

Economic Development Updates

Recommendation: Business Attraction

Planned Activities

1. Placemaking Art projects (NEA Grant Apps for photography, sculpture garden)
2. Create Business Resource Guides
3. Facade/signage improvement grants
4. DHCD Grant application for facade improvement

Activity Update

1. Supported the Takoma Langley Archway mural selection and installation process. NEA grants were not pursued due to limited staff capacity.
2. Resource guides were created by a number of organizations. Additional marketing of existing guides began in 2020.
3. Facade/signage improvement grant will begin this year.
4. DHCD grant application for facade/signage improvement was awarded to the City.

Recommendation: Large scale outreach to business community in Takoma Langley Crossroads, New Hampshire Avenue corridor, and Flower Avenue Area Economic Development

Planned Activities

1. Business Walks
2. City-wide Business Workshops (for artists, youth, women, general topics)
3. Create a Database of Takoma Park Businesses to include city permits and processes

Activity Update

1. One Business walk was conducted to distribute COVID-19 public safety signage
2. Workshops were few in FY20. Most were online information sessions for COVID-19 recovery. A technical assistance pilot program was implemented in the first quarter of FY21. Additional workshops for targeted entrepreneurs will be piloted in FY21.
3. The Bludot database was implemented in 3rd quarter of FY20. It includes capability for interdepartmental use. Additional access for departments will be available in FY21.

Recommendation: Suspension of Inventory Tax City - Council Council Resolution Completed March 2019

Recommendation: Create Spaces to Start

Planned Activities

1. Support Vendor Markets through CDA & OTBA funding and collaboration
2. Promote Farmers' Markets via Bus Shelters
3. Support Pop-Up Galleries through CDA & OTBA

Activity Update

1. CDA Holiday Market held at the Recreation Center. Both CDA and OTBA funding to support the ongoing Takoma Street Festival, Crossroads Spring Fling, and other events that highlight entrepreneurs and small and microbusinesses.
2. Farmers' Markets the Takoma Park and Crossroads Farmer's Markets were promoted in Summer through Fall bus shelter ads created by the City Communication Manager.
3. Few pop-up galleries have been created in FY20 due to the public health emergency. Few are anticipated this year.

Recommendation: Expand knowledge of financing options

Planned Activity

1. Business training & coaching

Activity Update

1. Business training began in FY19 and continued in the first half of FY20 through local partnerships. Workshops were few in FY20. Most were online information sessions for COVID-19 recovery. A technical assistance pilot program was implemented in the first quarter of FY21. Additional workshops for targeted entrepreneurs will be piloted in FY21.

Recommendation: Business Familiarization

Planned Activities

1. Business Walks
2. Property Owners Breakfast
3. Business Brunch with the City
4. Create a Database of Takoma Park Businesses (StiR grant dependant) - Address specific database for all city permits and processes

Activity Update

1. One Business walk was conducted to distribute COVID-19 public safety signage
2. The Property Owners Breakfast is postponed due to the public health emergency. Alternative outreach is needed.
3. The Business Brunch is postponed due to the public health emergency. Alternative outreach is needed.
4. The Bludot database was implemented in 3rd quarter of FY20. It includes capability for interdepartmental use. Additional access for departments will be available in FY21.

Recommendation: Increase access to workforce training

Planned Activities

1. Partnership Development through Success Fair Pilot
2. Virtual Success Fair Follow Up

Activity Update

1. Partnership development has continued with WorkSource Montgomery and the Ethiopian Community Center. Collaboration with the Housing Division resulted in a workforce development inclusion with the Community "Quality of Life" Grant program.

The newest workforce partnership through the Community Grants program began with Upwardly Global in FY21 to assist underemployed immigrant residents. Additional partnership development for training and certification programs is ongoing.

2. The Virtual Success Fair was postponed due to limited staff capacity.

Housing Division Updates

Recommendation: Expand the scope of the Emergency Assistance Program

Planned Activities

1. Evaluate the unmet needs of city residents that support housing stabilization
2. Identify key stakeholders and coalition partners and their respective programs and services

Activity Update

1. Increased outreach to residents to determine additional needs (in-person and virtual outreach)
2. Developed stronger working relationships with Neighborhood Services, Long Branch Partners, Tess Center, DHCA, Interfaith Works, Crisis Center, Cornerstone (mental health services), Montgomery County Food Council, Emergency Assistance Coalition, Hoarding Working Group, HOC, Health and Human Services.
3. Expanded financial support for individuals and families in need.

Recommendation: Outreach, education, workshops for landlords, tenants, and real estate professionals

Planned Activity

Increase outreach through educational and information materials to key housing stakeholders

Activity Update

1. The Housing Division hosted over 20 presentations both in-person and virtually over the past year to landlord, tenants, and real estate professionals.
2. The Housing Division has also increased communication with licensed property owners through email concerning housing related resources, events, and transactional matters.

Recommendation: Modify the Home Stretch Down Payment Assistance Program

Planned Activities

1. Review existing program model and eligibility criteria to increase utilization and long-term residency.
2. Work with industry professionals gain a better understanding of programs across the state and how to support long-term affordability.

Activity Update

1. Meetings with lenders and title companies to understand industry standards for issues associated with debt to income ratios.

2. Strengthen provisions in the second note and deed to support compliance and protection for the city's interest in the property.
3. Supported the refinancing of existing mortgages within the five-year grant life cycle.

Recommendation: Provide support for homeowner associations

Planned Activities

1. Establish relationships with homeowner associations and Montgomery County's Office on Common Ownership Communities.
2. Identify issues common to the City's homeowner associations including, stability in HOA fees, management, the need for reserves to address major capital needs, and stagnant appreciation.

Activity Update

1. Outreach to management companies and board of directors
2. Working in collaboration with the Office on Common Ownership Communities
3. Working with management companies to address the need for more engaged and competent management of smaller communities.

Recommendation: Expand Accessory Dwelling Units to support housing options

Planned Activities

1. Conduct outreach to community regarding Accessory Apartments and related county legislation
2. Examine and weigh-in on final county legislation concerning Accessory Apartments and develop outreach opportunities to explain the new regulations to residents.

Activity Update

1. Developed a strong working relationship with newly developed ADU county inspection staff to ensure coordination with the city's licensing program.
2. Established a grant program to support homeowners struggling financially to complete ADUs.
3. Partnering with the County, Habitat for Humanity, and Housing Initiative Partnership (HIP) on a new home sharing program.

Joint Project Recommendations

Takoma Park Recreation Center

Planned Activities

1. Secure land transfer from Montgomery County
2. Planning Zoning/conditional use allowances
3. Earmark funding for Public Engagement Process
4. Public Engagement Process for redevelopment
5. Apply for architect and design grant funds from DHCD
6. Establish development relationships for Opportunity Zone projects
7. Draft RFP for redevelopment partner
8. Guide redevelopment process

Activity Update

1. Land transfer secured
2. Funds were earmarked for public engagement process
3. The public engagement process began in the last quarter of FY20. The process will conclude in March 2021.
4. Outreach and consultation will begin for upcoming grant applications in FY21
5. Relationship development is ongoing. The target relationships extend beyond the Opportunity Zone scope.
6. RFP drafting is likely to begin in FY22.
7. Process and guidance is ongoing

Washington Adventist Hospital Site

Planned Activities

1. Develop partnership consensus for redevelopment priorities
2. Reach out to potential owners to share redevelopment priorities
3. Zoning/conditional use allowances
4. Guide redevelopment process

Activity Update

1. Priorities were agreed to by the City Council and shared with key stakeholders at Washington Adventist University, Montgomery County Executive Office, and Montgomery County Public Schools.
2. Multiple meetings were held to further discuss redevelopment priorities and goals for potential owners.
3. The City successfully advocated to have a Minor Master Plan conducted by Montgomery County Office of Planning. The process began in FY21 and will continue in FY22.
4. Development guidance is ongoing.

Identify opportunities to expand housing production that encourages housing for varying incomes including the "missing middle"

Planned Activity

1. Work to identify property and partners that support the development of housing affordability.

Activity Update

1. Active property and partner identification began in FY20, resulting in a secured property and development partner agreeing to produce two (2) new affordable home ownership opportunities in the City. The renovation/redevelopment of the property located in Ward 2 will begin in FY21.