

Takoma Park Youth Council Charter

A. PURPOSE

The Takoma Park Youth Council is established by the City Council:

1. To provide an opportunity for the youth of Takoma Park to acquire a greater knowledge of and appreciation for local government through active participation in the system.
2. To help the City Council to address problems and accomplish the goals of this community by working directly with the representatives of youth.
3. To serve the youth of Takoma Park by:
 - a. informing the Takoma Park municipal government of the needs and wishes of youth;
 - b. planning and implementing social, educational, cultural and recreational activities for the youth;
 - c. working with the Mayor, City Council, City department heads, schools, civic clubs and service organizations to provide service and leadership opportunities for the youth of the City; and,
 - d. helping to instill a feeling of positive self-worth and esteem, teaching respect for the rights of others, and promoting community pride.

B. YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

1. The Youth Council shall consist of eleven (11) Takoma Park youth appointed by the City Council representing a cross-section of the City's youth. The City Council will actively recruit and appoint members from traditionally underrepresented Wards 4, 5, and 6.
2. The Youth Council shall report to the City Council the names of the elected Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.
3. All members shall be in grade levels 7 through 12, except that the Chairperson shall be in the 11th or 12th grade.
4. The term of each member shall be one (1) year. Members are eligible to reapply annually if they meet member eligibility requirements.
5. Members must meet the following qualifications:
 - a. remain residents of the City and the ward they may represent;
 - b. attend meetings on a regular basis and inform the Youth Council of absences prior to meetings;
 - c. maintain at least a 2.5 grade point average for the current school year;
 - d. fulfill the responsibilities of the office held; and,
 - e. set an example for youth in the community.
6. A member can be removed from the Youth Council if he or she fails to sustain any of the above qualifications and by a majority vote of the members, subject to approval of the City Council or the City Manager.
7. Vacancies shall be filled by the City Council for the remainder of the unexpired term.

C. APPOINTMENT PROCESS

1. An application for appointment will be distributed to all potential members during the last month of the school year.
2. Applications will be completed and submitted to the City Clerk no later than June 30.

3. The City Council will review applications and select members to be included in an appointment resolution in July.

D. FIRST MEETING

Youth Council members will attend and be recognized at the first City Council meeting in September. In an election year, members will attend and be recognized at the meeting when the newly-elected Mayor and Councilmembers take the oath of office.

E. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE YOUTH COUNCIL

1. Youth Council members shall meet at least monthly to conduct business.
2. The Youth Council may recommend changes to this Charter as needed.
3. A quorum shall be a majority of the members serving on the Youth Council. A quorum is necessary to vote on motions and resolutions and a majority of those present is needed to pass motions and resolutions.
4. Each meeting of the Youth Council shall be open to the public and the schedule of all meetings and agendas will be published before the meetings.
5. Youth Council members will focus on areas they deem important to the needs of youth and areas designated by the City Council.
6. Youth Council members will also be given the opportunity to sit in on some of the other City Council-appointed board, commission, and committee meetings.
7. Youth Council members will bring forth issues of concern in their respective wards that need to be discussed and addressed.

F. RESPONSIBILITY OF ADVISOR AND YOUTH COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

1. There shall be a Youth Council Advisor.
2. All activities of the Youth Council shall be coordinated with the Youth Council Advisor, who shall be an adult volunteer and shall be appointed by the City Council from applicants. He or she will attend all meetings and help guide the members in their processes and reporting to the City Council.
3. The Youth Council Chairperson shall be responsible to lead meetings, set the agenda, meet with the Mayor, schedule Youth Council meetings, and assign and delegate duties to members.
4. There shall also be a Vice Chairperson to assist the Chairperson in all matters pertaining to the Youth Council and step into the Chairperson's role if the Chairperson cannot attend a meeting.

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