



# CITY OF TAKOMA PARK

## City Manager Comments

Report for City Council Meeting of April 5, 2017

### *Follow-up from Last Council Meeting*

#### **Data on Presence of Lead in Water Pipes**

Councilmember Male asked if there was any data available on the levels of lead in the WSSC water pipes and/or in residential units in Takoma Park. WSSC is required to conduct regular system-wide testing, but the data that they provide is system-wide, other than spot checks occasionally conducted on residential units and other buildings. As such, we do not have data on pipes specifically located in Takoma Park. Some customers may have a small traceable amount of lead, but no WSSC customers have levels approaching amounts that are a cause for concern under EPA guidelines. The level of lead in 90% of homes tested is less than 1.2 ppb, versus the 15 ppb level which the EPA says is unacceptable. In 2014, no homes exceeded 12 ppb.

Per WSSC: "It's important for customers to know that the corrosion inhibitor WSSC adds to the water creates a coating on pipes that prevents them from leaching lead, but it's still possible that a few homes built prior to 1960 may still have lead service lines on their property. Concerned customers should contact a WSSC-Registered plumber to determine if their homes contain lead pipes in their homes or contact WSSC's Water Quality Center at 301-206-7575 about having their water tested. More information is available on the WSSC [website](#), and WSSC's annual Water Quality Report can be found [online](#), as well." The last testing WSSC conducted was in 2015.

### **Information to Share**

#### **Takoma Junction Community Consultation Update**

The Takoma Junction Community Consultation Process Advisory Committee held their final meeting on Tuesday, April 4. In total, almost 200 people attended the meetings, and 630 people completed the on-line surveys. Generally the committee thought the participation in the meetings and the surveys met the goal of getting the community feedback needed for specific design elements for the Junction redevelopment. The outreach effort was thorough, including the City's work publicizing the meetings and surveys, business cards that had the survey link on them, printed fliers in businesses, OTBA's media outreach to business owners and community members, and specific efforts to reach Junction businesses.

NDC and Streetsense will distill the feedback from the meetings and the surveys and present a summary to Council on May 3rd. They will use the information to shape the Concept Plan which they will present to Council in June.

### **Arbor Day**

We invite community members to join us for this year's Annual Arbor Day celebration and tree seedling give away. The event will take place on Saturday, April 8 from 10am - 2pm on the Library grounds. We'll have 12 varieties of seedlings available including bald cypress, pitch pine, black oak, white oak, shumard oak, red maple, sweet gum, sycamore, red bud, paw paw, persimmon and hazelnut. The event is open to everyone. Members of the Tree Commission will be present to answer questions about trees.

### **Safe Grow Bus Shelter Ads and Photo Contest**

New Safe Grow ads will be going up in nine bus shelters in Takoma Park on or around April 17. We expect that they will be in place through the beginning of June. Also, the City is going to be hosting a photo contest that will last throughout the spring and much of summer that will feature resident-generated pictures of gardens, flowers, etc. that were grown without the use of pesticides.

### **Police Traffic Enforcement – Maple Avenue near Sligo Creek**

In response to reports from residents and a request from Councilmembers concerned about pedestrian safety in the area of Maple Avenue near Sligo Creek, the Police Department temporarily stepped up traffic enforcement efforts in the area. We have received at least one complaint from a resident who was ticketed for disobeying traffic restrictions in the area. I appreciate the Police Department being responsive to complaints about pedestrian safety, even when it annoys others.

### ***New Staff***

Jan van Zutphen was recently hired as the City's new **Urban Forest Manager** and will begin work on April 17. Jan (pronounced Yaun) has over 20 years of experience in urban forest management. Previous employers included the City of Annapolis and College Park, as well as private landscaping companies. Jan received his Bachelor of Science degree in Landscape Management from the University of Maryland and has certifications from the International Society of Arboriculture as an Arborist, Tree Risk Assessor and is qualified as a Maryland Roadside Tree Expert. Jan is an avid bicyclist and looks forward to getting to know the trees (and residents) of Takoma Park.

### ***Kudos***

Kudos to Public Works, Recreation, and Police Department staff for their work in making the Dog Park grand opening, which occurred on Sunday, a very successful event! Special shout outs go to **Nima Upadhyay**, Special Projects Coordinator, and **Ian Chamberlain**, Construction Manager, for their hard work developing construction plans, coordinating with neighbors and other governmental agencies, and managing contractors to make the vision of a Dog Park in Takoma Park a reality. And also kudos **Cpl. Cyndy Conrad** and **Pfc. Eric Mueller** from the Police Department for their work in organizing the event.

Kudos to **Captain Tyrone Collington** in the Police Department for being invited to speak at a conference held last Saturday titled “The Police are the Public and the Public are the Police.” The objective of the conference was to provide a venue where the community could hear innovative and challenging ideas on policing and the role it should play in American society. Captain Collington’s presentation focused on building bridges and maintaining relationships between the community, youth and the police. Unity in the Community was prominently featured during his presentation. He also spoke on Tuesday night at the PTSA meeting at Rolling Terrace Elementary about the role of our Police Department as it relates to immigration laws, our status as a sanctuary city, and building trust in the community.

### ***Hiring Update***

We have not yet been able to prepare the Request for Proposals for a County lobbyist.

We have many open positions, but most are part-time Recreation positions for the summer. Other positions include a Public Works Right of Way Crew Leader, several internships, and the always-advertised position of Police Officer. An announcement for a new Police Chief is not expected for several weeks.

### ***My Schedule***

I will be out of the office May 12-14.