



CITY OF TAKOMA PARK

City Manager Comments

Report for City Council Meeting of February 7, 2018

Information to Share

Traffic Signal at Carroll and Philadelphia

At long last, we received word yesterday from Pepco that they will be meeting with SHA onsite at Carroll and Philadelphia later this week to complete connections for the traffic signals at the intersection. We have been told they will update us once the work is complete.

Recreation Summer Camp Registration Update

Recreation Department Summer Camp registration opened on Monday, February 5th for City residents. On the first day, 1,353 slots out of 2,088 (65%) were filled. New summer camp offerings include a STEAM camp, theatre camp and a revamped New Ave Adventure Camp (formerly Camp Recess) which will take place at the New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center. Non-resident registration will begin on Monday, February 12th.

Updates on Upcoming Major Construction Projects

- The City held a mandatory pre-bid meeting for the [Flower Avenue Green Street project](#) on Wednesday, Feb 7 at 1pm. Bidder submissions are due March 21. Qualified bidders are notified March 28. Price proposals are reviewed April 2.
- The start date for the construction of the [Ethan Allen Gateway project](#) is expected to be at the end of March. The anticipated construction period is 6 months.
- [Lincoln Avenue sidewalk construction](#) bid has not yet been advertised. Staff is awaiting final approval of the bid documents by SHA, which is providing a significant portion of the funding through the Safe Routes to School grant. We plan to advertise the bid in February or March.

Takoma Junction Redevelopment – Project Page Updates

The online project page created for the [Takoma Junction redevelopment](#) has been updated to include a fact sheet providing answers to questions that have been raised by the community about parking requirements for the site and clarification on what has been proposed once the property is developed. The new Q&A, posted on February 6, can be found online at <http://bit.ly/2C1NAic>.

Additional information on the planned redevelopment of the site can also be found on the project page. We encourage community members to check the site periodically as the information is routinely updated.

Takoma Junction Traffic Study

The Takoma Junction traffic study, approved by the Council in November, has been delayed due to recent weather conditions. A Thomas Morton and Associates representative notified staff this week that they have not begun to collect traffic data as they are waiting for weather conditions to improve. The study includes the collection of data on not only the number of vehicles that travel along select routes, but also the level of pedestrian and bicycle traffic which occurs in the area, both of which have been impacted by the cold temperatures the region has experienced this past month. The firm is monitoring weather forecasts on a weekly basis in hopes of getting a pattern of warmer and less windy weather on a Tuesday or Wednesday.

The study focuses on vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian traffic along Ethan Allen and Carroll Avenues as well as a number of adjoining streets. The study will include recommendations on how to improve the flow of traffic at key intersections and provide recommendations for addressing safety concerns.

Update on Socially Responsible Investing Efforts

There has been interest in examining the level of and policies concerning Socially Responsible Investing done by the City of Takoma Park. The City Council will be evaluating this over several months. While the Council process has not been finalized yet and still requires much discussion, the process will build on the work the Finance staff and I have done already. It will likely include:

- sharing with the City Council updated information on how City funds are currently invested and the extent to which City funds are held in cash in banks
- sharing with Council what is involved in Socially Responsible Investing and evaluating the risks, costs, opportunities and benefits of it
- learning from an expert in Socially Responsible Investing about positive screens (investing funds in entities that do the good things the Council wants to do) and negative screens (avoiding investments in entities that do things the Council does not want to support) and how to do them
- making decisions on what the Council wants and what it does not want in terms of a formal Socially Responsible Investment policy; this would include consideration of other City policies, laws and goals including the City's Nuclear-Free ordinance, environmental goals, racial equity goals, affordable housing goals, etc.
- finalizing the City's investment policies so that the Council's Socially Responsible Investment desires are considered along with risks, costs and any applicable legal requirements; this would include consideration of the City's goal of fiscal responsibility and the understanding that we are talking about taxpayer funds
- staff implementing the direction given by Council.

The plan moving forward will include some background meetings with individual Councilmembers to provide them with information on the City's finances and processes, and answering questions on the information. This is particularly important for the three new Councilmembers who were not present when information was presented in the past. We are then planning to have a presentation to the Council and to the public from an expert in Socially Responsible Investing. The Finance Director, Deputy City Manager and I recently had a preliminary meeting with this consultant on the topic that was very helpful. I will work with Mayor Stewart on scheduling a presentation to the Council and public; hopefully this can take place within the next two months.

The next step will be to help the Council focus on its goals for Socially Responsible Investing - what does it want to encourage or discourage? This will be a good opportunity for those who wish to help direct investments to or away from certain entities to weigh in on what they would like to see the Council do. Then, to what extent is the Council comfortable spending tax funds or increasing risk to tax funds to advance its Socially Responsible Investing goals?

Once this is determined through a Council resolution or ordinance, staff can implement the direction provided. Implementation may include changing investments, retaining an investment adviser regarding investments, issuing a Request for Proposal for banking services, etc. It is possible that short-term, non-permanent steps could occur before Council reaches a final decision. For example, one step could be investing available funds in short-term positive-screen investment options.

Meeting with Purple Line Representatives

City staff met yesterday with Michael Madden, MDOT's Deputy Project Manager for the Purple Line, and Joy Hamilton, MTA Construction Outreach Manager for the Purple Line, to discuss a number of items related to the impending work along the Takoma Park borders. These items included how information about construction is communicated to City officials and residents, efforts being taken to support businesses during construction, and how we might be able to work together to address streetscaping, public art installations, and unsettled boundary issues on University Blvd. The meeting provided an opportunity for some key officials to reconnect after challenges associated with

the Purple Line were overcome and construction began. The discussions and coordination will be ongoing.

Residents interested in signing up for construction updates/notices can do so by emailing notices@purplelinemd.com. Construction related questions and concerns can be sent to outreach@pltcllc.com or via a 24-hour telephone hotline at 240-424-5325.

Hiring Update

We are currently advertising for a number of positions, including Police Dispatcher, Police Officer, Sanitation Driver, Recreation Program Leader, Recreation Program Assistant, Housing and Community Services Intern, and Contract CDL Driver.

The hiring process for the Economic Development Specialist position was unsuccessful. I will be asking to change the position from a two-year contract position to a permanent position.