

Thank you. My name is Patrick Cavanaugh, and I am a resident of Silver Spring in the Sligo Park Hills neighborhood. I urge the council to approve the Thrive 2050 general plan. This plan is a step in the right direction toward allowing current and future residents freedom to live in the most popular areas of our county and to ensure that people aren't priced out of living here in the next 30 years.

As a renter who has lived in the county for 6 years, I know it can be pretty expensive to live here. I think that's because there are a lot of good things about our county - the parks, transit accessibility, access to good jobs, performing arts and other cultural events. We should ensure those great things stay accessible even as more people come here to enjoy them.

Two aspects of the plan I really like are the support for missing middle housing and for increased walkability and bikeability.

Our current zoning forbids missing middle housing, like duplexes, triple deckers, and townhomes in many places and requires a complicated legal process to get a variance where it is possible at all. Allowing denser home types to be built gives more opportunity to residents and future residents to buy or rent a home because there will be more of them. In the neighborhood I grew up in, I lived in a single family house and on the same street other residents lived in triple deckers and duplexes. The compatibility concerns raised by others did not seem to create a problem.

Secondly, further investment in protected bike lanes, trails, and sidewalks opens up the ability for residents to choose to make trips without a car if they want to. Bicycling in this county is still not safe enough if you choose to leave the confines of our park trails, and even walking across some streets can be dangerous.

In summary, the new general plan is a good step toward a future that makes our county more welcoming, affordable, and safe. Thank you for listening and I urge you to approve the plan.