

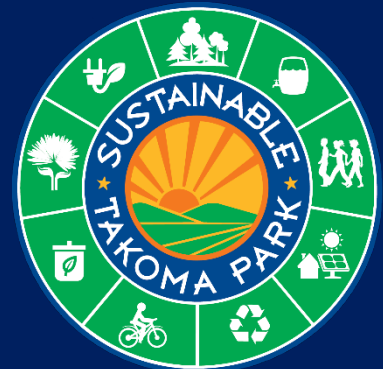
**Executive Summary**  
**2020 Climate Emergency Response Act**  
*From Nuclear Free to Fossil Fuel Free*

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# From Nuclear Free to Fossil Fuel Free

## Executive Summary

Takoma Park completed its first greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction plan in 2000, and has completed three subsequent plans. The last GHG reduction plan, the 2014 Sustainable Energy Action Plan, contained 17 key strategies to reduce emissions city-wide and all feasible strategies were implemented. Voluntary incentive programs were heavily pursued, helping the City to win several awards including a MWCOG award, Sustainable Maryland Certified award, and a Georgetown University Energy Prize award.

The 2019 Climate Emergency Declaration notably called for the Sustainability Manager to identify the most aggressive local actions its authorities and resources will allow and to identify what steps the City can take to *“move rapidly toward net zero greenhouse gas emissions”*. The declaration also specifically noted a focus on dramatically improving efficiency of all our buildings (single family, multifamily, commercial and institutional); and an examination of leading policies around the country to build upon and propose nation-leading policies for our community. This proposal directly addresses and fulfills the mandates of the 2019 Climate Emergency Declaration.

Staff worked with the Cadmus Group to evaluate opportunities for the next generation of climate action. Initially a comprehensive sustainability and climate action plan was sought, however given budgetary constraints and the timeline of Montgomery County’s planning process for their climate plan, the Cadmus Group recommended the City wait until the County plan is complete. This was to allow the City to complete its plan in full context of regional efforts and resources.

The Cadmus Group’s report contained a list of 18 strategies to reduce GHG city-wide. Of the 18 strategies, 9 were prioritized and evaluated. Buildings were a heavy focus because the city has more legal authority and opportunity to make new policies affecting buildings, which also have a large impact on emissions. Addressing transportation, which has a similarly large impact on emissions, requires separate processes that are less within the control of the City. The strategies were shared via a

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stakeholder engagement process, including a workshop, webinar, online survey, neighborhood meetings, tabling, and more. One of the largest takeaways from the stakeholder engagement that was conducted across the community was a desire to see more aggressive actions included in the strategy list. This community input has helped shape the 2020 Climate Emergency Response Resolution (CERR).

***“Climate change is already inflicting and will continue to inflict substantial damages to our physical, social and economic well-being”***

### **Comprehensive Planning**

The Climate Emergency Response Resolution (CERR) is a necessary step that cannot wait, but it is not the only step needed for Takoma Park to be net-zero. The city will need to develop implementation steps for the Resiliency and Adaptation Memo prepared by the Cadmus Group. Additional plans and coordination will be needed at the city, county, state, and regional levels. It may be necessary for Takoma Park to purchase offsets to cover what emissions it cannot reduce by 2035.

Fifteen residents of Takoma Park and the Sustainability Manager serve on the planning workgroups for the Montgomery County climate planning process. They represent the city’s interests, and are actively advocating for programs and policies at the county level that will benefit Takoma Park and help the city reach its goals faster. Some of the major areas that the county is best suited to act on include green building incentives and codes; and green power procurement and potential aggregation.

Other key areas that should be addressed through separate processes in Takoma Park include transportation and tree canopy. Transportation is such a large issue that it warrants a separate community engagement process with collaboration with the Takoma Park Complete Streets Committee, Parking Task Force, and at the regional level with Montgomery County, WMATA, and the MWCOG Transportation Planning Board. It is recommended a transportation planning process kick off in June 2020.

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The tree canopy is being addressed through the current review of the Tree Ordinance with participation by the Tree Commission, the Committee on the Environment and interested residents and is expected to include development of an implementation plan for additional tree planting and establishment of a citywide tree canopy goal.

### **Fiscal Impact**

As ordinances and implementation plans are developed and considered, supplemental analysis focusing on specific fiscal impacts will be shared with the City Council and public. There are many aspects of the proposal to consider, including the costs of doing nothing and the anticipated impacts of climate change on Takoma Park. Some of the impacts that need to be considered include the costs and savings for improving energy efficiency; the positive and negative impacts eliminating fossil fuels; and the co-benefits and drawbacks of minimum energy efficiency standards on economic development. The City also must identify existing and new financial assistance resources to help residents and business owners.

### **Community Impact**

The Climate Emergency Response Resolution is the beginning point for a robust, equitable and thoughtfully implemented community collaboration process. Stakeholder engagement, including renters and homeowners, businesses, and commercial property owners, will be central to the development of specific ordinances and implementation details. Specific attention will need to be paid to potential economic development impacts, racial equity impacts, and other impacts as identified by the community collaboration process.