

This is a written copy of my verbal testimony I provided on June 17th, 2021.

Hello, my name is Joe Gillespie, no relation to the other Gillespie I see on the speaker list. I live and work in North Bethesda, and the Council should approve the Thrive Montgomery 2050 Plan.

I chose to move to this area about four years ago after traveling here often for work for about ten years. I love living in Montgomery County. I love my neighbors at Grosvenor Park. I love that my bilingual children get to see and interact with people who have moved here from around the world. I love our parks and libraries. I love the restaurants. I love taking the metro.

However, like everyone, I have worries. I worry that my kids will get run over going to preschool when we walk next to Rockville Pike. I worry about how much time I spend in the car. I worry that the county fundamentally values abundant parking over abundant housing opportunities for my children when they grow up.

But when I read the Thrive 2050 Plan, I see a framework to help address these worries. I see a plan that focuses on promoting strong bonds and improving the environment we live in. I see a plan to help make life safer and more enjoyable for my children and maybe even one day my grandchildren. I see a plan on how we can help make homes more affordable and encourage active transportation.

I commend the work that was done to lay out a vision for how Montgomery County can become a leading example on achieving people-focused urban and suburban living.

Accordingly, I urge the council to approve this plan and to aggressively take action to implement the plan to make up for lost time. I believe it represents a strong step forward in improving the quality of life for people in this county. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Joe Gillespie