



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – July 22, 2020 Agenda Item 9

Voting Session

Discussion of Legislative Requests to Submit to the Maryland Municipal League

Recommended Council Action

Consider and vote on requests to submit to the Maryland Municipal League.

Context with Key Issues

Member municipalities in the Maryland Municipal League (MML) may submit up to three Legislative Action Requests (LARs) each year for consideration as MML initiatives before the Maryland General Assembly. The deadline to submit for the 2021 Legislative Session is July 24.

The MML LAR process is as follows:

- Member municipalities submit up to three LAR forms on issues they would like to have addressed by legislation in the upcoming General Assembly Session;
- MML staff prepares background on each LAR for the Legislative Committee to consider;
- The Legislative Committee meets to discuss the requests and to consider the MML priority issues not resolved during the previous session;
- The MML membership votes on the recommended Legislative Committee priorities at the Fall Conference in October.

A legislative request that is the same or substantially similar to a request that has been previously considered and rejected by the Legislative Committee twice within a four-year period coinciding with the current General Assembly term shall be excluded from consideration by the Committee.

The Legislative Committee shall limit recommended legislative proposals to the membership for consideration at the annual fall conference to no more than four non-prioritized issues and the membership is limited to adopting no more than four legislative priorities at the fall conference. A list of Takoma Park's requests to MML for the 2015-2019 sessions of the General Assembly is attached along with the League's legislative priorities for those same years.

The City Council discussed potential priorities at its work session on July 15 and members of Council prepared a resolution.

Council Priority

Fiscally Sustainable Government; Environmentally Sustainable Community; Community Development for an Improved and Equitable Quality of Life

Environmental Considerations

To be evaluated as Council selects priorities to submit to MML.

Fiscal Considerations

Fiscal impact will depend upon the priorities selected and the success of those priorities in the legislative session.

Racial Equity Considerations

To be evaluated as Council selects priorities to submit to MML.

Attachments and Links

- Draft Resolution

Introduced by:

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION 2020-

**Resolution Authorizing Transmittal of Legislative Action Requests
To the Maryland Municipal League for Consideration**

WHEREAS, the Takoma Park City Council is charged with setting policy and pursuing legislative changes in the best interests of the Takoma Park community; and

WHEREAS, the City of Takoma Park is an active member of the Maryland Municipal League (MML); and

WHEREAS, MML pursues legislative changes to benefit Maryland municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the Council is concerned that COVID-19 has caused severe economic disruption for its residents. Investment in small businesses and job training programs is desperately needed; and

WHEREAS, following the murders of Black men and women like the tragedies of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and countless others, the nation is coming to grips with what policing is like for the Black community. The Council believes it is imperative that police reform is implemented now in an explicit and determined manner; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has identified several requests to forward to MML for its consideration as legislative priorities for the League.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the City of Takoma Park authorizes the City Manager to transmit to the MML the following Legislative Action Requests:

1. The Council urges the MML to initiate or support legislation that bolsters the economy within Maryland municipalities by:
 - **Supporting small businesses through tax incentives, grants, and technical assistance.** Businesses in our communities are negatively impacted by COVID-19 closures. Many of our small businesses were unable to qualify or apply for aid before limited resources at the federal and county levels ran out. Legislation that supports these businesses during these trying times are critical to ensuring the economic vitality of communities across the state.
 - **Increasing workforce development opportunities (in collaboration with county government).** With a growing number of residents currently unemployed, it is important to support workforce development opportunities including but not limited to paid on-the-job training and apprenticeship programs, employment search assistance and expedited licensure pathways

for residents with degrees from outside the U.S., funding for certificate programs that provide career advancement, funding assistance for job-training transportation and distance-learning equipment, and programs to assist veterans, returning citizens, and others transitioning to new employment needs; and

2. The Council urges the MML to initiate or support legislation on police reform that would require:

- **Repeal of the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights (LEOBR).** Even for police officers with a proven track record of abusing and killing Black and Brown people, our state still gives law enforcement special rights against punishment for wrongdoing under the LEOBR – the most extreme such law in the country. Since LEOBR was enacted, it has allowed police abuse to go unpunished. Now is the time for accountability, and accountability requires pending LEOBR.
- **Transparent investigations into police misconduct.** The Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA) currently blocks access to information about how police misconduct investigations are handled, wrongfully categorizing this information as confidential personnel files. This secrecy allows police departments to hide the details of police misconduct. Survivors of police misconduct, their families, and communities should have the right to know if their cases – all of their cases, without exception – are investigated properly or if they were even investigated at all.
- **Limiting the use of force by law enforcement.** Maryland is one of a few states that do not have a statutory limit on police officers' use of force. For decades, officers have used violent and often deadly force against Black and Brown people, which is why legislators need to pass a law to address the use of force by law enforcement in Maryland.
- **Expanding or establishing mobile mental health crisis units.** This would potentially reduce the number of mental health service calls police officers are currently required to address.

Adopted this _____ day of July, 2020

Attest:

Jessie Carpenter, CMC
City Clerk