

Montgomery County Building Lot Termination (BLT) Easement Program

Open Application Period: January 12 – February 13, 2026

The Montgomery County Office of Agriculture is pleased to announce the opening of the Building Lot Termination (BLT) Easement Program purchase period. This program is a key farmland preservation tool that permanently extinguishes residential development rights—including associated septic capacity—to reduce land fragmentation and protect the County's Agricultural Reserve.

Key Eligibility Requirements

To qualify for the BLT Program, properties must meet the following criteria:

- Located in the Agricultural Reserve (AR) Zone
- Minimum 50 acres, or smaller if contiguous to protected land
- At least 50% of the land must consist of:
 - USDA Soil Capability Classes I, II, or III, or
- Must lie outside water and sewer categories 1, 2, and 3
- Must have sewage disposal area(s) approved on a final well and septic plan and obtain a Well and Septic Approval Letter from the Department of Permitting Services (DPS)

Request an Approval Letter by emailing:

Heidi.Benham@montgomerycountymd.gov

Application Submission Instructions

Applicants must complete the official BLT Easement Application Form and submit all required documentation.

Application Due Date: 2/13/2026

You may submit your application:

- By Email: Mike Weyand - Michael.Weyand@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov

**Submission of an application does not guarantee acceptance or purchase. All applications must meet eligibility criteria outlined in County regulations, including zoning, soil classification, and septic requirements.*

Funding and Compensation

Applications are ranked based on objective criteria (size, soil quality, land tenure) and additional factors aligned with the program's goals. Ranking does not guarantee purchase, as the County and the Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board may prioritize multiple properties to achieve program objectives.

Note: The County's ability to purchase BLT Easements is subject to available funding. If funds are insufficient, some eligible applications may not be accepted during a purchase period. The County will offer a price based on the BLT Valuation Formula, subject to Base and Maximum Value limits. Offers cannot exceed the Maximum Value established by the County Executive.

Important Notes

- Applications must include the Well and Septic Approval Letter before they are reviewed.
- The total number of approved septic areas, and the number of approved septic areas you plan to terminate, must be clearly identified.
- Properties with existing TDR easements must disclose how many TDRs remain.
- Participation in the BLT Program is voluntary, and acceptance is not guaranteed.

BLT Easement Program Timeline

Timeline may change as needed.



APPLICATION PERIOD	REVIEW AND RANKING	OFFER STAGE	SETTLEMENT AND RECORDING	COMPLIANCE AND MONITORING
January 12 – February 13	March – April	May – July	August – November	Ongoing
Accept applications from landowners. Applicants must submit all required documentation, including updated Well & Septic Approval Letter.	Office of Agriculture reviews applications for completeness and eligibility. Eligible applications forwarded to the Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board (APAB) for ranking.	County determines available funding and prioritizes ranked applications. Formal offers made to selected landowners.	Title searches and legal documentation completed. Easements recorded in land records, Payments issued	Properties, monitored every 2 years for compliance. Landowners without an updated Soil Conservation Plan must implement one within one year of settlement.

Montgomery County BLT Easement Program Application Form

Open Purchase Period: January 12 – February 13, 2026

Application Date: _____

Section 1: Applicant Information

Applicant Type:

Individual(s) Business / LLC / Trust / Other Entity

If Individual(s):

- Full Name(s): _____
- Mailing Address: _____
- Phone Number: _____
- Email Address: _____

If Business Entity:

- Legal Entity Name: _____
- Authorized Representative Name: _____
- Title/Role: _____
- Business Address: _____
- Phone Number: _____
- Email Address: _____
- Entity Type: LLC Corporation Trust Other: _____

Section 2: Property Information

- Farm Name (if different from owner or business name): _____
- Property Address: _____
- Tax Parcel Number(s): _____
- Total Acreage: _____
- Is the property currently encumbered by a TDR Easement?
 Yes No
- If yes, how many TDRs remain with the property? _____
- How many existing dwellings are on the property? _____

Section 3: Site Plan Approval

- Have you obtained an Well and Septic Approval Letter from DPS?
 Yes (Attach copy)
 No (Application cannot be submitted without this letter)
- Date of DPS Approval Letter: _____
- Number of approved septic areas on the property: _____
- Number of septic areas proposed for termination (BLTs): _____

- **If multiple BLTs are available, would you be willing to sell only one BLT at this time due to limited program funding?**
 Yes No Maybe
- **Would you be interested in selling additional BLTs in future purchase periods if funding becomes available?**
 Yes No Not Sure

Section 4: Property Description

Please attach the following:

- **Copy of property deed(s)**
- **Property Map(s)**
- **Survey or plat (if available)**
- **Approved Well and Septic Plan (approved by DPS)**
- **List any existing encumbrances, easements, or restrictions on the property (e.g., right-of-way, utility, conservation, or other preservation easements)**

Section 5: Additional Information

- **Describe the current agricultural use of the property:**

- **Do you lease the land to a farm operator?**

Yes No

- **If yes, provide name and contact of operator:**

Section 6: Other Notes or Important Information

- **Space for applicants to share any additional notes or relevant details**

Section 7: Business Entity Documentation (if applicable)

If you are applying as a Business, LLC, Trust, or other legal entity, please attach documentation confirming your legal status and authority to submit this application.

- Articles of Organization or equivalent founding documents**
- Certificate of Good Standing from the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT)**
- Other documentation confirming legal authority to act on behalf of the entity (e.g., operating agreement, resolution, or power of attorney)**

Please list the documents you are submitting below:

Section 8: Applicant Certification

I/we certify that the information provided in this application is true and complete to the best of my/our knowledge. I/we understand that submission of this application does not guarantee acceptance into the BLT Easement Program.

Signature of Individual or Authorized Representative: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

BLT Easement Program – Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the BLT Easement Program?

The Building Lot Termination (BLT) Program permanently extinguishes residential development rights—including septic capacity—to preserve farmland and reduce fragmentation in Montgomery County's Agricultural Reserve.

2. Who is eligible to apply?

Property must be in the Agricultural Reserve (AR Zone)

Minimum 50 acres

At least 50% of land must meet USDA Soil Classes I–III

Must lie outside water/sewer categories 1, 2, and 3

Must have an approved septic system and a current Site Plan Approval Letter from DPS

3. How are applications ranked?

Applications are ranked using the BLT Ranking Formula:

Size of property (up to 5 points)

Soil quality (up to 10 points)

Land tenure (up to 5 points for active farming or long-term lease)

Additional points may be awarded for factors like proximity to preserved land or subdivision approvals. Ranking determines priority but does not guarantee purchase.

4. How is the purchase price determined?

The County calculates offers using the BLT Valuation Formula:

Base Value: Minimum price set annually by the County Executive

Added Value: Based on property characteristics

Maximum Value: Highest price allowed by the County

Offers cannot exceed the Maximum Value.

5. Is funding guaranteed?

No. Funding is limited and subject to annual budget allocations. Some eligible applications may not be accepted during a purchase period.

6. What happens if I reject the County's offer?

If you decline an offer, you cannot reapply for 24 months.

7. What rights are permanently restricted under a BLT Easement?

BLT Easements permanently restrict residential, commercial, and industrial development rights, except as specifically allowed under the easement terms.

8. What happens after closing?

The easement is recorded in land records. The County monitors properties at least biannually to ensure compliance.