

# City of Takoma Park, Maryland

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*Suzanne R. Ludlow, City Manager*

December 10, 2020

Mr. Casey Anderson, Chair  
and Members of the Montgomery Planning Board  
Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning  
2425 Reddie Drive, 14th Floor  
Wheaton, MD 20902

Dear Chair Anderson and Members of the Planning Board:

On behalf of the City of Takoma Park, I write to support the proposed Thrive Montgomery 2050 Plan. Takoma Park shares the goals and vision of Thrive Montgomery 2050, which shifts away from "car-oriented greenfield development to transit-oriented infill development and redevelopment that is compact, mixed use and walkable." Thrive Montgomery aligns with the City's priorities, particularly regarding climate and racial equity initiatives.

In Resolution 2019-15, Declaring a Climate Change Emergency, the City of Takoma Park calls on the county, state and federal governments "to take more aggressive action on climate change mitigation, adaptation and resiliency to move rapidly toward net zero GHG emissions, and the City will continue to advocate at all levels of government for adoption of policies to achieve these goals."

Takoma Park provides a disproportionate share of the County's affordable housing. The City wants to ensure that all aspects of the plan are implemented equitably throughout the County as this will lead all municipalities to success. The City recognizes the importance of creating more affordable and 'missing middle' housing as an important and necessary step to achieve housing goals and Complete Communities with greater density near transit. We know that zoning and other regulatory changes will be needed to accomplish this. The County's Growth and Infrastructure Policy must be shaped to support and further the goals of Thrive Montgomery. We support the development of metrics to measure housing growth and equity.

The City appreciates the emphasis on transit and transportation alternatives, including bike and pedestrian infrastructure, and the transformation of major roadways into safe and attractive multi-modal boulevards, a goal the City identified in the Corridor Concept Plan for New Hampshire Avenue in 2008. We continue to advocate for Bus Rapid Transit on New Hampshire Avenue as an essential element of that transformation, as well as additional investment in all transit. We want to move away from continuing to plan for and fund more auto-oriented efforts. We also appreciate the incorporation of the goals of Vision Zero in the Plan. The Plan will benefit from more details and strategies regarding the way that transportation projects will be funded.

The Plan highlights the need to coordinate with the State Highway Administration to achieve the shift from car-centric development patterns to improved multi-modal and transit options, and will benefit from the addition of more specific strategies to achieve this objective. The Plan also highlights the importance of coordination with surrounding jurisdictions to ensure project continuity, essential for municipalities like Takoma Park, which borders several jurisdictions. The success of the Plan will depend on reaching beyond the County boundaries.

In such an ambitious vision, we recognize the need for additional study and the development of metrics for many aspects of the plan, including the issues of park quality along with those for proximity, distance, and race equity. We encourage the County to commit to regular, perhaps annual, evaluations of progress.

The Thrive Montgomery Plan is compatible with the work of the City of Takoma Park. We add our voices to support for the Plan and the commitment to create the future we need.

Sincerely,

Suzanne R. Ludlow  
City Manager

cc: Takoma Park City Council