



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – April 7, 2021 Agenda Item 2

Presentation

Final report on the Recreation Center Redevelopment Community Engagement

Recommended Council Action

None – View Presentation

Context with Key Issues

The Council approved a budget and resulting contract with consulting firm, Brick & Story, to begin focused community engagement around the redevelopment process for the Takoma Park Recreation Center. A priority goal of the process was to engage residents of color, Ward 6 residents, those living closest to the recreation center campus, and those that rarely connect to the City government. The contract term began April 2020 and was intended to be a 6-month scope of service. Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency declared after Council approval of the contract and resulting social distance rules and closed facilities and services, traditional means of community engagement were deemed unsafe for residents.

The original contract was extended by an additional 6 months to allow for time to adjust the original engagement plan and implement new safer, socially distant ways for residents to be informed about the redevelopment process and invited to participate in reimagining the recreation center campus. Brick & Story will provide Council with a final update on the recreation center redevelopment community engagement process.

The presentation will be a final discussion of the following topics:

- Community engagement activities provided throughout the contract term.
- Challenges and lessons learned in engaging hard to reach residents during a critical time.
- Key findings of the Final Report.
- Use of the report findings in the next steps of the redevelopment process.

Council Priority

“A Livable Community for All” with the goal of ensuring that a range of safe, quality, and stable housing options and opportunities are available to all residents in neighborhoods throughout the community.

Environmental Considerations

Residents were engaged around issues of sustainability and environmental stewardship as part of the process. The resulting report will include resident input around environmental considerations to help guide the redevelopment process.

Fiscal Considerations

The council approved a budget of \$75,000 for the execution of the community engagement contract. \$69,980 is the total contract amount for Brick & Story. The remaining amount of \$5,020 is allocated for additional printing, translation, incentives, and awards for residents.

Residents were engaged around issues of economic development that included objectives of the Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan. The end goal of redevelopment of the recreation center will also provide an opportunity to address critical space needs for residents and businesses. The initial cost of redevelopment will depend on the development partner and resulting project plan. This redevelopment effort is a critical piece in the overall redevelopment of New Hampshire Ave and is needed to strengthen the economic base of Takoma Park, which will provide funds for City services needed for an improved and equitable quality of life in the community.

Racial Equity Considerations

A priority goal of the process was to engage residents of color and actively pursue their engagement to provide a final report that reflects the diversity of the City. The community engagement process included access in four languages and targeted outreach to multifamily buildings.

Additional Links

[Engage Takoma Park website](#)

[Engage Takoma Park Facebook page](#)

[Housing & Economic Development Strategic Plan](#)