



New Town Task Force

Meeting No. 7

January 27, 2026

Agenda

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Welcome, Purpose and Meeting No. 6 Recap

Prior Meeting Minute Approval, Elements and Information Requests

Overall Schedule and Expectations for Meeting No. 7

Process and Schedule for Developing Recommendations

Recommendations

Wrap-Up

- Homework for Next Meeting
- Open Comments

Adjourn



Welcome and Meeting No. 6

Recap

Task Force Purpose

Executive Order 2025-09 and 2025-10

County Executive
Of
Howard County, Maryland

Executive Order: 2025-09
Date: May 14, 2025
Subject: Creating a New Town Task Force

WHEREAS, the County's General Plan, HoCo By Design, was adopted in October of 2023 and took effect December of 2023; and

WHEREAS, to date, the Department of Planning and Zoning has worked to implement several aspects of HoCo By Design since its adoption, to include: convening an Affordable Housing Working Group to develop recommendations related to growth management strategies for this component of housing; convening the Adequate Public Facilities Act Review Committee to develop recommendations for revisions to the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO); advancing a comprehensive master planning effort for the future of the 1,100 acre Columbia Gateway office park; progressing updates to the Howard County Landscape Manual; and will soon commence projects to update the Route 1 and Route 40 Design Manuals; and

WHEREAS, HoCo By Design describes the New Town (NT) zoning district in Columbia of over 14,000 acres and 28,000 parcels as having a unique sense of place that its residents want to preserve, enhance, and strengthen; and

WHEREAS, the General Plan identifies that a review of the New Town (NT) zoning district and its character-defining elements by a task force would provide an opportunity to ensure that the regulatory structure is calibrated to successfully carry forward New Town (NT) zoning; and

WHEREAS, the General Plan calls for the establishment of a task force to evaluate and make recommendations on how to carry forward New Town's planned community framework; and

WHEREAS, the General Plan specifies that the Task Force shall consist of members appointed by the County Council and the County Executive; and

WHEREAS, the County Executive received recommendations from the County Council for members to be appointed by this executive order.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED, that the New Town Task Force is established.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that the duties and responsibilities of the Task Force are to evaluate and make recommendations on how to carry forward New Town's planned community framework, including but not limited to, modifications to zoning regulations and development processes.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that the following individuals are appointed to serve as voting members on the New Town Task Force:

1. Matt Abrams
2. Nina Basu
3. Judelle Campbell
4. Nicole Campbell
5. David Costello
6. Sharon Cooper-Kerr
7. Greg DesRoches
8. Rene DuBois
9. Karin Emery
10. Brian England
11. Michael Golbersuch
12. Robbyn Harris
13. Ryan Hermann
14. Ian Kennedy
15. Joan Lanco
16. Tim May
17. Kristi Smith
18. Stacy Spann
19. Collin Sullivan
20. Ashley Vaughan

WHEREAS, on May 14, 2025, I issued Executive Order No. 2025-09 that established the New Town Task Force; and

WHEREAS, I wish to alter the membership of the Task Force to add a member.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED, that Fran LoPresti is added as a voting member of the New Town Task Force.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that all other provisions of Executive Order No. 2025-09 shall remain in effect.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I, Calvin Ball, as County Executive of Howard County, Maryland have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of Howard County to be affixed this 3rd day of June 2025.



Calvin Ball
County Executive

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that the Task Force shall issue a written report by May 31, 2026.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that the Task Force's report shall be provided to the County Executive and County Council and shall be considered as zoning changes are developed for the New Town (NT) zoning district.

AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED, that the New Town Task Force and the terms of its members shall cease to exist on or about September 30, 2026.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I, Calvin Ball, as County Executive of Howard County, Maryland have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of Howard County to be affixed this 14 day of May 2025.


Calvin Ball
County Executive

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED, that the New Town Task Force is established.

*AND BE IT FURTHER ORDERED that the duties and responsibilities of the Task Force are to **evaluate and make recommendations** on how to carry forward New Town's planned community framework, including but not limited to, **modifications to zoning regulations and development processes.***



Task Force Vision

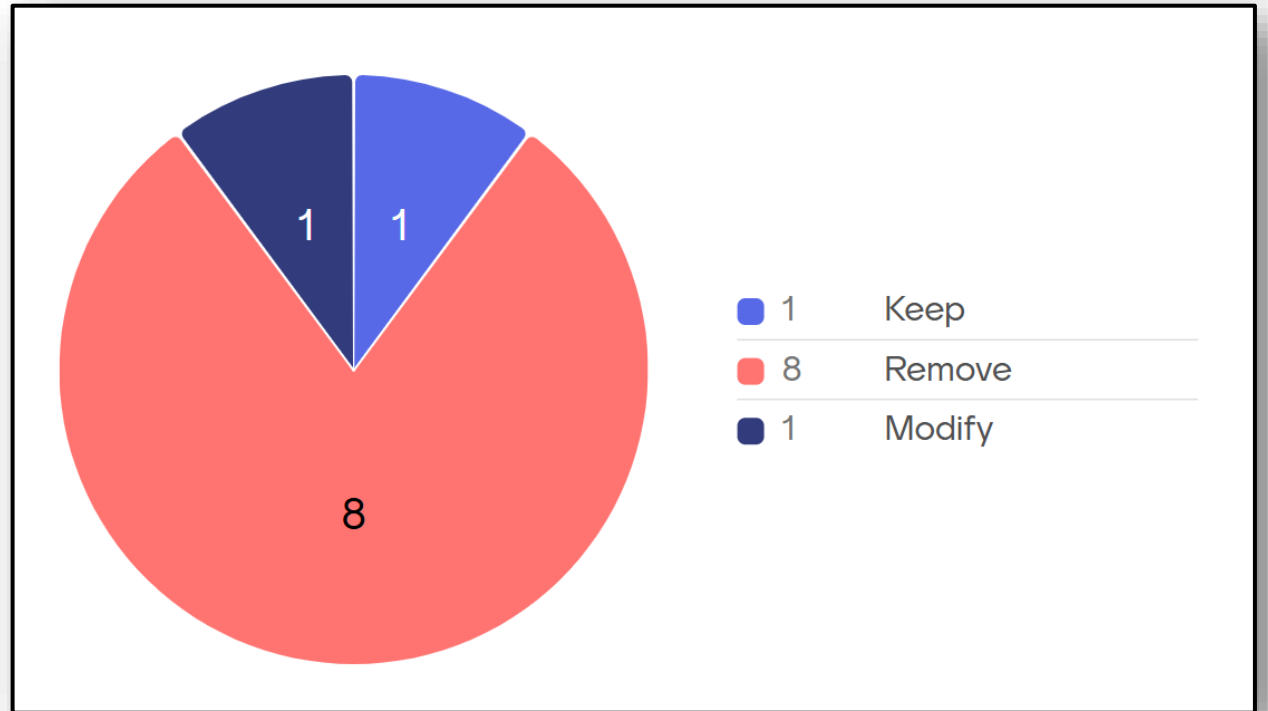
- *People and Community, Diversity and Inclusivity, Open Space and green space aid in maintaining the spirit of Columbia.*
- *Embrace the future while honoring the values that Columbia was based upon.*
- *Columbia is a place that needs to value its uniqueness / based on its history.*

The Vision for New Town Recommendations

Meeting No. 6 Recap

Reviewing Original Petitioner Role

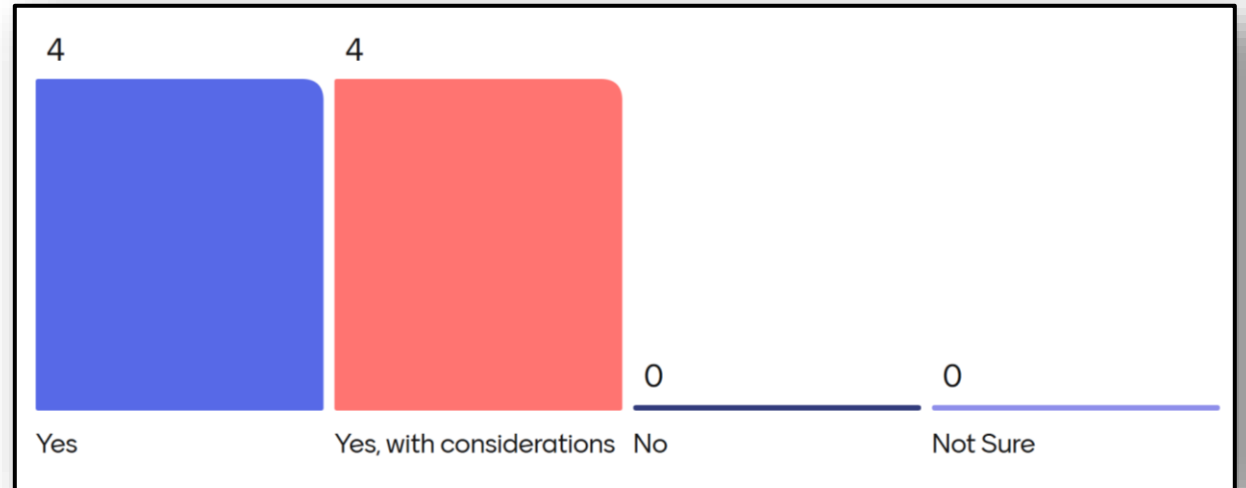
Q1: Should we keep, remove, or modify the role of the original petitioner?



Meeting No. 6 Recap

Uses, Materials, and Design Guidance

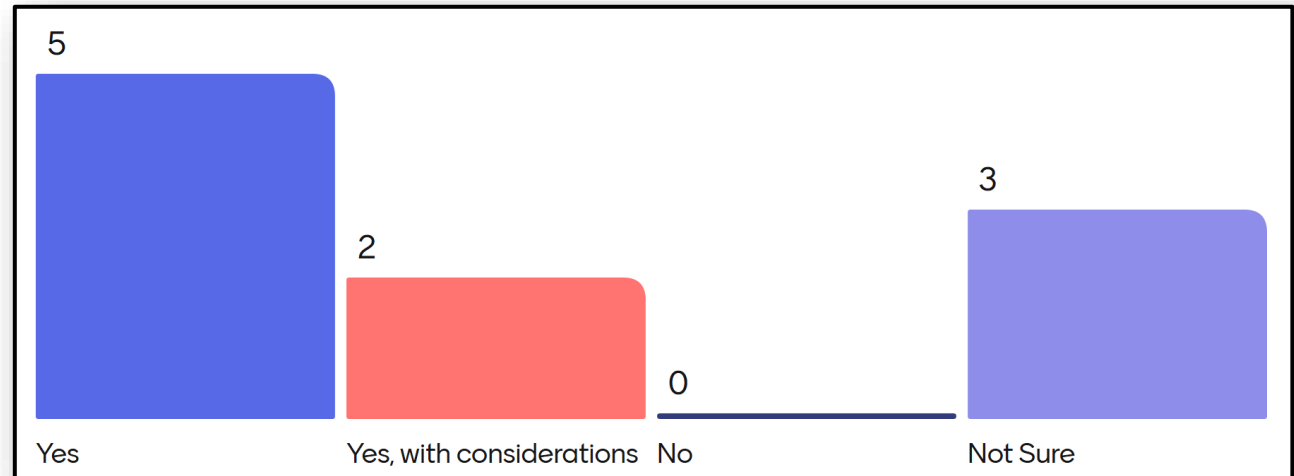
Q2a: Should there be an enhancement or expansion of the uses (i.e. Age Restricted Adult Housing/Missing Middle/Mixed Use)



Meeting No. 6 Recap

Uses, Materials, and Design Guidance

Q2b: Should there be an enhancement or expansion of material allowances and design guidance (i.e., Universal Design, Accessibility, Sustainable Materials, Design Guidance generally) in the New Town Zoning code?





Prior Meeting Minute Approval and Information Requests

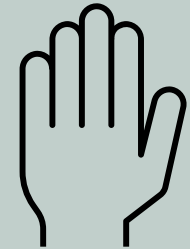
Meeting Minutes

Approval / Discussion of Meeting Minutes

Task Force No. 6 Meeting Minutes previously distributed

- Voting Process
 - Motion to approve the meeting minutes as distributed
 - Second to the motion
 - Any discussion (if there are any revisions to the meeting minutes, these are to be brought forward at this time).
 - If revisions are noted, we will vote to approve the revised meeting minutes.
 - If no revisions are noted, we will vote to approve to meeting minutes as distributed

HOW TO VOTE



If you agree, raise your hand when called to vote “in favor”

If you disagree, raise your hand when called to vote “opposed”

Is there a motion to approve Task Force No. 6 meeting minutes?



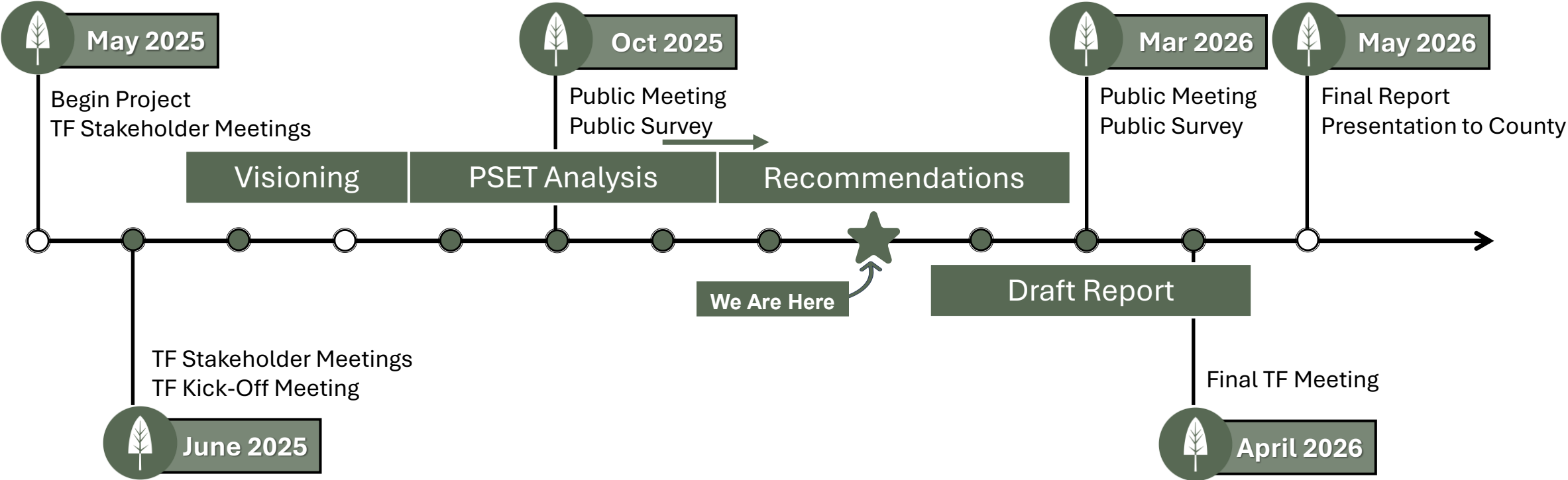
Overall Schedule and Expectations for Meeting No. 7

Overall Schedule



Anticipated Milestones

● Task Force Meeting

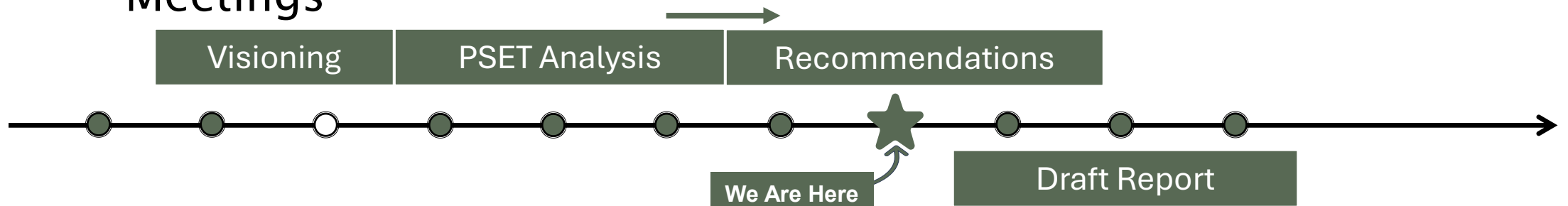


Expectations for Meetings

Developing Recommendation Meetings

December, January, February and March Meetings

- Review Major Elements of Zoning Code (Section 125.0)
 - Major discussion elements were presented at NTTF No. 3 (September)
 - Major elements will be reviewed individually with relevant case study information pertaining to that element
 - NTTF will discuss each element to identify the recommendation to preserve, strengthen, enhance, or transform element
- Elements will be further refined during the Recommendations Meetings



Expectations for Meetings

January 2026

Task Force Meeting #7

Recommendations Meeting #2

- Review meeting survey responses
- Draft recommendations

February 2026

Task Force Meeting #8

Recommendations Meeting #3

- Finalize Task Force member recommendations

March 2026

Public Meeting # 2 and

Task Force Meeting #9

- Public meeting to review recommendations and provide input
- Task Force to review initial public input

April 2026

Task Force Meeting #10

- Finalize recommendations report using public input



Process and Schedule for Developing Recommendations

Developing Recommendations

Process

- Following Robert's Rules of Order (light)
- Using the recent recommendations work completed through the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) Review Committee as a model

Recommendations

- NTTF does **not** have to have the details fully vetted and areas of particular interest can be noted within the recommendation
- Recommendations are in line with the NTTF Vision of where Columbia should be in the next 10, 20+ years

Developing Recommendations

Tracking Spreadsheet (from e-mail)



PRELIMINARY DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Element	Section Reference	Recommendation #	Preliminary Draft Motion for Discussion	NTTF Meeting Discussion
Creating Another NT District	Section 125.0.B	1	Reduce the acreage requirement to create a New New Town	September
		2	Remove the section on creating a New New Town	September
		3	Maintain the original petitioner's ability to expand or restrict a New Town district	September
		4	Additional task force motions	N/A
		5	Additional task force motions	N/A
PDP/FDP/CSP Structure	Section 125.0.	1	Re-structure New Town zoning to align with existing land uses in Columbia under new Euclidean zoning.	November
		2	Maintain its current overall structure, but seek to simplify the approval and development processes within New Town zoning district.	November
		3	Create a master plan for Columbia in order to establish a community vision that guides future development.	November
		4	Standardize requirements by land use types across the FDPs	November
		5	Remove CSPs as a step in the development process	November
		6	Remove the New Town district by creating a New Town Overlay in order to regulate open space, design, and character; and zone properties with similar land uses under existing County Euclidian zoning districts.	November
		7	Consider implementing performance-based, incentive, or form-based zoning districts within Columbia.	November
		8	Consolidate the FDPs and their requirements to create a table of permitted uses by area	November
		9	Expand the types of uses that can be approved administratively through DPZ	November
..	Identify most effective opportunities for public engagement and maintain them as a priority in the development	..		

Developing Recommendations

Full Tracking Spreadsheet

Element	Section Reference	Recommendation #	Preliminary Draft Motion for Discussion	NTTF Meeting Discussion	Motion Made By	Seconded By	Pass Tally	Opposition Tally	Pass/Fail
Creating Another NT District	Section 125.0.B	1	Reduce the acreage requirement to create a New New Town	September	Task Force Member Name	Task Force Member Name	#	#	P/F
		2	Remove the section on creating a New New Town	September	Task Force Member Name	Task Force Member Name	#	#	P/F
		3	Maintain the original petitioner's ability to expand or restrict a New Town district	September	Task Force Member Name	Task Force Member Name	#	#	P/F
		4	Additional task force motions	N/A	Task Force Member Name	Task Force Member Name	#	#	P/F
		5	Additional task force motions	N/A	Task Force Member Name	Task Force Member Name	#	#	P/F
FDP/CSP Structure	Section 125.0.	1	Re-structure New Town zoning to align with existing land uses in Columbia under new Euclidean zoning.	November	Task Force Member Name	Task Force Member Name	#	#	P/F
		2	Maintain its current overall structure, but seek to simplify the approval and development processes within New Town zoning district.	November	Task Force Member Name	Task Force Member Name	#	#	P/F
		3	Create a master plan for Columbia in order to establish a community vision that guides future development.	November	Task Force Member Name	Task Force Member Name	#	#	P/F
		4	Standardize requirements by land use types across the FDPs	November	Task Force Member Name	Task Force Member Name	#	#	P/F
		5	Remove CSPs as a step in the development process	November	Task Force Member Name	Task Force Member Name	#	#	P/F
		6	Remove the New Town district by creating a New Town Overlay in order to regulate open space, design, and character; and zone properties with similar land uses under existing County Euclidian zoning districts.	November	Task Force Member Name	Task Force Member Name	#	#	P/F
		7	Consider implementing performance-based, incentive, or form-based zoning districts within Columbia.	November	Task Force Member Name	Task Force Member Name	#	#	P/F

Motions and Vote Tracking

PSET Principles

Preserve, Strengthen, Enhance, and Transform Principles

Areas to
PRESERVE



Areas to
STRENGTHEN



Areas to
ENHANCE



Residential / Non-Residential

Areas to
TRANSFORM



Less change / lower intensity

More change / greater intensity

Preserve

Protect and Maintain

Preserving what matters most

Strengthen

Strengthen existing communities and infrastructure

Strengthening what already works

Enhance

Adding into what is already working to be more robust

Enhancing what already exists

Transform

Transforming areas that are underutilized or poised for change

Transforming what needs to evolve

Key Elements Discussed

Key Elements Discussed during PSET Meetings

September Discussion

- Creating another New Town District
- Defining Credited Open Space
- Incorporating Moderate Income Housing Unit (MIHU) Regulations
- Managing Density Caps

October Discussion

- Evaluating New Town District Structure
- Simplification of Regulations & Processes
- Redefining Apartment Land Use
- Reviewing Original Petitioner Role
- Expansion of uses and materials, and design guidance in New Town Zoning

November Discussion

December Discussion

Recommendations Order

Recommendations to be Discussed

January
Discussion

- Creating another New Town District (*Sep*)
- PDP/FDP/CSP Structure (*Nov*)
- Defining Credited Open Space (*Sep*)
- Defining Apartments (*Nov*)
- Original Petitioner (*Dec*)

- Downtown and Village Center Process Simplification (*Nov*)
- Density Cap Requirements (*Oct*)
- Land Use Percentage Requirements (*Oct*)
- MIHU Requirements (*Oct*)
- Expansion of uses and materials, and design guidance in New Town Zoning (*Dec*)
- Continued Discussion / Review of Recommendations

February
Discussion

March
Discussion



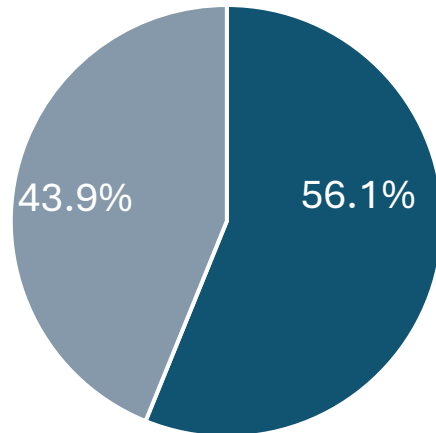
Recommendations

Recommendations

New Town District Awareness

Q2: Are you aware that the predominant zoning for the majority of Columbia is New Town zoning?

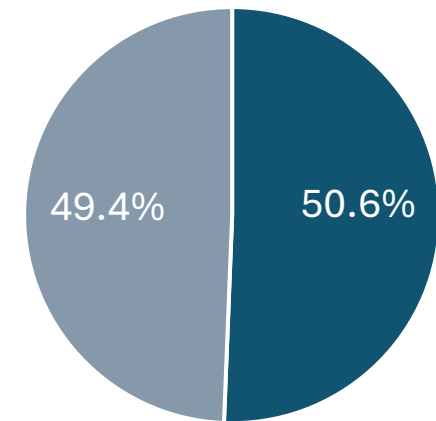
- 399 Replied
- 0 Skipped



■ Yes ■ No

Q3: Are you aware that New Town zoning functions differently than the rest of Howard County zoning?

- 399 Replied
- 0 Skipped



■ Yes ■ No

Recommendations

Creating another New Town District

Section 125.0.B

Overview of NTTF Meeting Discussion

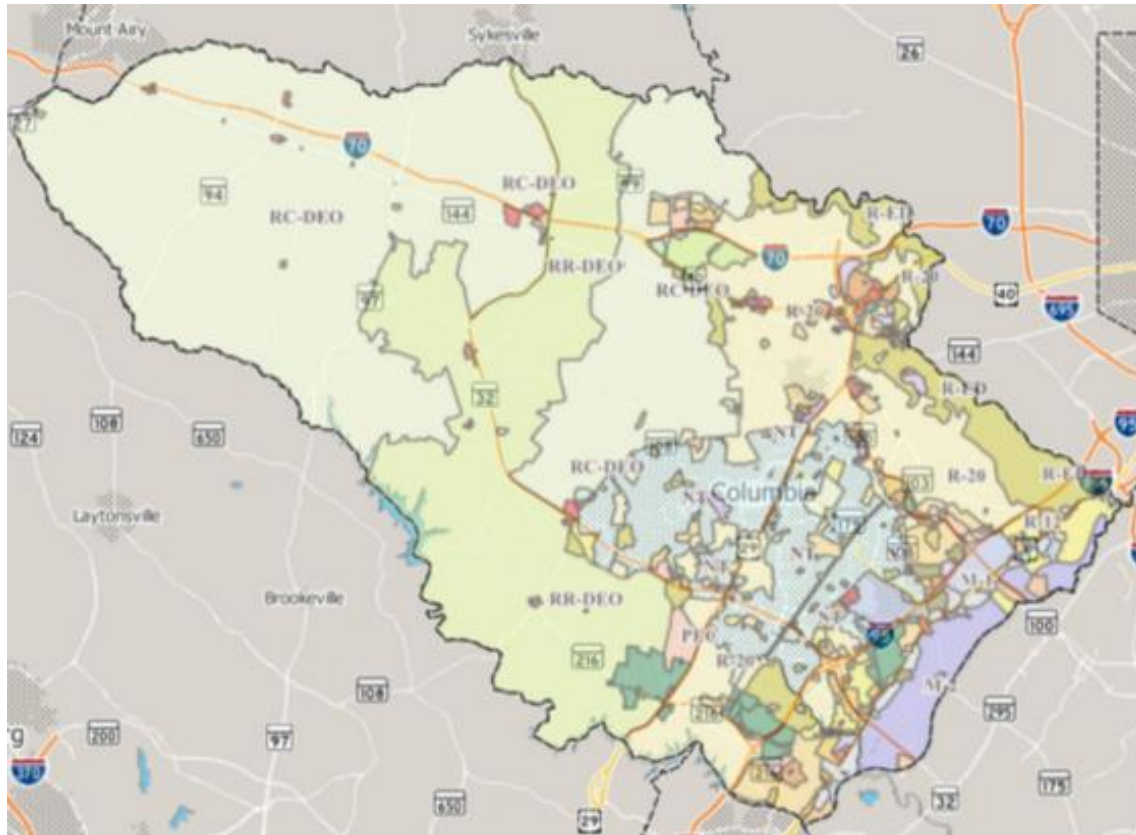
- Removing the ability to create a 'new' NT District does not impact current NT Columbia's ability to maintain itself as a NT district or annex new land into its own NT district
- There is limited to no available land left in the county to create such a large master planned community
- Questions if 'under developed' land in the county could be formed into a 'new' New Town district

Creating a new New Town

Creating a New Town District

- Contiguous, planned community for 20,000 or more people
- Minimum 2,500 acres
- A preliminary plan must be presented to the Zoning Board, who will determine whether
 - The petition complies with the provisions of these Regulations;
 - A New Town District should be located at the proposed site; and
 - The Preliminary Development Plan constitutes a general land use plan for the area covered thereby, designed to meet the objectives set forth in these Regulations.

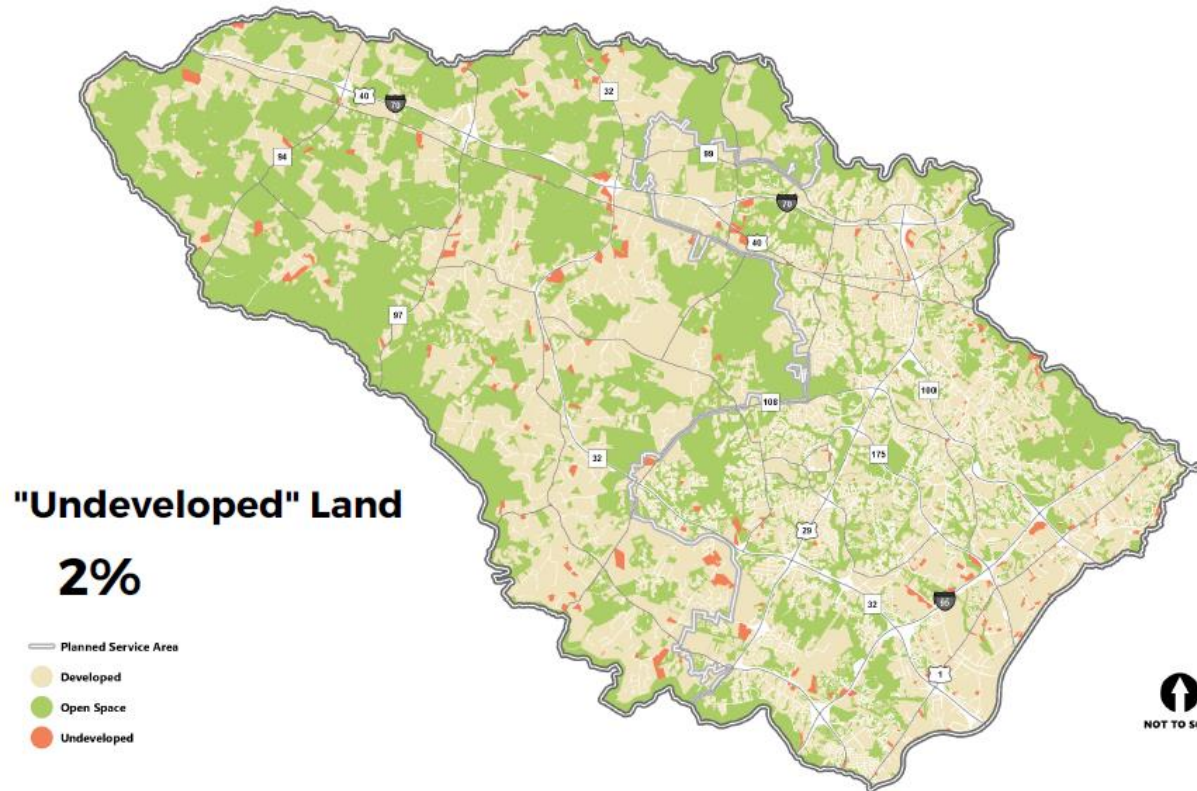
Creating a new New Town



- The county includes many different zones, including **Euclidean, Floating, and Overlay zoning types which allow a variety of different uses, densities, and design patterns**
- There has **not been interest in developing another New Town community** from the development community
- More recent developments of master planned communities have used other Euclidean zoning methods, such as:
 - MXD (Maple Lawn, Emerson)
 - PGCC (Turf Valley)

Creating a new New Town

Creating a New Town District



- HoCo By Design identified only **2% of land is undeveloped or unprotected – scattered in small areas throughout the County**
- Development opportunities and PSA expansions in the West are limited by:
 - Limited by
 - Environmental Resources
 - Preservation Easements
 - Current open space
 - Water and Sewer Capacity

Recommendations

Another New Town District

Section 125.0.B

Recommendation #1: Reduce the acreage requirement to create a new New Town.

Discussion

Motion

Make the Motion
Second the Motion

Vote

Yes OR No OR Abstain

Another New Town District

Recommendations

Another New Town District

Section 125.0.B

Recommendation #2: Remove the section on creating a new New Town District.

Discussion

Motion

Make the Motion
Second the Motion

Vote

Yes OR No OR Abstain

Another New Town District

Recommendations

Another New Town District

Section 125.0.B

Recommendation #3: Maintain the original petitioner's ability to expand or restrict a New Town District.

Discussion

Motion

Make the Motion
Second the Motion

Vote

Yes OR No OR Abstain

Another New Town District

Recommendations

PDP/FDP/CSP Structure

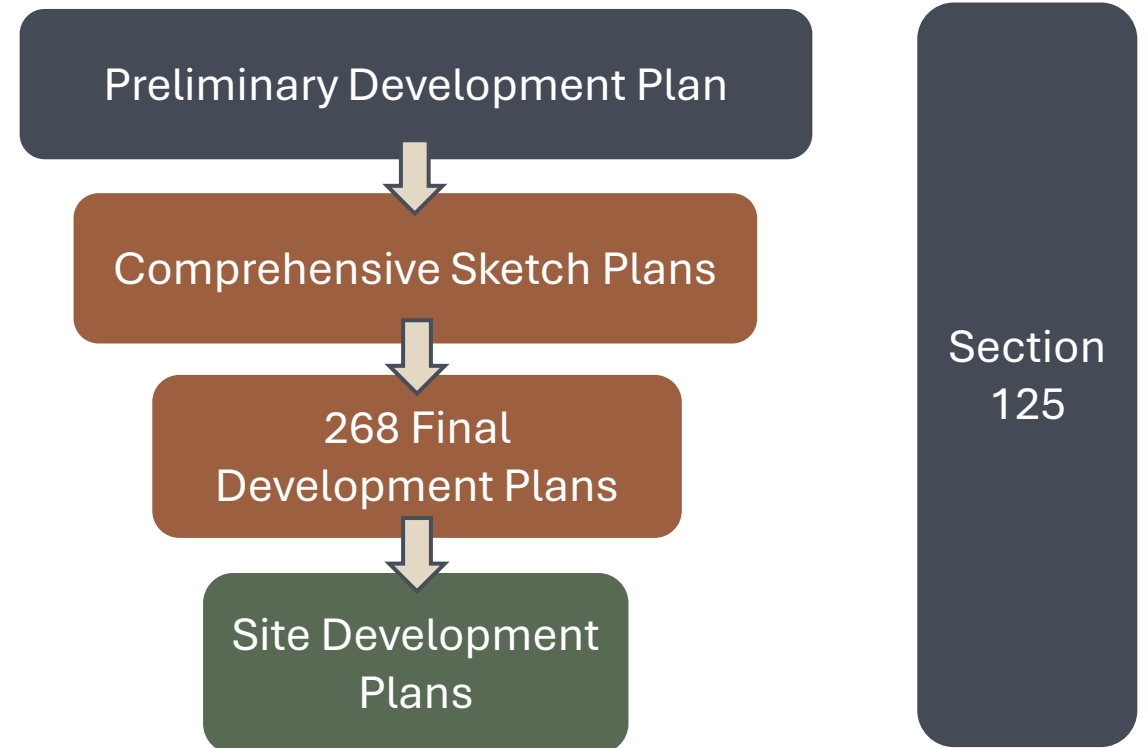
Section 125.0

Overview of NTTF Meeting Discussion

- Too complicated for property owners, developers, and administrators to follow, interpret, and implement
- Site specific regulations through FDPs are inconsistent
- Concern of number of meetings
- Interest in maintaining public engagement as part of the development process
- Interest in expanding flexibility for new, modern land uses, such as mixed use areas

NT Structure

- **Section 125** and the **Preliminary Development Plan**
Manage overall land use percentages and density caps across the entire New Town district
- **Comprehensive Sketch Plans** and **Final Development Plans** lay out generalized permitted uses, open space, setbacks, and bulk regulation/design requirements
- **Site Development Plans** show detailed development plans, including utilities, stormwater, and other infrastructure



4 Stage Structure

Structure Challenges

- Complexity
 - Multiple layers (PDP -> CSP -> FDP -> SDP) creates long timelines
- Outdated Land Use and Design Standards
 - Original regulations do not incorporate modern planning needs such as mixed-use development, sustainability, and resiliency
- Constraints on Redevelopment
 - Existing lack of standardization between FDP's creates challenges
 - Specific land use percentages and highly specific FDPs limit flexibility for redevelopment
- Public Process
 - Provides transparency
 - Adds to the timelines and cost for applicants

Structure Solutions

- Adjust or Remove the overall land use percentage requirements to create more flexibility
- Simplification from a 3-4 Stage to a 2-stage structure
 - Remove Comprehensive Sketch Plans from the process, since they are duplicative to already created Final Development Plans
 - Consolidate the Final Development Plans using zoning tools such as Euclidean, Overlay, or Hybrid Form-Based codes
 - Create a consolidated, consistent use table to associate permitted uses across different areas of New Town
- Allow for increased staff review and administrative approvals of smaller additions, accessory uses, or other types of projects

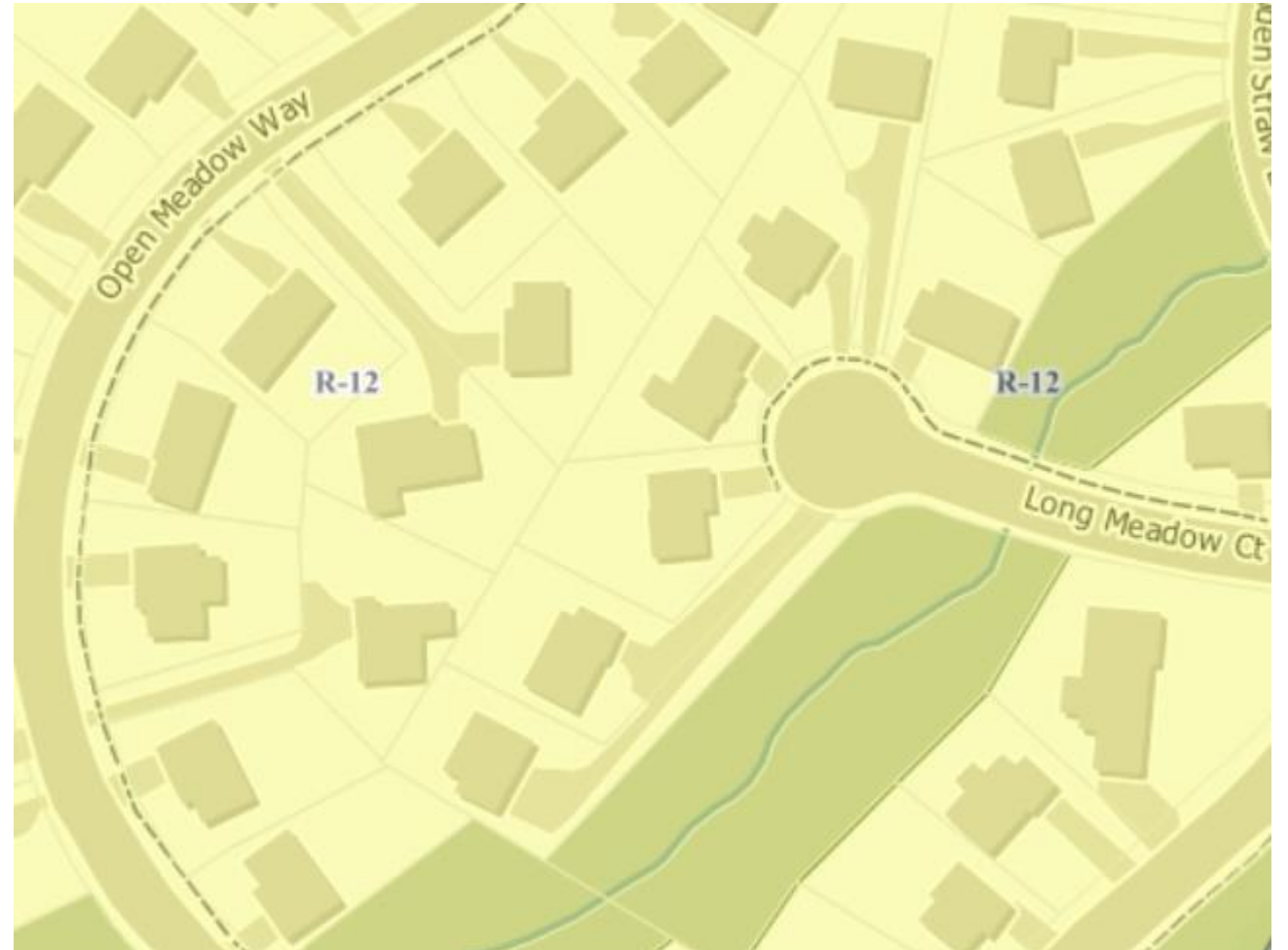
Structure: Alternative Zoning Options

Purpose and Function:

- Mapped to property lines or geographic features
- Separates land use types
- Mandates Setback Requirements
- Regulates building bulk/massing requirements (e.g. Building height limits, floor area ratios)
- Often referred to in existing FDPs to regulate uses (i.e. all uses allowed in B-1 are allowed in a given commercial FDP)

General Categories of Euclidian/Base Zones:

- **Residential**
 - Rural residential (e.g., RC, RR)
 - Single-family detached (e.g., R-20, R-12)
 - Apartment zones (e.g., R-A-15)
- **Mixed-Use**
 - Supports a combination of residential, commercial, and/or office
- **Non-Residential**
 - Office zones
 - Manufacturing/industrial zones



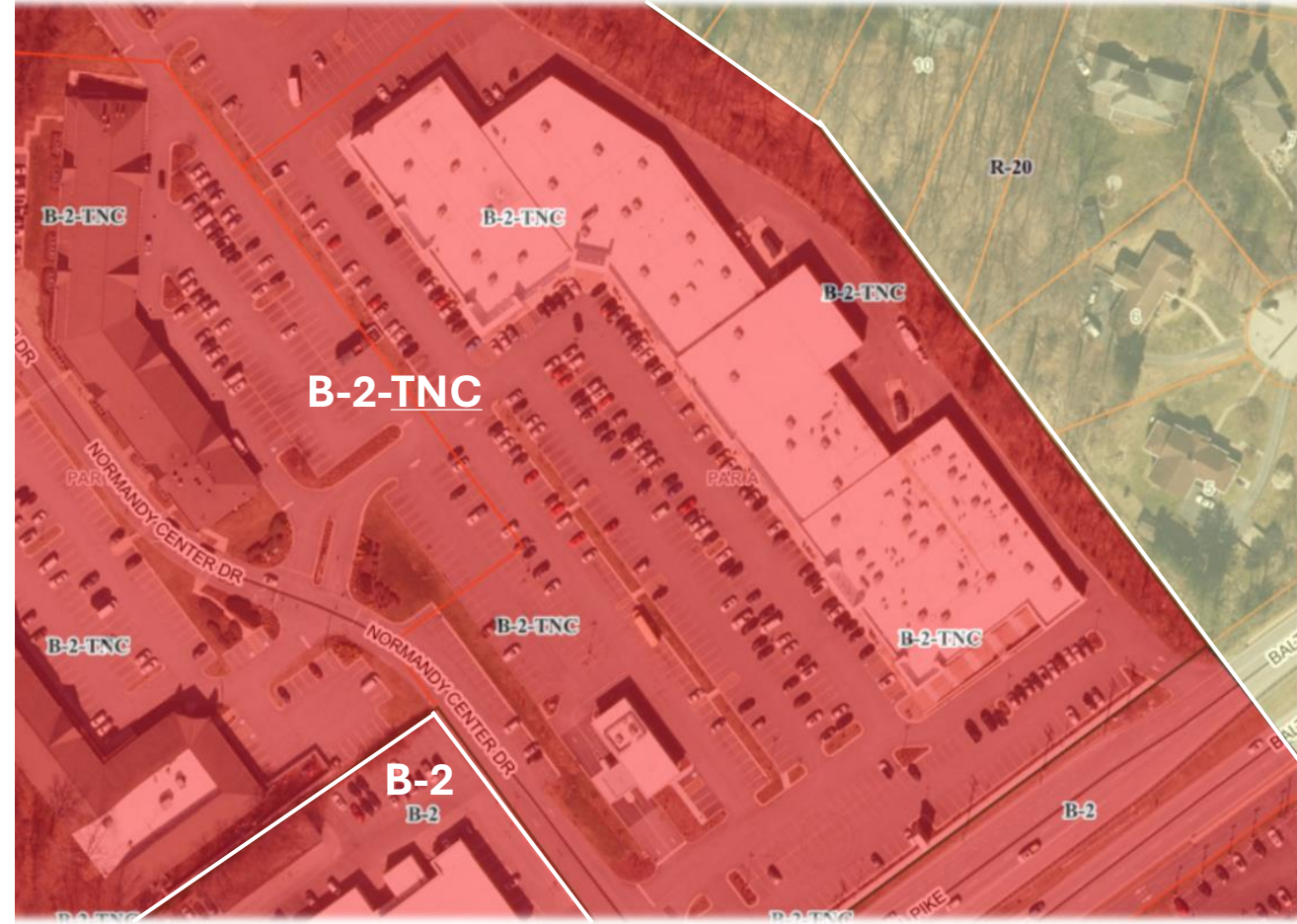
Structure: Alternative Zoning Options

Purpose and Function:

- Overlaid on a base zoning district
- Can apply additional regulations (ex. historic) or provide more options (ex. Higher density) on top of base zone allowances/requirements
- Implements new targeted policies without needing to amend base zoning
- Add special requirements or incentives for particular uses (e.g. open space, character, or certain land uses)

Zoning Examples:

- Continuing Light Industrial (CLI)
- Traditional Neighborhood Center (TNC)
- Density Exchange Option (DEO)
- Institutional (I)
- Solid Waste (SW)
- Commercial Redevelopment (CR)
- Montgomery Village Overlay (MVO, Montgomery Village)
- Neighborhood Conservation Overlay (Greenbelt)



Structure: Alternative Zoning Options

Performance-Based Zoning

Purpose and Function:

- Emphasizes outcomes over rigid zoning categories
- Encourages mixed-use development with specific performance standards
- Promotes innovation, sustainability, and community compatibility
- Supports flexible, phased planning and modern urban design

Desired Outcomes:

Design flexibility to meet goals

Incentive-Based Zoning

Purpose and Function:

- Developers earn zoning bonuses by providing public benefits
 - Streetscape improvement = 20 pts
 - Library construction = 70 pts
- Incentives may include:
 - Increased building heights or density
 - Reduced parking or application fees
 - Expedited permit review
- A point system assigns scores to receive benefits once a threshold is met

Incentives:

More amenities grants more incentives (i.e. density, parking reductions)

Form-Based Zoning

Purpose and Function:

- Focuses on physical building form over land use
- Regulates buildings and streets together, ensuring cohesive public spaces
- Uses visual diagrams and standards to shape facades, massing, and street design
- Prioritizes walkability, active frontages, and attractive streetscapes

Design Focus:

Building design and character are more prescriptive

Recommendations

PDP/FDP/CSP Structure

Section 125.0

Recommendation #1: Re-structure New Town zoning to align with the existing land uses in Columbia under new Euclidean zoning.

Discussion

Motion

Make the Motion

Second the Motion

Vote

Yes OR No OR Abstain

Recommendations

PDP/FDP/CSP Structure

Section 125.0

Recommendation #2: Maintain the current overall structure but seek to simplify the approval and development processes within the New Town zoning district.

Discussion

Motion

Make the Motion

Second the Motion

Vote

Yes OR No OR Abstain

PDP/FDP/CSP Structure



Wrap-Up



Task Force Vision

- *People and Community, Diversity and Inclusivity, Open Space and green space aid in maintaining the spirit of Columbia.*
- *Embrace the future while honoring the values that Columbia was based upon.*
- *Columbia is a place that needs to value its uniqueness / based on its history.*

The Vision for New Town Recommendations

Homework

A decorative brown line graphic that starts on the left side of the slide, rises to a peak, and then descends to a horizontal line that spans the width of the slide.

To be completed no later than **February 17, 2026**.

Review the next set of recommendation topics with respect to the meeting notes and be prepared to identify recommendations.

Recommendations Order

Recommendations to be Discussed

January
Discussion

- Creating another New Town District (*Sept*)
- PDP/FDP/CSP Structure (*Nov*)
- Defining Credited Open Space (*Sept*)
- Defining Apartments (*Nov*)
- Original Petitioner (*Dec*)

- Downtown and Village Center Process Simplification (*Nov*)
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February
Discussion

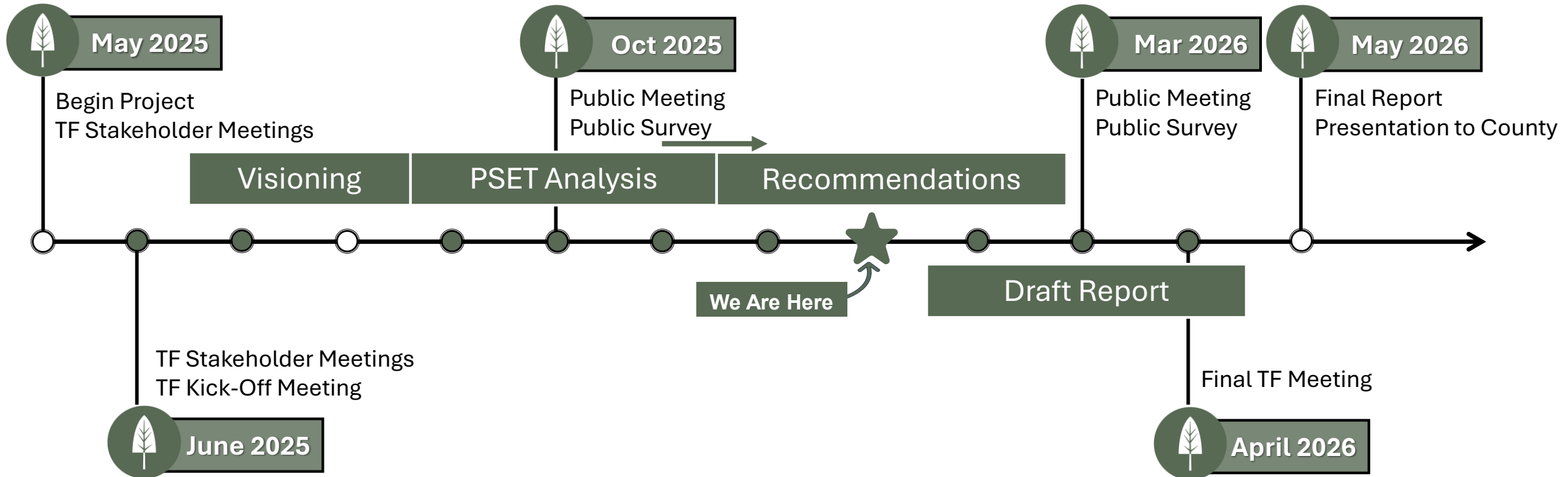
March
Discussion

Wrap-Up



Anticipated Milestones

● Task Force Meeting



Wrap-Up

Pending Topics

- Developing Recommendations
- Review Draft Report Outline and Document



Wrap-Up

Upcoming Task Force “Recommendation Development-Focused” Meetings

February 17, 2026

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

In-Person

Primary Topic

*Finish Developing
Recommendations*

March 24, 2026

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Virtual

Primary Topics

*Review Recommendations
Review Draft Report
Outline*

Wrap-Up

Upcoming Public Meeting

March 18, 2026

In Person Option

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

*East Columbia 50+ Center
6610 Cradlerock Way
Columbia, MD 21045*

March 19, 2026

Virtual Option

12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

*Webex (Virtual)
Will be recorded and posted to the New Town
Task Force Website*



Open Comments

Thank you



Thank you

Task Force Meeting No. 8

February 17, 2026

In-person

Task Force Meeting No. 9

March 24, 2026

Virtual

