

March 11, 2025

Hon. Kate Stewart
President, Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Ave., 6th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Re: Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 25-02, Workforce Housing - Development Standards

Dear President Stewart,

The Maryland Building Industry Association (MBIA) representing over 1,100 member companies across Maryland, with a significant portion located in Montgomery County is submitting testimony in **support** of ZTA 25-02.

Zoning Text Amendment 25-02 is designed to encourage the development of workforce housing in select residential zones. Under this amendment, the County Council will allow duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, and apartment buildings in R-40, R-60, R-90, and R-200 zones located along major corridors such as boulevards and downtown streets. The amendment requires that at least 15% of units (with a minimum of one unit when three or more are built) qualify as workforce housing—defined by affordability criteria pegged at 120% of the County's area median income.

This is a flexible approach to address the housing crisis in the county by permitting a wider range of residential building types that capture more density and contribute the affordable housing stock in the county. However, we have some recommendations increase flexibility and applicability. We would ask to expand the applicability to more neighborhoods by increasing the zones permitted, the street types permitted, and reducing the minimum ROW and travel lanes. An increase to the minimum number of units permitted before the first workforce housing unit is permitted, and justify this with more housing of all types to help the entire market – historically 3/4 of housing is market rate and the vehicle for affordable/workface, so it needs to be encouraged and not restricted

- Expand zones to R-30, R-20, R-10, CR, TMD and road types to Neighborhood Connector, Neighborhood Streets, Town Center Streets, and the County Connector
- Reduce ROW to 50' minimum and two lanes
- Increase FAR because of other site constraints, 45 feet and increase minimum for 15% requirement
- Increase permitted lot coverage with Storm Water Management (SWM)

The industry appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback and would urge the council to consider our recommendations and adopt ZTA 25-02. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or comments regarding the industry's position.

Thank you,

Griffin Benton
Vice President