



CONCEPT

Patuxent Commons is based on an intentional, intergenerational community model in which residents are asked to commit to being good neighbors and lending social support to one another through the ups and downs of daily life. Examples of similar communities include Bridge Meadows in Oregon, which supports families adopting youth from foster care, and Bastion in New Orleans, a supportive community for wounded warrior veterans facing life-long rehabilitative needs.

Patuxent Commons will adapt this approach to create a diverse community but with a particular focus on serving a group facing a serious housing crisis in Howard County: adults with disabilities. It will be 76-unit, mostly affordable community for people with and without disabilities that will embody diversity and inclusion in age (multiple generations), income (90% affordable, 10% market rate units) and ability (25% of units set aside and made deeply affordable for adults with disabilities).

OBJECTIVES

The initiative is being designed to meet – and will be evaluated against – four key objectives:

- Address housing instability faced by low-income adults with disabilities, older adults and families.
- Reduce social isolation and improve other key social determinants of health.
- Maximize potential and community integration for people of all ages and abilities.
- Pioneer innovative, financially viable solution suitable for replication in Maryland and beyond

The community will include extensive common spaces, active event programming and a small staff to facilitate neighbor-to-neighbor connections, community building and service coordination. Any direct service needs or supports will be contracted by residents.

HISTORY

The Autism Society of Maryland (AUSOM), previously known as the Howard County Autism Society, established a 12-member Task Force in 2017 charged with developing the Patuxent Commons concept and positioning it for development. With seed money support from AUSOM, the Weinberg Foundation,

and other donors, the Task Force developed a detailed project prospectus that was utilized to recruit a qualified housing developer. In 2019, Mission First Housing Group, an award-winning, non-profit developer of affordable housing throughout the mid-Atlantic, was selected by the Task Force to develop Patuxent Commons.

In 2020, Mission First entered into a sales agreement to acquire a prime location for the project in the Hickory Ridge neighborhood. The site is ideally located directly across the street from the Hickory Ridge Village Center and adjacent to public transit. This purchase was completed in 2022 with generous support from the people of Howard County through the County Department of Housing and Community Development.

CURRENT STATUS AND TIMELINE

With a location secured, design completed, and necessary approvals in place, Mission First closed on project financing and began construction in July 2024. The community is on track to be completed in October 2025 and will begin welcoming residents soon thereafter.



PROJECT FUNDERS

The \$44 million project has drawn support from a wide range of major capital funders, including

- The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation (\$1.25m)
- Howard County Department of Housing and Community Development (\$5.8m)
- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (\$3.5m)
- Maryland Department of Health (\$1.3m)
- Maryland Legislative Bond Initiative (\$1.32m)
- US Department of Treasury Capital Magnet Funding (\$999k)
- US Congressionally Directed Spending/Community Project Funding (\$500k HUD EDI Grant)

NEXT STEPS

As Patuxent Commons nears completion, Mission First and AUSOM are collaborating to complete a community programming and staffing plan that will provide limited service coordination and community activities designed to encourage social connections and relationship-building among neighbors. Mission First and AUSOM are inviting conversations with potential donors who are interested in learning more about this work and the opportunity to support this critical element of the community.



Patuxent Commons site plan with the project footprint in white

