



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – February 8, 2017 Agenda Item 6

Work Session

Report Out from the City Council Retreat and Discussion of Council Priorities

Recommended Council Action

Discuss priorities established at the Council Retreat in preparation to affirm them by Resolution

Context with Key Issues

The Council holds a “Council Retreat” each year in advance of the budget preparation process. This year’s Retreat took place over two evenings on January 9 and 17. At the Retreat, Council reflects on their work during the previous year(s) and discusses policy and budget priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. The discussion and priorities established during the Retreat indicate the intended strategic direction of the Council and informs the development of the City Manager’s Recommended Budget.

During the first Retreat session, on January 9, the Council was joined by a representative of the National League of Cities’ Race, Equity, and Leadership Division who presented information and facilitated a discussion about the importance of incorporating considerations of racial equity in policy and budget decisions using a disciplined approach. The Council embraced the idea and plans to take steps moving forward to ensure that racial equity is considered when making decisions. For example, within the next few months, a “Racial Equity Impact Statement” will be added to all Council agenda items. The Council acknowledged that there is much work to be done in order to identify the data necessary to evaluate the impact of their decisions on racial equity. Work will be needed to identify sources of data and how to best use that data, but the Council also agreed that learning more about and highlighting what we do not know is of value in and of itself.

The focus of the remainder of the Retreat was on reviewing the priorities established at last year’s Retreat, at the outset of the Council’s term, and considering them in light of new needs and interests in the community. In addition to reaffirming the existing priorities, the Council, through a priorities ranking exercise, decided to place new or renewed emphasis on the following as they consider policymaking and budget decisions in the coming year:

- **Youth Success:** allocate funds for a summer program geared toward school-aged, at-risk youth, especially in light of the newly extended summer break.
- **Remaining a Welcoming and Inclusive City:** allocate funds for legal services to defend the City’s “sanctuary status” and potentially for residents in jeopardy of being deported.
- **Energy Efficiency:** allocate additional funds to promote energy efficiency in multifamily buildings; consider incentives for energy efficiency development along New Hampshire corridor and elsewhere.
- **Community Policing:** develop and implement steps to improve community-police relations.

- **Economic Development:** develop and implement a plan of action for economic development, including a review of Sector Plans.
- **Public Safety Mutual Aid Agreements:** develop and implement a plan of action to encourage partners in neighboring jurisdictions to enter into mutual aid agreements to enhance public safety.
- **Affordable Housing:** develop and implement a plan of action for the Housing Reserve Fund, including a request for contributions from the County.
- **Library Renovations:** finalize plans and acquire bond funding.
- **Trees:** allocate funds to support established tree and tree canopy goals; revise Tree Policy to make it more user-friendly and easy to understand.
- **Resident Survey:** allocate funds for a resident survey in order to gather information and data to inform decision-making, especially as it relates to racial equity.

The attached documents reflect revisions made to the existing Council Priorities resulting from the Council Retreat.

Council Priority

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

Environmental Impact of Action

The Council Priorities could result in greener building and development within the City and maintenance/growth of the tree canopy, among other possibilities.

Fiscal Impact of Action

To be determined during budget process.

Attachments and Links

- Draft 2017 Council Priorities (red-lined to show revisions to existing Priorities document)
- Draft 2017 Council Priorities (clean)

Council Priorities (Affirmed in February 2016; Updated in February 2017)



A Livable Community For All

Goal	Strategy	Desired Outcome	Achieved
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.	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). (B)	Expanded youth programming tailored to residents who need them the most or who are accessing them the least.	
	Allocate additional funding for youth programming and coordination of services for youth. Allocate funding for a summer program geared toward school-aged at-risk youth. (B) – 5 DOTS		
Formalize relationships with neighboring jurisdictions to enhance public safety.	Draft and adopt public safety mutual aid agreements. (P) Develop and implement plan of action to encourage partners to enter into mutual aid agreements. (P) – 4 DOTS	Mutual aid agreements in place with District of Columbia and Prince George’s County.	
Ensure we have a range of safe, quality, and stable housing options for residents of varying incomes and all races and ethnicities.	Revise existing housing policy and update 2009 Affordable Housing Plan; explore new approaches to providing affordable rental and home ownership opportunities. (P) – 3 DOTS	New equitable housing policy adopted and Affordable Housing Plan implemented updated	
	Develop and implement plan of action for Housing Reserve Fund, including request for contributions from the County. (P) – 4 DOTS		
Defend status as a Sanctuary City and continue to be a welcoming and inclusive community for all residents.	Dedicate funds for legal services for the City and potentially for residents in jeopardy of being deported. (P/B)– 5 DOTS	Remain a strong Sanctuary City.	

Council Priorities (Affirmed in February 2016; Updated in February 2017)

Move forward on Library renovations.	Acquire bond funding for renovations. (P/B) – 4 DOTS	Plan and funding in place for Library renovations.	
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Major projects, initiatives and ongoing activities

- Library renovation and expansion, including ADA improvements
- Piney Branch pool – advocate for retention of and investment in County owned and maintained indoor swimming pool; participate in Piney Branch Elementary School facility study
- Park improvements – dog park construction; ~~renovation at Colby Park playground~~; new construction at Sligo Mill Overlook Park
- Sidewalks – retrofit existing sidewalks to meet ADA requirements; sidewalk design improvements
- Public Land and Open Space Management Plan – adoption and implementation of recommendations
- Vacant Properties Registry – implementation of new registry
- Public Transit/Bike/ Pedestrian Safety projects – including continuation of the Safe Routes to School Program and bike improvements
- Cultural Plan – implementation of recommendations included in FY16 Update
- Washington Adventist Hospital – advocate for campus that continues to meet the health needs of the community, including a freestanding medical facility, and offers other new amenities available to the public



Fiscally Sustainable Government

Goal	Strategy	Desired Outcome	Achieved
Increase funding from County to address tax duplication.	Increase Councilmember advocacy and lobbying activities; improve coordination of efforts between staff and Councilmembers. (P) – 1 DOT	Increased funding from County to address tax duplication.	
	Partner with other Montgomery County municipalities to pressure County and General Assembly. (P) – 1 DOT		
	Develop more accessible, easy-to-understand communication methods for educating residents and other stakeholders; coordinate with news		

Council Priorities (Affirmed in February 2016; Updated in February 2017)

	media outlets as appropriate to share information. (B)		
Adopt financial policy to determine the appropriate level of designated reserves.	Review best practices and benchmarks and determine reserve level suitable for City. (P)	Policy adopted.	
Major projects, initiatives and ongoing activities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalize and adopt Financial Policies currently being followed • Modify budget document in accordance with GFOA standards of excellence in communicating about budget process 			

Council Priorities (Affirmed in February 2016; Updated in February 2017)

 <h1>Environmentally Sustainable Community</h1>			
Goal	Strategy	Desired Outcome	Achieved
Reduce consumption of non-renewable energy; increase use of renewable energy.	Include new section on “Environmental Impact” on cover sheet of all agenda items requiring Council action. (P)	Quantifiable reduction in use of non-renewable energy, or approved plan to do so.	
	Investigate steps that would need to be taken to go carbon neutral. (B)		
	Evaluate programs to determine energy uses and develop strategies for switching to alternative sources where practical. (B)		
	Transition to LED street lights. (B)		
	Explore innovative and cutting edge sustainable practices. (B)		
Achieve greater energy efficiency, particularly in multifamily buildings, businesses, and City operations.	Dedicate additional funds to promote energy efficiency in multifamily buildings; consider incentives for sustainable development along New Hampshire corridor. (B) – 5 DOTS	Improved energy efficiency in multi-family buildings; maximize sustainable features in new development.	
Increase renewable energy, particularly solar.	Dedicate additional funds for renewable energy credits and more solar power; consider incentives for multifamily buildings and new development. (B)	Increased use of renewable energy and/or offset of non-renewable energy.	
Preserve and grow tree canopy.	Dedicate additional funds to support established	Greater maintenance of mature	

Council Priorities (Affirmed in February 2016; Updated in February 2017)

	tree and tree canopy goals. (B) – 4 DOTS	trees; more plantings on City and private property.	
Major projects, initiatives and ongoing activities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement of City codes – polystyrene ban; Safe Grow; multifamily and business recycling; possible plastic bag ban • Continue work toward achievement of all Green Team priorities. • Continue implementation of Sustainable Energy Action Plan, including participation in Georgetown Energy Prize competition • Flower Avenue green street • Implement additional Sustainable Maryland Certified goals to increase City's rating • Continue to implement Council authorized Smart Energy Community Goals for energy reduction and green power • Implement stormwater management projects to meet State and Federal mandates for 2017 and 2025 • Continue annual tree planting program 			
 Engaged, Responsive, Service-oriented Government			
Goal	Strategy	Desired Outcome	Achieved
Identify policing priorities and explore options for enhanced police/community relations.	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. (P) – 5 DOTS	Improved resident survey responses.	
Improve communications with residents, especially two-way online communication.	Regularly update project directory, staff and Councilmember blogs on City website, promote My TkPk application. (P)	Increase in use of My TkPk to report issues.	
	Explore ways in addition to Newsletter to get information to a broader array of residents. (B) –		

Council Priorities (Affirmed in February 2016; Updated in February 2017)

	3 DOTS		
	Develop innovative graphic representations of key issues to help communicate key issues to residents and policymakers in Rockville and Annapolis. (B)		
	Develop new notification system for utility work. (P) – 2 DOTS	Better communication with residents about utility work that may impact them.	
	Conduct resident survey. (B) – 4 DOTS	Data that can be used to inform decision-making.	
Make Tree Policy more “user-friendly” and easy to understand.	Revise Tree Policy. (P/B) – 4 DOTS	More easily understood Tree Policy.	

Major projects, initiatives and ongoing activities

- Police Department renovation – concept design
- Community policing consulting
- Police rebate discussions
- Promotion of My TkPk
- Continue to serve as liaison between utility companies and community to improve communication and understanding of project impacts
- Assess the feasibility of moving City elections to coincide with state and federal elections



Advance Economic Development Efforts

Council Priorities (Affirmed in February 2016; Updated in February 2017)

Goal	Strategy	Desired Outcome	Achieved
Attract new businesses and prepare for economic development in the City and region while maintaining the special character of our community.	Dedicate staff to proactive economic development efforts (possible new position). (B)	Formalized economic development strategy.	
	Tap into private sector expertise to explore what development opportunities are feasible. (B) – 1 DOT		
	Work with neighboring communities and regional governmental agencies and established business associations to promote the City as an attractive place for economic development. (P/B) – 3 DOTS		
	Develop and implement plan of action for economic development; review sector plans and act/update as appropriate. (P) – 5 DOTS		
	Advocate for SHA reconstruction of New Hampshire Corridor. (P) – 1 DOT	SHA reconstruction of New Hampshire Corridor.	
	Continue advocating for repurposing of WAH campus. (P) – 2 DOTS	Vibrant WAH campus with community amenity and services offerings.	
Major projects, initiatives and ongoing activities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takoma Junction development • Purple Line preparation • John Nevins Andrews School – advocate for appropriate reuse of property • Washington - McLaughlin property – identify future use of wooded lots; encourage improvements to school property • Economic development along New Hampshire • Contracts for economic development services in Old Takoma and Takoma Langley Crossroads business districts • Washington Adventist Hospital site small master plan • Ethan Allen Streetscape projects 			

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	Allocate additional funding for youth programming and coordination of services for youth. Allocate funding for a summer program geared toward school-aged at-risk youth. (B)		
Formalize relationships with neighboring jurisdictions to enhance public safety.	Develop and implement plan of action to encourage partners to enter into mutual aid agreements. (P)	Mutual aid agreements in place with District of Columbia and Prince George's County.	
Ensure we have a range of safe, quality, and stable housing options for residents of varying incomes and all races and ethnicities.	Revise existing housing policy and update 2009 Affordable Housing Plan; explore new approaches to providing affordable rental and home ownership opportunities. (P)	New equitable housing policy adopted and Affordable Housing Plan implemented.	
	Develop and implement plan of action for Housing Reserve Fund, including request for contributions from the County. (P)		
Defend status as a Sanctuary City and continue to be a welcoming and inclusive community for all residents.	Dedicate funds for legal services for the City and potentially for residents in jeopardy of being deported. (P/B)	Remain a strong Sanctuary City.	
Move forward on Library renovations.	Acquire bond funding for renovations. (P/B)	Plan and funding in place for Library renovations.	

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