired housing types including “high-rise and mid-rise apartments and townhomes ... in proximity to the Green Line, MARC, and new Purple Line Stations.” The plan also states, “Townhouses may be an appropriate use in the Riverdale Park Urban Village to help transition” intensity from high-rise multifamily and mixed-use development.

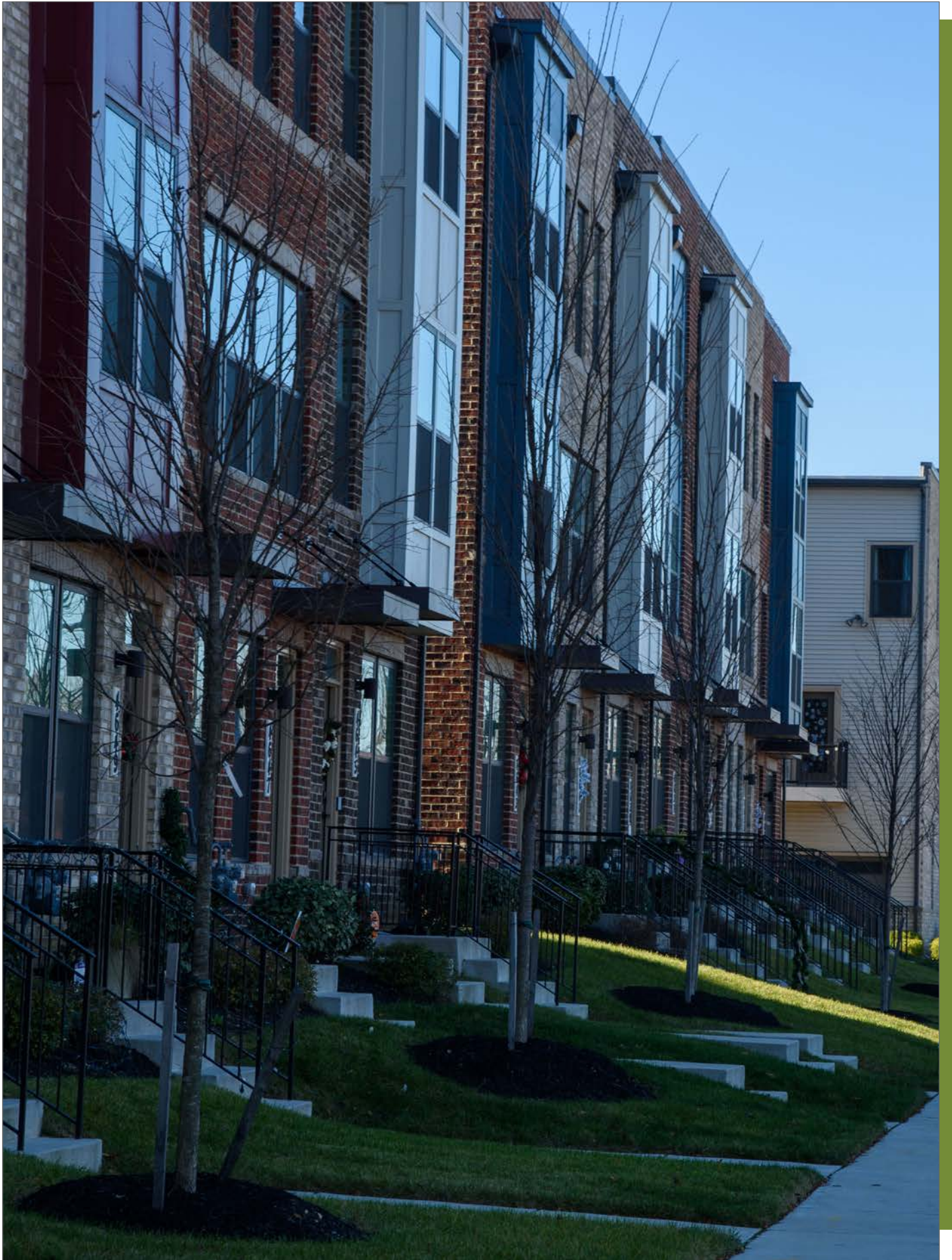
2014 Approved Southern Green Line Station Area Sector Plan

“The sector plan recommends rezoning property currently zoned One Family Detached Residential (R-55)” next to “the Reserved Open Space zone (R-O-S)” to “Townhouse (RT) zoning which permits one-family detached and attached, two-family, and three-family dwellings and promotes the maximum amount of freedom in the design of attached dwellings and their grouping and layout.”

2014 Approved Eastover/Forest Heights/Glassmanor Sector Plan (Portions of Planning Area 76A)

This sector plan recommends the demolition of an abandoned clinic building and increasing nearby land values by promoting the previously proposed Talbert Court Townhome Development. It too proposes redevelopment of the demolition site and replacing it “with new townhomes to balance residential development on both sides of Talbert Drive.”

⁴ M-NCPPC, Prince George’s County Planning Department, Master Plan, Sector Plan and Transit District Development Plan, <https://www.mncppcapps.org/planning/publications/default.cfm>



Part V:
Local Law
Relevant to
Townhouses

LEGISLATIVE BILLS OR RESOLUTIONS

Table 6 tabulates and summarizes enacted legislative bills or adopted resolutions pertaining to townhouses that have occurred since 2014. Some highlights include: permitting townhouses in the Commercial Shopping Center Zone; providing certain alternate development regulations for mixed-use planned community development in the Employment and Institutional Area Zone; limiting the authority in the Zoning Ordinance for development of Townhouse and One-family attached dwelling uses; and amending the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance for apartment housing for elderly or handicapped families in the R-T (Townhouse) Zone.

Table 6. Enacted Legislation or Adopted Resolutions

Reference No.	Type	Status	Purpose and Description
<u>CB-017-2023</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of limiting the authority in the Zoning Ordinance for development of Townhouse and One-family attached dwelling uses.
<u>CR-004-2023</u>	Resolution	Adopted	for the purpose of approving, with the force and effect of law, certain limitations on the time for processing of development applications pursuant to the superseded prior Zoning Ordinance for development of Townhouse and One-family dwelling uses in the R-A (Residential Agricultural) Zone.
<u>CB-051-2021</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of permitting certain Warehouse and Distribution uses in the M-X-T (Mixed Use -Transportation-Oriented) Zone , and permitting Townhouse uses in the R-55 (One-Family Detached Residential) Zone, under certain circumstances.
<u>CB-014-2021</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of permitting by right, Townhouse in the C-S-C (Commercial Shopping Center) Zone, under certain circumstances.
<u>CB-008-2021</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of amending the Commercial Table of Uses Permitted to permit Townhouse uses in the C-O (Commercial Office) Zone, under certain circumstances.
<u>CB-038-2020</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of permitting athletic fields in the R-R (Rural Residential) and R-T (Townhouse) Zones, subject to certain circumstances.
<u>CB-060-2019</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of amending the criteria for development of single-family detached, single-family attached, and townhouse residential uses within the O-S (Open Space) Zone to allow rough grading of land under certain circumstances.
<u>CB-045-2019</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of permitting by right 'Gas Station', 'Food or beverage store' in combination with a gas station, 'Apartment housing for the elderly or physically handicapped', 'Dwelling, multifamily', and 'Townhouse' uses in the C-S-C (Commercial Shopping Center) Zone, under certain circumstances.
<u>CB-029-2019</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of permitting townhouses in the R-T (Townhouse) Zone.
<u>CB-017-2019</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of permitting Townhouse and One-family detached dwelling uses in the R-A (Residential Agricultural) Zones, under certain circumstances.
<u>CB-097-2018</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of permitting the development of certain single-family detached, single-family attached, and townhouse residential uses within the O-S (Open Space) Zones, under specified circumstances.
<u>CB-092-2018</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of permitting certain multifamily, two-over-two, and townhouse residential uses, as well as certain mixed use development in the C-O (Commercial Office) and C-S-C (Commercial Shopping Center) Zones, under specified circumstances.
<u>CB-087-2018</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of providing certain alternate development regulations for townhouse units in the M-X-T (Mixed Use-Transportation Oriented) Zone.
<u>CB-081-2018</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of permitting the Planning Board to approve private roads and alleys in the C-M (Commercial Miscellaneous), C-S-C (Commercial Shopping Center), C-O (Commercial Office), I-3 (Planned Industrial/Employment Park), R-55 (One-Family Detached Residential), R-R (Rural Residential), and R-T (Residential Townhouse) Zones, under certain specified circumstances.
<u>CB-075-2018</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of clarifying the regulations applicable to certain Townhouse uses in the R-R (Rural Residential) and C-S-C (Commercial Shopping Center) Zones, under certain specified circumstances.
<u>CB-064-2018</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of permitting townhouses in the R-80 (One-Family Detached Residential) Zone, under certain circumstances.
<u>CB-063-2018</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of permitting townhouses in the R-R (Rural Residential) Zone, under certain circumstances.
<u>CB-062-2018</u>	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of permitting certain institutional and residential uses in the I-1 (Light Industrial) Zone, under certain circumstances.

Reference No.	Type	Status	Purpose and Description
CB-028-2018	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of amending the residential table of uses in the Zoning Ordinance to permit certain residential townhouse dwelling unit uses within the R-R (Rural Residential) Zones, subject to specified circumstances.
CB-118-2017	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of permitting, under specified circumstances, certain residential development in the R-55, R-T and I-3 Zones.
QR-016-2017	Resolution	Adopted	for the purpose of approving the Columbia Run residential development, proposed by Pennsylvania Avenue 2006, LLC, as a revitalization project qualifying for revitalization or redevelopment tax credit, as provided in Section 10-235.02.
CB-072-2016	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of providing a limited exemption from the preliminary plan of subdivision requirement for conversion of condominium townhouse dwelling units to record lot townhouse dwelling units, under certain circumstances.
CB-073-2016	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of providing certain alternate development regulations for mixed-use planned community development in the E-I-A (Employment and Institutional Area) Zone, under certain specified circumstances.
CB-042-2016	Council Bill	Enacted	for the purpose of amending the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance for apartment housing for elderly or handicapped families in the R-T (Townhouse) Zone.
CR-011-2015	Resolution	Adopted	for the purpose of transferring certain appropriations between certain projects in the Fiscal Year 2015 Capital Budget for the Department of Parks and Recreation.

SOURCE: Prince George's County Council, <https://princegeorgescountymd.legistar.com/Legislation.aspx>

ZONING PERMITTED TOWNHOUSES

Townhouses are permitted in a number of zones, as shown in **Table 7** and **Map 5**. These zones, covering 20,933.89 acres, comprise approximately 7.52% of all land in the County.

Among them, the Residential, Single-Family-Attached zone is the largest, covering 21.89% of all land zoned for attached dwellings. The Residential, Multifamily-20 Zone and the Commercial, General and Office Zone follow, representing 17.38% and 16.99% of the total land area for which townhouses are allowed.

There are also seven Planned Development Zones that may permit townhouses as well.

“They provide flexibility for innovative land use and site design concepts that will enhance the quality of life and support high quality development, strengthen environmental stewardship, encourage energy efficiency, and meet other County goals and objectives for mixed-use development, connected and multimodal places, and improved community services and facilities.”⁵

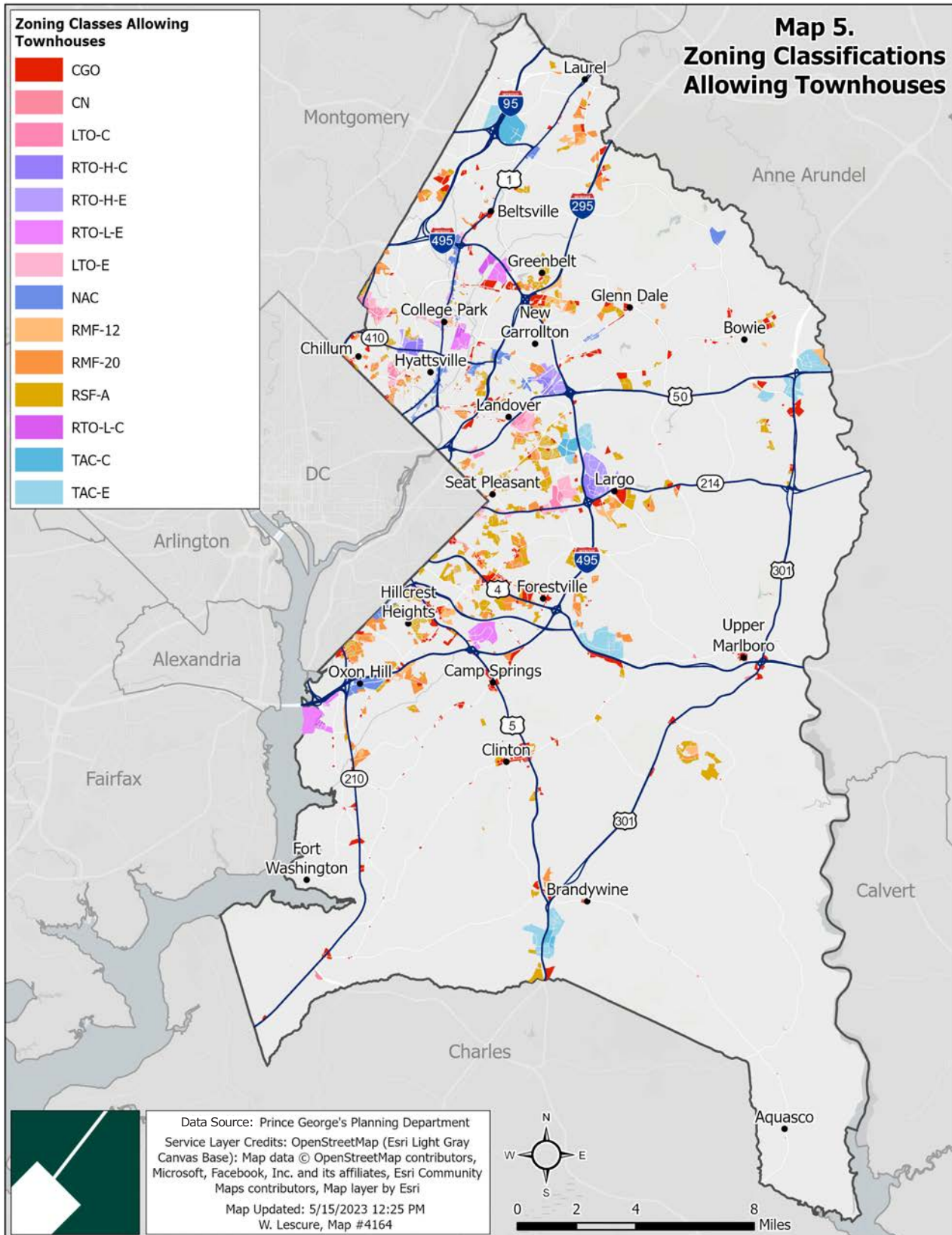
Table 7. Zoning Classifications Allowing Townhouses

Zoning Class	Zoning Description	Land Area (Acreage)	Percent Total
CGO	Commercial, General and Office	3,556.42	16.99%
CN	Commercial, Neighborhood	126.13	0.60%
LTO	Local Transit-Oriented	1,489.22	7.11%
NAC	Neighborhood Activity Center	1,157.84	5.53%
RMF-12	Residential, Multifamily-12	988.96	4.72%
RMF-20	Residential, Multifamily-20	3,638.73	17.38%
RSF-A	Residential, Single-Family-Attached	4,582.76	21.89%
RTO-H	Regional Transit-Oriented, High-Intensity	1,188.10	5.68%
RTO-L	Regional Transit-Oriented, Low-Intensity	1,378.66	6.59%
TAC	Town Activity Center	2,827.07	13.50%
Total		20,933.89	100.00%

SOURCE: Prince George's County Planning Department, Existing Zoning (Effective April 1, 2022)

⁵ M-NCPPC, Prince George's County Planning Department, Visual Guide to Zoning Categories, https://www.mncppcapps.org/planning/publications/BookDetail.cfm?item_id=419&Category_id=2

Map 5. Zoning Classifications Allowing Townhouses



SOURCE: M-NCPPC

Part VI:
Review of
Neighboring
Counties



PHOTO: www.iStock.com/krblokhin

Neighboring counties permit several forms of attached housing.

To understand how neighboring counties have implemented townhouse development and regulations, this report reviews definitions and zoning ordinances of Anne Arundel, Howard, and Montgomery counties in Maryland, as well as Arlington, Fairfax, and Loudoun counties in Virginia.

DEFINITIONS OF TOWNHOUSE

All six neighboring counties permit several forms of attached housing, including townhouses. The most common feature of attached housing is the presence of a common wall from floor to ceiling, with no openings between the units. Units are typically on their own lots. Most often, each unit is required to have its own entrance, though the entryways may share features such as a common porch.

Several of the neighboring counties—Anne Arundel, Howard, and Fairfax—allow for vertical integration of attached housing units, labeled as duplexes or “stacked townhouses.”

Loudoun County provides for triplexes and quadruplexes that, together with duplexes and townhouses, are considered single-family attached housing.

A cursory look at the regulations shows that these neighboring counties allow three- and four-unit horizontal configurations, but designate them differently. For example, they are considered to be single-family attached units in Howard County and some version of “townhouse” in the others. Fairfax County appears to be alone in allowing “back-to-back” housing—housing in which four or more units share a common wall.

REGULATIONS AND POLICIES

Anne Arundel County, Maryland

Townhouses are permitted in two residential zones, R10 and R15, which allow semi-detached, duplexes, and townhouses at maximum densities of 10 and 15 units per acre, respectively. Townhouses and duplexes are allowed by special exception or conditional use in low- and medium-density, single-family detached zones.

Howard County, Maryland

Townhouses are permitted in the Residential-Single Attached District Zone. It is the intent of this district that attached dwellings be compatible with adjacent residential zones. In addition, the county established the Residential Cluster district, was established to provide the opportunity for clustering of single-family detached and attached dwelling unit developments in appropriate locations adjacent to an arterial or collector highway or adjoining a non-residential zoning district.

Montgomery County, Maryland

Montgomery County zoning includes four residential townhouse classifications: Townhouse Low Density, Townhouse Medium Density, Townhouse High Density, and a Townhouse Floating Zone. The county's newly approved plan, Thrive Montgomery 2050, addresses townhouses and other missing middle housing types, from low to medium densities, at different prices, and in locations served by transit. The goal is to "provide more choice, enhance intergenerational interaction, promote aging in place, and build social capital."

Arlington County, Virginia

Townhouses are permitted as special exceptions in most residential districts and there are distinct townhouse districts: R-10T, R-15-T, R15-30T, R2-7, and C-TH for mixed single-family, various density, or adjacent to Metro transit corridors, or a transition from high density commercial development to low density residential subdivisions. In March 2023, the County Board voted unanimously to eliminate single-family only zoning to increase and diversify the housing supply and provide more housing options. As part of this regulatory change, the General Land Use Plan was amended to establish a wider range of housing options in lower density neighborhoods.

Fairfax County, Virginia

There are nine residential districts that permit townhouses, and three of them expressly permit stacked townhouses. They are allowed in districts with single-family detached, affordable, and other low, medium, and higher density developments. Particularly, the Planned Development Housing District was established to encourage creative design, protect open space and environmental features, promote a mix of housing types, and encourage the provision of homes affordable for low- and moderate-income households. The Comprehensive Plan emphasizes ensuring workforce dwelling units, including stacked townhomes, at mixed-use centers (including Tysons Urban Center), suburban centers, and community business centers.

Loudoun County, Virginia

Loudoun County has four zoning classifications that permit townhouses: R-8 Single Family Residential district for manufactured housing, single-family detached, duplex, townhouse, and single-family attached dwellings at a maximum density of eight units per acre; Rural Village Center Subdistrict for pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development allowing single-family detached, townhouse, apartment, storefront, workplace, and civic uses; R-16 Townhouse/Multifamily Residential district for manufactured housing, townhouse, and multiple family dwellings at a maximum density of 16 units per acre; and Planned Development-Housing district for a mix of single-family attached, duplex, triplex, and quadraplex units, and townhouses.



Appendix: Additional Definitions

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

The Survey of Construction (SOC) defines townhouses as, “Side by side housing units that do not meet the definition of single-family houses.”⁶ The Bureau’s New Housing Construction Reclassification⁷ asserts, “Townhouses are classified as single-family houses according to Census definitions; however, permit offices frequently classify them as multifamily structures. In the Survey of Construction, we often sample permits for multifamily buildings that our field representatives later determine are townhouses. This reclassification results in significantly more single-family starts and completions (and less multifamily) than are displayed in the permit data.”

AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

A Planners Dictionary⁸ provides a series of definitions for townhouses or row houses. APA also refers to townhouse development: “A subdivision consisting of attached dwelling units in conjunction with a separate lot or lots of common ownership, wherein each dwelling unit has at least one vertical wall extending from ground to roof dividing it from adjoining units, and each unit is separately owned, with the owner of such unit having title to the land on which it sits. (Moorpark, Calif.)”

Two examples of APA’s summaries on townhouses are: “dwelling, semi-detached (See also duplex; row house; townhouse; triplex),” “A building containing two attached dwelling units that share a common wall at the lot line and that are on separate lots (Cecil County, MD),” and “Row house (See also townhouse). A multifamily dwelling structure consisting of attached dwelling units owned individually and not in common by one owner (Camas, Wash.)”

FORBES ADVISOR

“A townhouse (also called a townhome) is generally one unit with at least two floors in a row of many that shares either one or two walls with another unit next to it. It can also share other features like yards and amenities, though it typically comes with its own entrance. ... Additionally, though a townhouse sits in a row of attached units, each unit is individually owned, and it might be part of a homeowners association (HOA).”⁹

REDFIN (REAL ESTATE)

Townhouses are a hybrid between a condominium and a single-family home. They are often multiple floors, with one or two shared walls, and some have a small yard space or rooftop deck. They are generally larger than a condominium, but smaller than a single-family home.

Townhomes often have more privacy than a condominium might afford. Some have HOAs or joint maintenance agreements to share upkeep costs. They tend to be more affordable than a single-family home. Townhomes do not usually have shared amenities like a gym or a pool, but they are not as private as a single-family home.¹⁰

THE MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF ASSESSMENTS AND TAXATION

The Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) categorizes all properties with an assessor’s zone code. There is no formal definition available for this categorization. Tax account classifications can be found on this dashboard developed by the Prince George’s County Planning Department:

The Planning Department’s Information Management Division has used the SDAT data and planimetric data to combine and map multiple assessment data fields as they relate to property boundaries to represent land use and ownership information more closely in the County. A structure code is assigned, and duplexes and triplexes have been broken out separately. This data is represented in our PropertyInfo File.

Although the numbers and methodologies vary slightly depending on the sources the overall patterns remain consistent across the datasets. For the purposes of this Report the primary source was a version of the SDAT Land Data file that was reviewed and enhanced to support this enhancement. Enhancement was primarily associated with validating and adding Year built information when not present in the SDAT data.

6 The U.S. Census Bureau, <https://bit.ly/census-townhouse-definition>

7 The U.S. Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/construction/nrc/nrcdatarelationships.html>

8 A Planners Dictionary, American Planning Association, <https://www.planning.org/publications/report/9026853/>

9 Zinn, Dori. “What is a Townhouse?”, Forbes, Oct. 5, 2022, <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/mortgages/real-estate/what-is-a-townhouse/>

10 Redfin, <https://www.redfin.com/guides/difference-between-building-types>

Acknowledgments

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