



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – November 30, 2016 Agenda Item 4

Work Session

Status Report on Council Priorities

Recommended Council Action

Receive report and presentation

Context with Key Issues

The Council holds an annual “Council Retreat” in advance of the budget preparation process in order to discuss its policy and budget priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. The priorities established during the Retreat inform the development of the City Manager’s Recommended Budget and, more generally, indicate the strategic direction the Council intends to move the City during the two-year term.

This year’s Retreat took place over two evenings in late January. During the meetings, Councilmembers discussed and ranked a variety of issues and interests, and eventually established a set of priorities to inform policymaking and resource allocation decisions during the remainder of their two-year term. The priorities, affirmed by Council at their February 24 business meeting, are:

1. A Livable Community for All
2. Fiscally Sustainable Government
3. Environmentally Sustainable Community
4. Engaged, Responsive & Service-Oriented Government
5. Advance Economic Development Efforts

Along with the priorities, the Council established goals, strategies, and measures associated with each priority that they wanted to work to address during their term.

The purpose of tonight’s presentation is to share information about what has been or is being done to address each of the priority areas.

Council Priority

A Livable Community for All; Fiscally Sustainable Government; Environmentally Sustainable Community; Engaged, Responsive & Service-Oriented Government; Advance Economic Development Efforts

Environmental Impact of Action

Several of the Council Priorities are related to the Council’s environmental and sustainability goals, both directly and indirectly.

Fiscal Impact of Action

N/A

Attachments and Links

- Status Report on Council Priorities
- Link to February 2016 Resolution Affirming the Council Priorities, including the table of Council Priorities and Associated Projects: <http://documents.takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-council/resolutions/2016/resolution-2016-04.pdf>

A Livable Community for All

Identify Youth & Family Programming Needs

Goal: Identify youth and family programming needs in the community, especially for our more vulnerable residents including but not limited to those in lower income and immigrant families and those with developmental disabilities, and develop approaches to meet those needs.

Strategy:

- Dedicate staff charged with identifying existing resources, and developing, implementing and coordinating program(s) that provide youth and family services and engage youth in civic activities (possible new position).
- Allocate additional funding for youth programming and coordination of services for youth.

Desired outcome: Expanded youth programming.

Status: During the FY17 budget development process, Council allocated funds for both a possible new position geared toward youth and family services and for enhancing the City's youth programming and coordination of services for youth. Subsequently, the City held a Community Conversation on Youth Success – and several conversations on the topic leading up and following the event – to help determine where there are gaps in services and how programs could be augmented and/or new programs created to address those gaps. In light of the lessons learned, we will be creating a new position with a focus on developing and maintaining community partnerships with organizations whose missions align with this Council priority.

In addition to the many programs and services already offered, particularly through the Recreation Department, Library, and Police Department, some new initiatives we have funded, implemented, or are going to be implementing in order to address this Council Priority include the following, all of which are the result of what we learned through our conversations on Youth Success:

New Programs in Support of this Council Priority:

- **First of Many:** A series of informative workshops to help teens, especially first-generation students, find answers to questions about college and receive guidance on applying to and getting the most out of college.
- **Wisdom in Minutes - Life Skills:** A series of workshops to help teens develop skills and prepare for the working world. Courses may include topics like resume basics, time management, interview preparation, public speaking, essay writing and giving presentations.
- **Do You Know Your Rights?:** A one-day workshop informing teens of their personal rights when being approached by law enforcement in the state of Maryland.
- **MAC Lab After-School Hours:** The Recreation Department has opened an all new Mac Computer Lab for youth, teens and young adults with expanded hours. Trained staff is available during all open hours to assist young people in various skill-building capacities using Apple's featured software including Logic Pro, Final Cut Pro, Adobe Suite, Garage Band, iMovie and a host of others. We believe that opening the Mac Lab after school will aid in the academic success of our youth, increase communication skills and help build technical skills.

- **College Prep Essay Writing Workshop:** This workshop will provide attendees with the necessary tools to compose a well written essay. Students will learn how to analyze prompts; and how to outline and structure their thoughts to construct a piece of writing.
- **Go to High School, Go to College Fair:** We will be facilitating the attendance of City teens at the "Go to High School, Go to College Fair" held in DC. Over 100 colleges and universities are anticipated to participate in this College Fair.
- **Politics, Advocacy & Political Careers for Girls:** This fun one day workshop begins with a lesson on the structure of the US political system at the federal and state levels. The session then examines the contributions of women political leaders beginning with Jeannette Rankin and moving through to present-day leaders. The advocacy portion of the session defines advocacy, the ways one can effectively advocate and the role of advocacy in political as well as social change. The program concludes with Political Careers for Girls as participants learn about the myriad professional opportunities for women in the political sector. Guest speakers for this portion of the program include a lobbyist, campaign manager, Chief of Staff, political fundraiser, political speech writer, PAC director and field organizer.
- **ACES Academy:** Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success (ACES) is a program designed to create a seamless educational pathway and support structure from high school to college completion. The program is aimed at those who are underrepresented in higher education, including African American, Hispanic, and low-income students, as well as those who would be the first in their family to attend college.
- **Urban Debate League:** The Urban Debate League is dedicated to improving educational and life outcomes for disadvantaged students. Through the motivation and thrill of competitive debate students improve self-esteem, increase academic achievement, improve graduation rates and increase access to higher education. For young people of promise, for their schools and their communities, youth are provided a new vision, hope and opportunity.

Future/Planned Programs in Support of this Council Priority:

- **Storytime Saturdays** for early youth (ages 3-5) and their families to get children and families excited about reading at an early age
- **Amharic and French Storytimes**
- **Readers Theater:** Readers Theater is a dramatic presentation of a written work in a script form. Readers read from a "script" and reading parts are divided among the readers. No memorization, costumes, blocking, or special lighting is needed. The focus is on reading text with expressive voices and gestures. Making comprehending the text meaningful and fun for the student
- **STEM Workshops**
- **Healthcare Career Partnership with Washington Adventist**
- **Takoma Park Student Government Association**
- **Summer Job Program Expansion**
- **Life Skill Building Programs** including personal finance, cooking, civic engagement through election judging, beautician/barber

Formalize Relationships With Neighboring Jurisdictions

Goal: Formalize relationships with neighboring jurisdictions to enhance public safety.

Strategy:

- Draft and adopt public safety mutual aid agreements.

Desired outcome: Mutual aid agreements in place with District of Columbia and Prince George's County.

Status: Public safety mutual aid agreements have been drafted and sent to representatives in the District of Columbia and Prince George's County. The draft is currently under review by the MPD Police Chief and DC General Counsel and we are awaiting a response. We are checking in often, but still waiting to hear back from Prince George's County. The transition in leadership in the PGPD, which occurred earlier this year, is the likely cause of the delay.

Ensure Stable Housing Options

Goal: Ensure we have a range of safe, quality, and stable housing options for residents of varying incomes.

Strategy:

- Revise existing housing policy and update 2009 Affordable Housing Plan; explore new approaches to providing affordable rental and home ownership opportunities.

Desired outcome: New housing policy adopted and Affordable Housing Plan updated.

Status: Since the adoption of the Council Priorities, the following actions have been initiated to address stability of housing options:

- The City hosted the first Community Conversation on Affordable Housing.
- Council adopted an Ordinance establishing new Vacant and Vacant Distressed Property Registry, effective July 1, 2016.
- Council authorized the continuation of the City's Owner Occupied Group House Registration Program.
- Council established a new Housing Fund with \$400,000 budgeted in FY17. Discussions about how to use that funding in the short and longer term are ongoing.
- Council approved the allocation of \$40,000 to undertake a community-wide strategic plan to facilitate the review of existing housing policies.
- Council endorsed a preliminary proposal for the development of a new down payment assistance program. Staff will be providing a plan for comment in November 2016.
- Housing and Community Development Department was reorganized with the goal of providing a more proactive approach to the preservation and expansion of local housing options. The reorganization includes the creation of a new Housing and Community Services Division, the

reassignment of the Code Enforcement staff to the new Neighborhood Services Section in the Police Department, and the addition of a new Community Development Manager.

- Issued a request for proposals for services for the development of a Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan. Submissions are due in mid-December 2016.
- Council was presented with and discussed a proposed down payment assistance program.
- Council was presented with and discussed a set of rent stabilization policy changes, proposed by the Renters Protection Group.

Fiscally Sustainable Government

Increase Funding from Montgomery County

Goal: Increase funding from Montgomery County to address tax duplication.

Strategy:

- Increase Councilmember advocacy and lobbying activities; improve coordination of efforts between staff and Councilmembers.
- Partner with other Montgomery County municipalities to pressure County and General Assembly.
- Develop more accessible, easy-to-understand communication methods for educating residents and other stakeholders; coordinate with news media outlets as appropriate to share information.

Desired outcome: Increased funding from County to address tax duplication.

Status: Regarding the first strategy, increasing Councilmember advocacy and lobbying and improving coordination of efforts between staff and Councilmembers:

- Council, staff, and Public Policy Partners (PPP), the City's legislative advocate in Annapolis, are working to focus on a small number of legislative priorities, closely monitor select areas of legislation, and build relationships with legislators and their staffs. The Council met with Public Policy Partners (PPP) on June 1 and September 28 and discussed legislative priorities in work sessions on June 1, September 7, and September 28. Public Policy Partners is currently working on developing brief strategic plans for the Council's top three to five legislative priorities. Each plan will include a statement of the issue, a strategy which will be dynamic to reflect changing circumstances during the 2017 Session, identification of action steps, and identification of partners, including legislators, other elected officials, municipalities, advocacy groups, and so on.
- The City Council and the 20th District Delegation are scheduled to hold a joint priorities meeting on December 6. The purpose is to inform the Delegation about the City's priorities, learn what the legislators are planning for the Session, and identify areas where we can work together. These discussions will be based on guidance from staff and PPP.
- We are very fortunate that Councilmember Smith was appointed Vice Chair of the MML Legislative Committee which facilitates sharing of information on legislative matters affecting municipalities and building relationships. This will be another means of information gathering and sharing, and advocacy for the City's priorities.

- Staff is preparing the RFP for a lobbyist to assist the City in its efforts to advocate for and promote our interests with Montgomery County.

Regarding the second strategy, there are a number of examples of where the City is partnering with other municipalities within the County in an effort to influence County and State decision-making with the goal of increasing funding or improving service provision to City residents. In addition to our efforts as active members of the Montgomery County chapter of MML in establishing and advocating for action on jointly developed priorities, we have been working directly with others to apply pressure regarding issues such as:

- Stormwater fees: We have been working closely with Rockville and Gaithersburg to address an issue where the County was exempt from paying stormwater fees for County property within municipalities, and a draft MOU is almost complete. While the dollar amount the City can expect is modest - about \$1,500 - the County will be paying out a total of about \$220,000 this fiscal year to municipalities where they own property.
- MCPS Capital Budget and CIP: Another example is joint efforts with other municipalities and the Board of Education to apply pressure on the County regarding funding for school construction and maintenance to help address overcrowding and aging facilities. Staff worked with officials from Rockville and Gaithersburg to organize a joint presentation at a MCPS Capital Budget and CIP hearing before the County. Board of Education Public Hearing on the Superintendent's Recommended FY 2018 Capital Budget and the amendments to the FY 2017-2022 Capital Improvements Program.
- Policing Payments: We have also been working with a group of Police Chiefs and administrators from County municipalities to attempt to quantify and make the case for what we believe is a more fair duplication payment for policing services provided by municipalities.

Regarding the third strategy, we have been publicizing - through the website, social media, and other channels - Council's formal letters and requests regarding issues such as the relocation of Washington Adventist Hospital and our strong desire for a free-standing medical facility to remain at the campus (among other medical services), the County's capital budget and CIP for school facilities, and County funding for an aquatics center within the City, among others. We are still thinking about and plan to develop some sort of visual/graphic representation of how tax duplication negatively impacts the City in order to highlight the complex issue and make it easier to understand for residents.

Adopt Reserves Financial Policy

Goal: Adopt financial policy to determine the appropriate level of designated reserves.

Strategy:

- Review best practices and benchmarks and determine reserve level suitable for City.

Desired outcome: Policy adopted.

Status: Staff has reviewed existing financial policies, best practices and benchmarks related to reserve levels suited to cities that are similarly situation to Takoma Park. We expect to have a draft policy before

Council later this winter ahead of budget deliberation discussions for Fiscal Year 2018.

Environmentally Sustainable Community

Increase Use of Renewable Energy

Goal: Reduce consumption of non-renewable energy; increase use of renewable energy.

Strategy:

- Include new section on “Environmental Impact” on cover sheet of all agenda items requiring Council action.
- Investigate steps that would need to be taken to go carbon neutral.
- Evaluate programs to determine energy uses and develop strategies for switching to alternative sources where practical.

Desired outcome: Quantifiable reduction in use of non-renewable energy, or approved plan to do so.

Status: Regarding the first strategy listed with this Priority, the cover sheet for Council agenda items now includes a section on “Environmental Impact” in order to demonstrate that everything Council discusses has been viewed through an “environmental lens.”

Regarding the second strategy, City staff has been involved in a number of discussions, including with the Green Team and members of the Committee on the Environment, about what it means to be carbon neutral. In general, carbon neutrality refers to achieving net zero carbon emissions by balancing a measured amount of carbon released with an equivalent amount sequestered or offset, or buying enough carbon credits to make up the difference. Sustainability is a major factor that staff considers when making purchases or construction related decisions. However, further direction from Council will be required – particularly the extent to which we should offset carbon emissions versus buying carbon credits – before we can accurately determine the costs of becoming a carbon neutral City.

The following are updates on various areas in which the City has recently taken initiatives to “go green” with our operations:

City Vehicles and fuel

- Police have two electric vehicles in the fleet for use with parking enforcement.
- The City fleet now has 13 hybrid vehicles (gas/electric).
- City diesel fueled vehicles continue to be run with 80/20 bio diesel (95/5 in winter months). City staff continues to monitor technology for use of 100% bio-diesel; equipment is available, however a reliable source of 100% bio-diesel is the limiting factor at this time.
- Four staff bicycles were purchased and are available for staff use; 2 are located at the Community Center and two are located at Public Works. Since put into use, they have accumulated over 64 miles traveled.

Community Alternate Fuel Options

- Fourteen electric vehicle charging stations have been installed; these are the first public stations in the City. These stations were provided and installed at no charge (although City had to provide conduit and electricity source). Use of these charging stations is conservatively estimated to reduce 29 gallons of gasoline use per month.

City Facilities

- City solar panels currently generate approximately 99,200 kWh of electricity annually.
- In FY13, the City joined the Smart Energy Community Campaign and committed to reducing energy use for municipal buildings by 15% over a 5 year period and increasing the use of green energy by 20% in that same time period. Since FY12, building energy use has been reduced by 136,266 kWh or 19%. Green energy supplied by the City's solar panels and geothermal system at Public Works provides 25% of the energy used. *In addition the City purchases Renewable Energy Credits of 1,800 mWh (1,800,000 kWh), which offsets more than 100% of our annual usage.*
- Continued LED conversion of City facility interior and exterior lighting is underway; approximately 40% of fixtures have been converted to date. In FY17, planned projects funded through an MEA grant and CIP projects will bring that to 60%.

Community Residential Energy Use Reduction

- Residential solar applications have increased 35% through the City's participation in Solar Co-ops with Maryland Sun. New efforts are underway to bring a Community Solar project to the City.
- The Neighborhood Energy Challenge begun in March, 2015 was very successful with 20% of single family homes participating (10% of households city-wide). Over 174 homes have been Green Home Certified, with the majority making substantial improvements including air sealing and insulation. Over 15% of Takoma Park single family homes have had a Comprehensive Energy Audit within the last 4 years, and nearly 25% have had a Quick Energy Check-Up (mini audit). The City invested \$41,225 in this program by providing 241 rebates including 187 for energy audits and 54 for completed energy efficiency improvements.
- Twenty of the City's low-to-moderate income homeowners received energy makeovers that included air sealing, insulation and appliance upgrade at no cost through a grant received and administered by the City. The program covered \$101,000 in improvements.
- Multi-family buildings also participated in new energy efficiency programs including energy check-ups and retrofit projects. The City provided a rebate of \$10,000 to two qualifying apartment buildings. One project was a lighting retrofit and the other an HVAC improvement. These projects are estimated to reduce over 73,000 kWh of electricity annually, the equivalent of 7.6 homes per year and 51.42 metric Tons of CO₂.
- Taken together, the programs listed above resulted in a reduction of 447,334 kWh of energy use; 355 metric Tons less of CO₂ (739,560 lbs). This is equivalent to the annual energy use of 50 homes.
- The City partnered with a local Boy Scout to earn his Eagle Scout badge by implementing a porch light project that replaced 100 porch lights with LED bulbs.

Community Business Energy Efficiency

The City partnered with the Green Impact Campaign which encourages college students to provide energy audits to commercial businesses. Through this program 63 businesses received a no-cost audit and 480,000 kWh of potential energy reductions were identified. The City provided a small scholarship to the student that completed the most audits.

Transition to LED Street Lights

The City has had 49 streetlights on Flower Avenue and 29 street lights on Ethan Allen Avenue converted to LEDs. This represents 5% of our estimated 1,577 street lights. The Council authorized staff to proceed with city-wide conversion of streetlights through Pepco. City staff met with Pepco staff October 20 to discuss next steps. City staff will also be working with members of Safe Roadways Committee regarding details of light type and concerns related to light pollution and health impacts from over lighting.

Additional Initiatives Related to this Priority

- The City hosted the Montgomery County GreenFest in March, 2016, at the Community Center.
- Creation the nascent Neighborhood Services Team Division and associated team leader position, which will have an emphasis on education and enforcement of the environmental codes.
- Continued work on the Flower Avenue Green Street project: The project is at the 95% design phase. City staff is working with SHA to review and complete design plans. Schedule anticipates July, 2017 construction start.
- Implementation of additional Sustainable Maryland certified goals to increase City rating
- Continued implementation of stormwater management projects to meet State and Federal mandates:
 - The Dog Park construction includes a storm drain feature to address long standing erosion from school property into wooded area. This step pool area will be completed in November.
 - 3 bio-retention facilities were completed in June and July at Larch and Glaiewood Avenue,
 - Stream restoration of a section of stream near Hayward Avenue and Larch Avenue was completed in June, additional work in that same area to add a green swale and remove asphalt pavement and replace with permeable pavers is scheduled to begin November.
 - The permeable paver project installed in June in front of the Community center required some additional work to improve its function. That work will be completed in November.
- Continued annual tree planting: FY16 included \$22,000 expenditure for street tree planting, \$7,605 for private tree purchases through the city's bulk buy program and \$38,625 in tree maintenance. (The FY17 Fall tree planting and bulk buy program may be impacted by vacancy of City Arborist.)
- Continued staff education: 51 staff members participated in the Cool Choices program, an online challenge that encouraged alternative choices to save energy and improve healthy options. A new Environmental Workgroup has also been established.
- Continued programs to improve pedestrian access: The ADA compliance program in FY16 expended \$309,301 and included work in Ward 3. In FY16, new sidewalks were installed on Cherry Avenue, a section of Sligo Creek Parkway, and Westmoreland Avenue, funded by the City

(\$348,000) and in the 1000 block of Elm Avenue funded by a Safe Routes to School grant (\$26,735).

- Movement away from plastic water bottle use: Through combined funds from OTBA and Public Works, a portable water bottle filling station was purchased for use at City festivals. In City facilities, there are now four water bottle filling stations.
- Consideration of new programs: City staff have developed two potential new programs for the Green Home Certification program. These are Near Zero Waste Initiative and Backyard Habitat. Decision on which program to roll out for next certification will be made soon and implementation is expected in March 2017.

Engaged, Responsive & Service Oriented Government

Identify Policing Priorities

Goal: Identify policing priorities and explore options for enhanced police/community relations.

Strategy:

- In addition to community survey, hold community meetings and conversations to learn more about perceptions of police relations with the public. Develop and implement steps that the Police Department can take to improve community relations.

Desired outcome: Improved resident survey responses.

Status: After establishing this Priority and associated strategy, the Council decided to put off funding for a comprehensive community survey this year. However, we plan to use some of the funds set aside for community policing consultation to administer a scaled back survey that focuses specifically on the police department. We hope that our efforts to enhance police/community relations will be evident when the survey is conducted. To that end, the following are initiatives the Police Department has recently undertaken with the goal of improving perceptions and relationships within the community. These efforts are in addition to ongoing training for officers in the areas of mental health first aid, crisis intervention, de-escalation and tactical disengagement, peer support, and constitutional law, among others:

- **Unity in the Community:** The City partnered with a local business to hold a very well attended kick-off event for the Unity in the Community initiative. The initiative was created as a plan of action to build upon the continuation of community responses throughout the nation to unite local police departments with their community into one collective voice. The initiative is a proactive step Takoma Park is taking to create and strengthen relationships between the Takoma Park Police Department, elected city officials and community residents by expanding routine opportunities for people of diverse backgrounds to come together through community dialogue, relationship-building events, sustained partnerships and fundraising campaigns.
- **Police/Teen Dialog Sessions:** Dialogue circles between community members (youth and/or adults) and police support relationship building and humanize members of the circle to each other. The facilitated circles give everyone a chance to speak about their experiences and allow everyone to hear different perspectives on some divisive issues. The overall goal is to build a

new understanding. Rather than responding to a specific incident, dialogue circles allow those involved to address the broader sense of mistrust between residents and officers. The focus of the conversation is on individual experiences.

- **Continued Crime Meetings:** The Police Department has held a series of neighborhood crime meetings in homes across the City, which several Police Department staff, including the Crime Analyst, attend to listen to residents, present crime data, and present information on how to safeguard life and property.
- **Continued Neighborhood Cookouts:** The Police Department continues to host neighborhood cookouts in some of our more at-risk neighborhoods featuring food, games, and most importantly, positive interactions with Police Department staff.
- **Participation in Community Conversation on Youth Success:** Several Police Department staff participated in the Community Conversation on Youth Success, facilitating discussions and otherwise engaging with community members about programs and service provided.
- **Attendance and Participation at Lunch and Learn and Essex House youth programs.**

We continue to think about how to improve perceptions and relationships with the community, and are considering ways to include proactive efforts by individual officers to engage residents in positive ways as part of the annual performance evaluation process.

Improve Communications With Residents

Goal: Improve communications with residents, especially two-way online communication.

Strategy:

- Regularly update project directory, staff and Councilmember blogs on City website, promote My TkPk application.
- Explore ways in addition to Newsletter to get information to a broader array of residents.
- Develop innovative graphic representations of key issues to help communicate key issues to residents and policymakers in Rockville and Annapolis.

Desired outcome: Increase in use of My TkPk to report issues.

Status: Since the adoption of this Priority, we have made strides in utilizing the new website (which was launched in November 2015) as a source of up-to-date information on various City projects and initiatives, especially through the use of the project directory. After the initial launch, we added a variety of features to the website, including built-in translation services, improved MailChimp configuration and integration, alert upgrades, and blog enhancements. Website analytics also show that staff and Council blogs and news alerts have been very effective means of disseminating information, especially when posted to the website and pushed through social media.

The My TkPk application has also been an effective tool for residents to report a variety of issues to staff, and also for staff to have a system for keeping track of certain types of requests and their status. The issues most commonly reported are for street/pothole repair, abandoned vehicles, trash/recycling pick-up, and sidewalk repair. We continue to promote My TkPk as a means of reporting a wide-variety of issues.

As noted above in the Priority related to increasing funding from Montgomery County, we are still thinking about and plan to develop some sort of visual/graphic representation of how tax duplication negatively impacts the City in order to highlight the complex issue and make it easier to understand for residents.

Advance Economic Development Efforts

Attract New Business

Goal: Attract new businesses and prepare for economic development in the City and region.

Strategy:

- Dedicate staff to proactive economic development efforts (possible new position).
- Tap into private sector expertise to explore what development opportunities are feasible.
- Work with neighboring communities and regional governmental agencies and established business associations to promote the City as an attractive place for economic development.

Desired outcome: Formalized economic development strategy.

Status: Since the adoption of the Council Priorities, the following actions have been initiated to advance the City's economic development goals:

- Council allocated \$50,000 to undertake a community-wide strategic plan to facilitate the review of existing economic development policies approved by Council, with an additional \$100,000 budgeted for undefined economic development programming.
- Executed contracts for economic development services with the Takoma/Langley Crossroads CDA and the Old Takoma Business Association. The contracts include, within the scope of services to be provided by the two business association, "business retention, expansion, and recruitment assistance."
- Executed a Development Agreement with Neighborhood Development Company, LLC (NDC) for the development of an estimated 25,000 sq. ft. of additional commercial space in the Takoma Junction and the 6,000 sq. ft. expansion of the Takoma Park Silver Spring Co-op. The Agreement requires creation of community process advisory committee group to assist in gathering input on proposed land uses and tenancy. The advisory committee has been established and anticipates the scheduling of a series of community gatherings in early 2017. Negotiations with the Co-op are in process. Feasibility analysis of the site by NDC is underway.
- Assisted in the development of an analysis of the economic impact of the build-out of select properties located in the Takoma/Langley Crossroads and along the New Hampshire Avenue Corridor. The study, initiated by the City of Takoma Park and the Montgomery County Chapter of the Maryland Municipal League, is to be released by the Maryland Department of Planning in December 2016.
- Identified specific development opportunities and delineated Central Business Areas (CBAs) areas within Takoma Park as defined in ADM 1097.1 "Incorporating Principals of Sustainability, Economic Development and Efficiency into GSA Business Practices and Location Decision Making." Identified priority areas will be submitted for inclusion in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's submission to the U. S. General Services Administration

(GSA). Once finalized, the material will be used to identify priority places for locating federal facilities.

- Issued a request for proposals for services for the development of a Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan with submissions due mid-December 2016.
- Preliminary proposal to secure ownership of the Takoma Recreation Center and the issuance of a Letter of Interest, intended to identify potential development partners, presented to the Council for consideration.
- A new Business Retention and Expansion Program, modified to address the interests of Takoma Park, proposed for implementation in January 2017. In addition to developing stronger relationships with local businesses and property owners, the program is intended to expand the City's understanding of the current and future needs and concerns of local businesses, identify opportunities for development, and allow for a timely respond to requests for assistance. This effort is to be undertaken with the assistance of a contract employee at an estimated cost of \$50,000. Additional support is to be provided by the Takoma Langley Crossroads CDA and the Old Takoma Business Association as addressed in the earlier referenced Contract for Economic Development Services.
- A request for proposals for marketing services is under development with an anticipated release date in early December 2016. Anticipated deliverables include the creation of a community wide marketing strategy for purposes of promoting Takoma Park as a desirable place to live, work and invest.
- Council adopted a new Streetscape Manual developed in part for the purposes of facilitating the maintenance and development of public spaces to "enhance business vitality" and support "economic sustainability." (Council Resolution 2016-24)
- Advocated for an evaluation of the collection and distribution of business personal property tax by the State of Maryland, following an extensive but preliminary internal review by staff. (Council Resolution 2016-17)
- Subscribed to CoStar, an online real estate research and data collection service used by regional economic development agencies, for purposes of identifying site opportunities and monitoring the economic vitality of the local commercial sector.
- Met with local investors to explore redevelopment opportunities along the New Hampshire Avenue Corridor.
- Seven new businesses located in Takoma Park and Takoma DC in the past six months with an additional three new businesses planning to open by early 2017. Three existing businesses expanded their operations. The construction of three new commercial structures, located within the New Hampshire Avenue Corridor, has been scheduled.
- Continued work with neighboring communities and local, regional and state agencies with staff meeting with representatives of the Maryland Departments of Planning and Commerce, State Highway Administration, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties Planning Departments, Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs, Prince George's County Arts and Humanities Council, City of College Park and City of Mt. Rainier's Economic Development Departments, the University of Maryland's Urban and Regional Planning Department, and others.
- CDBG Facade Easement program: The City has reviewed and approved 6 projects, for a total of \$35,888 of community investment. Four have been completed and \$11,292 has been reimbursed with grant funds. Two projects are pending and one application is in process now.