

**COUNTY COUNCIL TESTIMONY ON PLANNING BOARD DRAFT OF
THRIVE MONTGOMERY 2050**

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Silver Spring, MD

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Position: FAVORABLE

Hi, my name is Kris n Mink, and I'm a lifelong resident of Silver Spring and a current candidate for the Montgomery County Council. Thank you for hearing my testimony today.

I support the Planning Board draft of Thrive 2050, and I urge you to uphold its vision for a sustainable, inclusive county.

When I was looking for a place to start a family as a young teacher, I couldn't imagine living anywhere besides the neighborhood I grew up in, by Blair High School -- and I didn't have to, because we were able to buy my childhood home from my parents.

They bought this house in the '70s, a time when the first version of the deed they saw included a racially restrictive covenant that would've prohibited my mom, a Chinese immigrant, from purchasing the home.

Thankfully, explicit racial discrimination like that wasn't and isn't upheld. Montgomery County is a place that takes great pride in diversity. However, we must come to grips with the fact that the effects of historic racial discrimination in housing and development do live on here today.

We will not be able to overcome our housing crisis without rezoning our neighborhoods to welcome multi-family housing.

While I had the good fortune to be able to move back into my neighborhood, many childhood friends tried to do the same, only to end up moving further out with a long commute, or to another county or even another state.

Single family home prices are skyrocketing. A house on my block recently sold in just two weeks for \$640,000, and it's now being overhauled and flipped, and bumped out of the price range of even more young families, and especially families of color. If that house was turned into a duplex, I can name two families who'd move back to the area for it.

If we want to attract and retain young professionals heading into their prime earning years, and local entrepreneurs willing to take the risk of starting new businesses; if we want to ensure all our community members staffing those businesses have stable housing, and that housing affordable for those at the lowest income levels remains available to those who need it; then we need more income-restricted housing *and* more market-rate housing attainable across nearly every income level.

We also need to prioritize connectedness. In the Montgomery County of our future, all our residents will be able to access work, school, local shops, restaurants, and green spaces quickly and easily, just by walking or taking public transportation. This is already a reality in a few places in our county, and it is a necessity everywhere if we're taking climate justice and racial equity seriously.

We cannot allow ourselves to be held back by outdated and misplaced fears.

If Thrive 2050 is delayed or obstructed, our opportunities as a community will dwindle, our environment will be harmed, and our neighbors will suffer. Adopting Thrive is a necessary first step toward the joyful work of building an affordable, connected, and resilient community where all of us can thrive.

I urge the Council to adopt Thrive 2050 so that together, we can move Montgomery County boldly and proudly into the future. Thank you.