



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – May 23, 2018 Agenda Item 5

Work Session

State Legislative Advocate's Report on the 2018 Legislative Session

Recommended Council Action

Hear Public Policy Partners' report

Context with Key Issues

The City contracts with a legislative advocate, Public Policy Partners (PPP), to advance the Council's priorities in the Maryland General Assembly. Alice Wilkerson, PPP's Government Relations Associate, will attend tonight's work session to present a report on the 2018 legislative session.

Council Priority

Livable Community for All; Fiscally Sustainable Government; Environmentally Sustainable Community; Engaged, Responsive & Service-oriented Government; Community Development for an Improved and Equitable Quality of Life

Environmental Impact of Action

The City's sustainability priorities and recommendations of the Committee on the Environment assist the Council in their consideration of legislative initiatives to pursue and in determining positions on various bills introduced in the Maryland General Assembly.

Fiscal Impact of Action

State legislation may have positive or negative fiscal impacts on the City. The Council can request or support legislation that is beneficial, or oppose legislation that is not. The Council, staff and legislative advocates monitor legislation to determine fiscal impacts and make decisions as appropriate.

Racial Equity Impact

The Council considers potential impacts of legislation on racial equity as they develop legislative priorities or consider legislation.

Attachments and Links

- Public Policy Partners' End of Session Report
- [Maryland General Assembly Website](#)
- [Montgomery County Delegation Website](#)

City of Takoma Park
Legislative Advocacy – End of Session Report – 2018

May 14, 2018

Public Policy Partners (PPP) is pleased to present this end of session report for the 2018 Maryland General Assembly Session summarizing the accomplishments of the City of Takoma Park and legislative outcomes important to the City.

We were pleased to have the opportunity to work with the City of Takoma Park on a wide range of policy and budget issues. The City's advocacy in Annapolis resulted in successfully passing legislation of importance to city residents and defeating a number of potentially harmful bills.

Legislative Priorities

This year, PPP tracked over 150 bills in addition to the Operating and Capital budget for the City. Legislative highlights on select bills and issue areas of particular interest to the city are presented in the 2018 Legislative Highlights Report and a complete list of all legislation tracked for the City is available in the final bill chart.

Prior to the legislative session, Takoma Park identified a list of legislative priorities and goals for the 2018 session. This list included legislation of importance to the City's economic development, transportation infrastructure, school construction funding, and protecting the City's municipal autonomy as well as legislation protecting the City's most vulnerable residents. Legislation from the City's priority list and significant bills identified during session include:

- **Economic Development Assistance:** Following the 2017 legislative session and the passage of HB1345, which created the National Capital Strategic Economic Development Fund, the City met with Delegate Alonzo Washington to advocate for funding in the budget for the new Development Fund, and for the New Hampshire Ave. corridor project to receive grant funding from the Development Fund. Late in budget negotiations, **\$1 million in funding** for the Economic Development Fund was added to the budget, which will become grant funding available in FY'19.
- **Highway User Revenue:** After years of decreased funding for highway user revenues to local governments, **HB807/SB516 was passed** to establish a new revenue allocation for HURs and to increase funding to local governments. The new funding formula is expected to increase by \$72.7 million in fiscal 2020, \$73.7 million in fiscal 2021, \$74.9 million in fiscal 2022, and \$76.5 million in fiscal 2023.

- **Advanced Generation 9-1-1 System**: The City’s in-person testimony helped to **pass HB 634/SB 285**, which creates a commission to study new communication technology and the implementation of Next Generation 9-1-1. The City’s proximity to Washington, D.C., and Prince George’s County, along with the presence of Montgomery County 9-1-1 services creates a significant challenge to emergency services in the City. New technology such as Next Generation 9-1-1 will be of critical importance to the City in the future and it is important for the City to participate in State implementation.
- **Small Cell Tower Permitting**: The City strongly opposed HB 1767/SB 1188, which ultimately **failed in committee**. This legislation would have eliminated municipal authority to grant or deny a permit for small cell phone towers.
- **Gun Violence Prevention**: The City passed a resolution supporting several bills introduced to reduce gun violence in Maryland. **All of the bills supported in the resolution passed** – Ban on rapid fire and bump stock devices, Extreme Risk Protection Order, Domestic Violence Firearms Transfers, strengthening Maryland’s conceal carry laws and funding for gun violence prevention programs.
- **Bond Bill Funding for the Library**: After receiving \$150,000 in bond bill funding from the State in 2017, the City reapplied for an additional \$250,000 in bond bill funds in 2018. Unfortunately, even though the City received commitments from legislators regarding the funding, an erroneous recommendation was made to have the City utilize state grant funding in place of bond bill funding, but due to the library’s unique status, it is not eligible for the grant funding. We are hopeful that the committees will correct this error next session and grant the City either bond bill funds or direct funding in the Capital Budget.

Budget

The 2018 Session was once again a quiet year for budget debates within the General Assembly chambers. There was significant disagreement between the General Assembly and the Governor, mainly focused on locking in casino revenues for K-12 education funding, an issue that will now go to voters in November.

Prior to the start of the 2018 Session, the State Spending Affordability Committee projected a budget shortfall of \$298 million. The legislature was able to address this shortfall while also growing the state budget slightly, but the State continues to face a cash shortfall of approximately \$900 million in FY’2020 and \$1.9 billion by FY’2023 with a structural deficit of over \$800 million in FY’2020 increasing to \$1.8 billion by FY’2023.

Overall, State aid to local governments increased by 3%, with Montgomery County (including municipalities in the county) receiving an increase of 3.8%. This increase includes police and fire aide, as well as highway user revenues. Transportation funding for municipalities comes from several sources: HURs in FY’2019, which are set at 0.4% for municipalities; \$22.5 million in capital transportation funding, which is an increase of \$2.4 million; and \$4.2 in PAYGO grants.

As mentioned previously, the inclusion of \$1 million in funding for the National Capital Strategic Economic Development Fund creates the opportunity for the City to apply for grant funding that would jump start the New Hampshire Ave. redevelopment project. This funding would be significant for the City and the redevelopment of New Hampshire Ave. is critical to long-term economic growth.

Summary

PPP appreciates the opportunity to continue representing the City of Takoma Park. The 2018 session of the Maryland General Assembly provided the City with many opportunities to work with the District 20 Delegation, legislators from outside of Montgomery County, as well as the House Appropriations and Senate Budget and Taxation Committees. Through our partnership, the City formally took a position either in support or opposition to approximately 25 bills, of which the City's position often prevailed. We look forward to continuing our work together during the interim and in preparation for the 2018 Legislative Session.

Sincerely,

Alice Wilkerson
Government Relations Associate
Public Policy Partners