



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – September 25, 2019 Agenda Item 6

Work Session

Continued Discussion - Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan

Recommended Council Action

Provide feedback to staff on revised draft Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Context with Key Issues

This is a continuation of a series of work session discussions held by the Council, the last of which was on June 12, 2019. The primary focus of this discussion is to review the goals, objectives and strategies and continue discussions of the contents of the draft Plan.

The City Council authorized the development of a strategic plan for the purpose of ensuring that a “range of safe, quality, and stable housing options are available for residents of varying incomes” and “to attract new businesses to the community and prepare for economic development within the City and the region.” Utilizing the expertise of a strategic planning consultant firm and with the valuable input from the City Council and community, the Department of Housing and Community Development developed a draft Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan. The recommendations identified in the draft Strategic Plan include efforts to increase economic development capacity, encourage business retention and expansion, and stimulate the construction of new moderate and higher density infill development and mixed-use residential development. Additionally, the Plan supports policies that further goals and objectives for workforce development, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship cultivation. By encouraging the preservation and development of a diverse range of quality housing that is affordable across all income levels, the City will work toward achieving its objective of creating a higher quality of life for current and future residents.

The latest document reflects input provided by the Council to date.

Council Priorities

Housing

A Livable Community for All: Ensure that a range of safe, high quality, affordable and stable housing options and opportunities are available to all residents in neighborhoods throughout the community.

Economic Development

Community Development for an Improved & Equitable Quality of Life: Ensure that all may benefit from economic well-being, a high quality of life and a stable tax base by creating and retaining jobs; by promoting workforce development and entrepreneurship; by retaining and attracting businesses; and by encouraging the development and redevelopment of commercial, mixed-use and residential properties.

Environmental Considerations

We believe the recommendations included in the draft Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan, once finalized and adopted by the Council, will present the City with opportunities to improve the environment, create energy savings, and improve water quality. We are also cognizant of the interest and need to minimize transportation distances to goods and services and to reduce greenhouse gas emission and will analyze how the strategic plan can encourage the use of cleaner modes of transportation including public transit, biking, and walking.

Fiscal Considerations

Many of the costs associated with the implementation of the strategic plan were considered during the FY20 budget process. We anticipate that the Department will be able to supplement existing appropriations through applications to county, state, and federal grants and other relevant funding. These efforts are needed for the City to build a strong economic base, preserve existing housing, create housing affordability for prospective residents, and strengthen existing policies.

Racial Equity Considerations

The Department of Housing and Community Development is committed to the development and implementation of the Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan and has identified and acknowledged the need to address ongoing racial inequities. Further, there is a commitment to embed matters of racial equity in the plan's structure, staff analysis, and decision-making.

The City of Takoma Park is a culturally diverse community and because of our commitment to racial equity, we are working strategically and collaboratively to build pathways that will increase participation and leadership from diverse constituencies in our City, amplify the voices of diverse participants, and build a racial equity lens into our strategic planning and implementation work under the strategic plan. Additionally, we recognize the need for adaptation as we encounter different perspectives and additional information.

We believe the recommendations included in the draft Strategic Plan, once finalized and adopted by the Council, will identify opportunities that will positively impact all residents and especially people of color, including immigrants and refugees.

Attachments and Links

- Revised Goals, Objectives and Strategies (to be posted when available)
- [Project Page: Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan](#)
- [Draft Strategic Plan \(October 15, 2017\)](#)