

# 2021-2022 Council Priorities – Staff Recommendations



## City Council Priorities - Staff Recommendations

February 10, 2021

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These City Council Priorities are to set the vision for the upcoming budgets and work plans for the next two years.

Priorities provide guidance when unplanned opportunities arise or events occur, and help bolster grant and legislative requests.

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## **2021-2022 Council Priorities – Staff Recommendations**

**THANK YOU!**

**Staff greatly appreciates the time and hard work the Council is devoting to this effort.**

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## 2021-2022 Council Priorities – Staff Recommendations

The City's Senior Leadership Team has been reviewing the draft City Council Priorities that are now being discussed.

Staff recommendations are being shared for Council consideration as the Priorities are finalized.

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## 2021-2022 Council Priorities – Staff Recommendations

There were a number of key themes from staff:

- Administrative needs related to COVID-19 response and technology
- Desire for flexibility in project implementation
- Desire for prioritization, among these priorities, particularly with a new City Manager coming on board

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With a new City Manager coming on board, there may be a period of time when the position is vacant after July 1. There will be time required for the new City Manager to familiarize themselves with City staff and processes, working with the Council and City partners, and the community.

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## 2021-2022 Council Priorities – Staff Recommendations

The impacts of the pandemic on City operations will continue for several years:

- Financial impacts
- Residents' service needs
- Staff workload and mental health

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Staff has gone through the Council's draft document and made suggestions or asked questions that the Council may wish to consider in reviewing the draft Priorities document.

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## 2021-2022 Council Priorities – Staff Recommendations

In our review, we recommend some additions.

- COVID-19 Goal re City operations
- Additions to the Fiscal Sustainability; Engaged, Responsive, Service-Oriented Gov't; and Community Development Goals

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## 2021-2022 Council Priorities – Staff Recommendations

### *Mitigate the Impact of COVID-19 on the Community and City Operations – new Goal*

**Goal:** Progress through gradual phases of reopening in a safe, deliberate return to normal operations. Prepare a reopening plan that supports long-term financial resiliency and employee well-being, and incorporates lessons learned from the health crisis response

**Strategies:**

- Budget conservatively for COVID-19 potential impact on City revenues in out years
- Encourage permanent changes such as hybrid Zoom and in-person meetings that are practical beyond the crisis period

**Desired Outcome:**

- Continuity of operations through all crisis phases, improved operations in compliance with safety protocols, and workforce resiliency

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*Livable Community for All* – recommend more general Strategies under 3<sup>rd</sup> Goal to allow for flexibility in implementation

**Strategies:**

- Utilize resident survey, staff and committee reports, program attendance, racial equity assessment tools, and other evaluative resources to determine where there may be existing gaps in program offerings;
- Enhance community engagement efforts using innovative strategies and technology to reach residents that rarely engage with the City, including residents of color and renters
- Develop programs to close identified gaps, through a mixture of reorganizing departments, adding staff capacity, leveraging new tools, streamlining service delivery, initiating community partnerships, hiring consultants, and relying on cross-jurisdictional cooperation.

**Desired Outcome:** Expanded and/or improved programming or partnerships tailored to residents who need them the most or who currently face barriers to access.

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## 2021-2022 Council Priorities – Staff Recommendations

### *Fiscally Sustainable Government*

- New Strategy under 2<sup>nd</sup> Goal: Promote economic development to increase tax base
- Delete goal re banking policy; while we will continue to pursue sustainable investment, no capacity for major change

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## 2021-2022 Council Priorities – Staff Recommendations

### *Fiscally Sustainable Government – New Goal*

**Goal:** Maintain adequate reserves in the various City reserve funds for long-term fiscal sustainability.

**Strategy:** Similar to having a City policy on the appropriate level of unassigned reserves that should be maintained, establish policies for the appropriate level of reserves in the Equipment Replacement Reserve, Facilities Maintenance Reserve, and other reserves, as well as consider establishing new reserves where needed for new programming and long-term financial planning.

**Desired Outcome:** Fiscal sustainability for key services

## 2021-2022 Council Priorities – Staff Recommendations

### *Engaged, Responsive, Service-Oriented Gov't – New or revised Strategies*

**Goal:** Hire and onboard a new City Manager

**Strategies:**

- Conduct a successful search with community input and the assistance of a consultant.
- Provide direction and allow adequate time to successfully onboard the new City Manager.

**Desired Outcome:** The hiring of an excellent City Manager who can effectively manage the day to day operations of the City government and implement the policy directions of the City Council.

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## 2021-2022 Council Priorities – Staff Recommendations

### *Engaged, Responsive, Service-Oriented Gov't – New or revised Strategies*

**Goal:** Improve City communications with residents and adopt innovative, culturally appropriate initiatives to improve public engagement and collaboration with residents, particularly with residents who may face barriers to participating in municipal government activities and community affairs.

**Strategies:**

- Improve the City's current communications tools including the City website and social media tools to increase public engagement and more easily and effectively share information.

## 2021-2022 Council Priorities – Staff Recommendations

### *Engaged, Responsive, Service-Oriented Gov't – New Goal*

**Goal:** Improve service delivery and reduce administrative burden by updating internal policies, IT infrastructure and software.

**Strategy:** Assess resources required to update the City's systems. Support the purchase of tools to facilitate cross-departmental collaboration.

**Desired Outcome:** Reduction in time spent on manual, inefficient processes to improve service delivery and allow staff to find greater bandwidth to innovate towards and advance Council priorities.

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## 2021-2022 Council Priorities – Staff Recommendations

### *Community Development for an Improved & Equitable Quality of Life – New Strategy*

- In 2021, focus on:
  - Providing support for small businesses especially those impacted by Purple Line construction.
  - Increase workforce development programs and assistance.
  - Attract new business to Takoma Park and facilitate the growth of existing businesses, particularly those that help meet workforce development, local ownership or other goals.

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*Minor wording changes:*

On a separate document, we note some minor clarifying language or have questions. For example, we also added “Vision Zero” to a Strategy under the Climate Change Mitigation goal and we added “partnerships” to several strategies.

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## 2021-2022 Council Priorities – Staff Recommendations

In summary - key themes from staff:

- Administrative needs related to COVID-19 response and technology
- Desire for flexibility in project implementation
- Desire for identification of most important priorities, particularly with a new City Manager coming on board

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## **2021-2022 Council Priorities – Staff Recommendations**

**And again, THANK YOU!**

**Staff greatly appreciates the time and hard work the Council is devoting to this effort.**

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