



# CITY OF TAKOMA PARK

## City Manager Comments

Report for City Council Meeting of July 27, 2016

### *Information to Share*

#### **Carroll Avenue Bridge Closure**

The Carroll Avenue Bridge over Sligo Creek in Takoma Park closed on the morning of Monday, July 25, despite the water main break on Maple Avenue that affected the detour route. Up to date information will be available for the duration of the project at: [www.takomaparkmd.gov/carrollbridgeclosure](http://www.takomaparkmd.gov/carrollbridgeclosure)

Tomorrow and Friday, the section of Sligo Creek Parkway under the Carroll Avenue Bridge will be closed so that railings and sidewalks are removed from the bridge. The alternate detour route is Old Carroll, Carroll, Lincoln, and Maple Avenues. The alternate detour route will also be used on August 17 and 18, when the bridge decking is removed.

Problems that had been encountered with the bridge closure and water main repair work are being addressed. Those problems included:

- Detour Ahead signs that seemed to direct people to make a turn on the street before the actual detour route. These signs were covered and will be moved or removed.
- New stop signs that did not have flags attached to call attention to them. Flags were being added.
- Lack of clear directional signs to Washington Adventist Hospital. Those signs will be added.
- Confusion about the bus route detour for Routes 12 and 13. This confusion may not yet be resolved. Once it is, we will help get the word out.

As always, if someone sees a dangerous situation, please call the Takoma Park Police Department at 301-270-1100, so that police can report to the scene and project managers may be contacted.

#### **WMATA SafeTrack Surge #6 and #10**

From Monday, August 1 through Sunday, August 7, WMATA's SafeTrack Surge #6 will be underway and will limit Metrorail trains at the Takoma station. Residents are strongly urged to prepare to get to work or other locations in a way that limits use of Metro or cars. Next week would be a great work to telework, bike to work, or carpool. The City's parking lot in Takoma Junction will be free to use for folks who want to meet to carpool.

Great information is available on alternative transportation options on the City's website at [www.takomaparkmd.gov/safetrack](http://www.takomaparkmd.gov/safetrack).

A more significant impact to Takoma Park residents will be felt October 10 to November 1, in SafeTrack Surge #10. What we learn in Surge #6 may help us plan for Surge #10.

### **Communications on Transportation Matters**

City staff are working hard to provide information to residents to encourage them to plan their routes while the Carroll Avenue Bridge detour route changes and the SafeTrack Surge #6 occurs. We are using Takoma Park Alert!, social media, and website alerts to help let the public know what's going on.

### **City Receives Safe Routes to School Funding**

The Transportation Planning Board approved \$275,000 (of \$468,000 requested) in Safe Routes to School Funding for a number of pedestrian safety improvements and educational efforts. Staff will need to review the projects and determine which of the requested improvements or activities will either not be pursued or will require additional funding.

### **Percent of City Income from Fines and Fees**

Several weeks ago, Delegate David Moon forwarded information to others that indicated that many Maryland municipalities with large populations of people of color receive a large portion of their revenue from fines. Takoma Park was on this list. The source of this information was a company using a hot topic – the practice in Ferguson, Missouri and elsewhere of financially benefitting from fines or fees from people they arrested – to boost sales of its services. The data, based on 2012 information gathered by the US Census Bureau, indicated that about 10% of Takoma Park's revenue came from fines and fees. The data is misleading, as it is skewed by fines from speed cameras. Municipalities in Maryland have fewer revenue options than municipalities in any other state, but many do have speed cameras. Speed cameras reduce accidents, help protect the safety of residents, and are completely race neutral. Speed camera revenue can only be used for public safety purposes and, in Takoma Park, is primarily used to pay for the speed camera operational costs and for sidewalk improvements. Revenue information for the past few years shows that, other than speed camera fines, revenue from fines and fees is a small percentage of overall City revenue.

YEAR	Total Revenue	Speed Camera Fines	% of Total	Other Fines	% of Total
2015	\$26,273,581	\$1,747,787	6.65	\$310,977	1.18
2014	\$25,172,974	\$1,702,807	6.76	\$252,499	1.00
2013	\$24,628,874	\$1,456,741	5.91	\$169,526	0.69
2012	\$23,844,667	\$2,072,029	8.69	\$197,814	0.83

### **Aging Well Network – Meeting Held on “Building Community”**

The Aging Well Network is a joint initiative of Lifelong Takoma and the Village of Takoma Park. A meeting on Building Community was held yesterday, facilitated by local resident and author Beth Baker. Beth provided an overview on different communities that provide support to each other and spoke of common goals or elements within the communities. She polled the group of 44 (42 were Takoma Park residents) and asked how many residents plan to stay in Takoma Park. About a third raised their hands. The group discussed what support and resources would be required for those who stayed. Some of the topics were tiny houses, shared living spaces, home modifications, financial limitations, and cooperative communities. Some participants grappled with how to develop social networks that may reduce discomfort in asking for help from neighbors. Some residents talked about the importance of early planning so as to not have to make decisions during a life-altering health crisis.

### **National Night Out – New Location!**

Make sure you have your calendars marked for August 2, from 6 to 9 pm for Takoma Park’s National Night Out event. Instead of having the event in the parking lot of Piney Branch Elementary School, it will be behind the school on the play area and Ed Wilhelm Field. Highlights this year include kick ball and a dunk tank, and all of the opportunities for interaction with our police officers and community.

### ***Congratulations!***

Congratulations to Deputy City Manager Jason Damweber and his wife Amanda on the birth of their son Quinn last Friday.

### ***My Schedule***

I plan to be off the week of August 1, then August 11 to 21.

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