

My name is Christina Cord, and I am the co-owner of Pizzeria Coco LLC, a women-owned mobile brick oven pizzeria based in Silver Spring. I am writing to urge your full support of the Montgomery Parks FY27 operating budget.

Montgomery Parks has been a true partner to our small business and to the broader community we serve. Events like Sligo Creek Fest and Acoustics and Ales are more than just a good time - they are economic engines for small, local businesses. When the county invests in activation events, vendors like us generate real revenue that gets reinvested right back into this community. We hire local staff, source local ingredients, and show up because Montgomery Parks creates the infrastructure that makes it possible.

For many small businesses (especially women-owned and minority-owned businesses that don't have large marketing budgets) Montgomery Parks' events are one of the most accessible and impactful ways to reach new customers and build a loyal following. Cutting those programs doesn't just affect a single afternoon. It affects a business's entire year.

Beyond the economic impact, well-funded parks are the backbone of community life in Montgomery County. Safe, clean, well-maintained green spaces are where neighbors meet each other, where kids play, where people decompress after long workdays. That doesn't happen without the maintenance workers and park police officers whose positions are now at risk. A \$3.2 million shortfall isn't just a line item - it's the difference between a thriving, connected community and one that slowly loses the places and events that hold it together.

Pizzeria Coco was built on the belief that food brings people together. Montgomery Parks shares that belief. Please fund them at the level they need to keep doing this critical work.

Thank you.