



CITY OF TAKOMA PARK

City Manager Comments

Report for City Council Meeting of January 10, 2018

Information to Share

Welcome to Police Chief Tony DeVaul

By now all the Councilmembers have met him, but I nevertheless wanted to note that our new Police Chief, Antonio “Tony” DeVaul, was sworn in on Tuesday, January 2. Chief DeVaul worked for the Maryland-National Capital Park Police Department for 23 years, serving as Chief since 2012. He is dedicated to the guardian model of policing and has a track record of community relationship building. I am very excited for this new chapter in the history of the Takoma Park Police Department.

I also want to express my gratitude to the three Captains who have rotated in the Acting Chief capacity since March – Captains Dan Frishkorn, Tye Collington, and Rick Bowers. They served professionally and admirably in the interim, and we are very fortunate that they were willing and able to step up. Thanks so much Captains! I also want to express my appreciation to Deputy City Manager Jason Damweber who worked with the Captains during this time to ensure consistency and continuity as we undertook the rotation.

MCPS – Downcounty School Site Selection Committee: Update and Concerns

Much to my surprise, on January 3, the Downcounty Consortium Elementary School Site Selection Advisory Committee (SSAC) recommended to the Superintendent a site and an alternate site for a possible new elementary school that may be built in lieu of capital improvements to area schools. The process set forth for the Committee was rushed, key information was not provided, and the meetings were held over the holiday season.

I have sent a letter to MCPS Superintendent, Dr. Jack Smith, expressing these concerns, letting him know that this will likely be controversial for us, and recommending that he reassess and possibly amend the process moving forward. The topic will be discussed at next City Council meeting on January 17. My letter and background information is already posted with next week’s Council agenda.

Once finalized, the Committee’s report with recommended sites will be posted for public comment for 30 days and sent to the Montgomery Planning Board for the mandatory referral process. Subsequently, the Superintendent will review the Committee report, public comments, comments from the county and municipal agencies, and comments of the Montgomery County Planning Board as he develops his recommendations. It is anticipated that the recommendation will be sent to the Board of Education in February 2018 as part of the FY 2018 Capital Budget and Amendments to the FY 2017–2022 Capital Improvements Program process. Board of Education adoption of a site should occur no later than the end of March 2018.

Takoma Junction Redevelopment Update

The City’s development partner, NDC, is currently meeting with Montgomery County development review staff regarding required components of a site plan for the Takoma Junction development. This staff consultation is taking longer than NDC projected, so we anticipate that NDC will be asking for an adjustment to the development schedule. If and when that is received and approved, the revised schedule will be posted to the website. In the meantime, both NDC and the City are moving forward with their respective traffic studies. Traffic counts for the City’s study will take place in the next few weeks, using traffic cameras installed temporarily for that purpose.

Review of Financial Policies and Investment and Banking Practices

The City's review of financial policies and practices was delayed somewhat by the difficulty of identifying consultants to help assess options regarding investments and banking. However, we do have a meeting scheduled in late January with a consultant that may be a good fit for Takoma Park. The overview of the City's financial policies presented by Finance Director Susan Cheung on October 11, 2017 will be expanded upon during the consideration of the City's budget.

Dockless Bikeshare Update

As directed by Council in late November, we have signed on as a party to the MOU between Montgomery County and the dockless bikeshare companies to officially be included in the 6-month pilot. More information on the program, including ways for residents to provide feedback during the pilot, is available here: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/bikeshare/>

A copy of the presentation by Montgomery County Department of Transportation is available here: <https://documents.takomaparkmd.gov/government/housing-and-community-development/community-development/bikeways-program/MCDOT%20Bikeshare%20Presentation%2020171019.pdf>).

A copy of the MOU template is available here: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT/Resources/Files/DocklessBikeshareMOU.pdf>).

NLC and the FCC Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee

The National League of Cities is asking jurisdictions to sign a letter pushing the FCC to better represent local interests on the their Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee, argue against the narrative that cities would rather extract revenues from broadband providers than ensure service for residents, and call for more federal focus on investment for digital inclusion. The City signed onto the letter in December. More information is available on the [NLC's website](#).

Kudos

Kudos to Captain Tyrone Collington for receiving the Unsung Hero Award from the Takoma Foundation's "Takoma United for Engagement" fund. Tye was selected as an award recipient because of his great community policing work. He will receive the award at the Takoma Middle School MLK Program which will be held at 5pm on January 15. Way to go Tye!

Hiring Update

We are currently advertising for a number of positions, including Police Dispatcher, Sanitation Driver, Recreation Program Leader, Recreation Program Assistant, Planner, Economic Development Specialist, Arts and Humanities Intern, and Housing and Community Services Intern.

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