

#TogetherTKPK



Reimagining Public Safety Task Force (PSTF) Recommendations

Council Review Approach & Schedule

by: Mayor Stewart, Councilmembers Searcy & Seamans

February 23, 2022



Goals

- **Refresh the Council on the Public Safety Task Force recommendations**
- **Propose a thematic approach to identifying priority actions needed to address stated recommendations**
- **Discuss actions taken to date and whether additional actions are needed**
- **Discuss next steps including future worksessions needed**



History

- **Reimagining Public Safety Task Force is to develop recommendations that make Takoma Park a safer, more livable community for all residents, with an emphasis on addressing racial inequalities that exist in government and services evolving around public safety.**
- **The final report consisted of 50 recommendations.**
- **The Council received the report on July 13, 2021.**
- **City Staff Presentation on November 3rd, 2021.**



Proposed Themes to Address PSTF Recommendations

Theme	Definition: Recommendations which....
Community Engagement & Education	Focus on new ways of engaging the community including data transparency and/or educating the community about public safety issues.
New and Expanded Programs	Create new community programs
Council External Advocacy	Require the Council to advocate at state, county, and local levels.
Policing Policy	Modify or create new policing policies. Sub-themes include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mental Health ● Inter-Jurisdictional ● Technology ● Traffic Stops, Searches, and Fines ● Other Policies (i.e. canines, asset forfeiture)
City Organizational Structure & Training	Request additional staffing, staff training, budget modifications, or other organizational structure changes. Sub-themes include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Budget ● Organizational Structure ● Staffing (new positions, training, and other staff resources)



Community Engagement & Education

Recommendations

1. Establish a permanent, civilian-staffed volunteer Takoma Park Public Safety Task Force
9. Improve the structure and content of City and Police department websites.
10. Strengthen the existing methods of communication (email, alert, social media, neighborhood platforms, etc.) and explore new methods to reach residents with limited Internet access (e.g., non-digital), with other information access difficulties (e.g., language barrier).
11. Publicize via City website and social media any changes in funding for police in Takoma Park's annual budget at least 30 days before the budget is voted on by the County Council.
12. Ensure that the City publishes on their website all code violations in apartments in Takoma Park over the last calendar year
13. In recognition that the extensive public safety and policing data provided to the Task Force was of service to our work, and to promote ongoing transparency, we recommend that data provided be made public.
14. The City should promote community engagement and outreach to increase awareness (and the use) of a new number (non-911) or process.
19. Provide clear communication of policing priorities.



Community Engagement & Education

Recommendation	Status/Proposed Actions	Next Steps
1. Establish a permanent, civilian-staffed volunteer Takoma Park Public Safety Task Force	In progress. Council discussion about boards and committees put a hold on public safety related groups such as the noise control board.	Council Work Session
13. In recognition that the extensive public safety and policing data provided to the Task Force was of service to our work, and to promote ongoing transparency, we recommend that data provided be made public.	In progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Arrest and Traffic stop data is available online and is interactive and is broken down by race, gender, age, residency, initiation, type -specific, and offense. Policing Data: Webpage and Release https://takomaparkmd.gov/government/police/policing-data-release/ (Staff presentation Nov 3rd 2021) 	Receive quarterly reports from staff on progress and new updates.
9. Improve the structure and content of City and Police department websites. 10. Strengthen the existing methods of communication (email, alert, social media, neighborhood platforms, etc.) and explore new methods to reach residents with limited Internet access (e.g., non-digital), with other information access difficulties (e.g., language barrier).	In progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff mentioned that we are undertaking a rebranding strategy to address functionality issues associated with City websites and communication methods. (Staff presentation Nov 3rd) 	Council presentation on rebranding strategy plan including timelines for website development, proposed approaches to communicate with people with information access issues including internet access and language barriers.
11. Publicize via City website and social media any changes in funding for police in Takoma Park's annual budget at least 30 days before the budget is voted on by the County Council.	In progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City is evaluating the possible purchase of budget publishing tools that will allow residents to explore budget data in more detail year-round. (Staff presentation Nov 3rd) 	Staff presentation on budget publishing tool and the feasibility of using such tool for the 2023 budget season.
12. Ensure that the City publishes on their website all code violations in apartments in Takoma Park over the last calendar year	In progress. Information available on the County website. Staff did not recommend modifying the City website. (Staff presentation Nov 3 rd)	Presentation from staff on feasibility of adding County data to the City website. If not feasible then Council will advocate the County for changes to their website.



Community Engagement & Education

Recommendation	Status/Proposed Actions	Next Steps
<p>14. The City should promote community engagement and outreach to increase awareness (and the use) of a new number (non-911) or process.</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City can increase its 911 and non-emergency line. • Staff and council can work with D20 delegation and County regarding state implementation of 988 or other mental health crisis hotlines. 	<p>Work with staff on implementing.</p>
<p>19. Provide clear communication of policing priorities.</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update 2017 Council resolution. 	<p>Form Council subcommittee to update the resolution.</p>



New and Expanded Programs

Recommendations

38. Invest in an increased number of scholarships for after school and weekend programs for children in Takoma Park.

39. Invest in additional scholarships for job training programs for Takoma residents who are un- or underemployed or who are reentering the community after release from incarceration.

40. Create a Takoma Park mentorship program.

44. Establish funding for Know Your Rights/Street Law training for all students enrolled in any school in Takoma Park

46. Create grants for Takoma Park teachers to encourage attendance of teacher-specific training

48. Offer courses that allow Takoma Park residents and staff to: learn about the breadth of identities in Takoma Park, enhance cultural competency and anti-racism practices, explore the cultural diversity of Takoma Park through fostering conversations and team building scenarios, and provide communities with divergent backgrounds a vehicle to explore their commonalities and shared humanity.



New and Expanded Programs

Recommendation	Status/Proposed Action	Next Steps
<p>38. Invest in an increased number of scholarships for after school and weekend programs for children in Takoma Park.</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Recreation Department currently has a scholarship program that affords. We currently grant all scholarship requested by disadvantaged and underserved populations. (staff Nov 3rd presentation) Proposal to increase number of scholarships using ARPA funds. 	<p>Discuss as part of ARPA discussions.</p>
<p>39. Invest in additional scholarships for job training programs for Takoma residents who are un- or underemployed or who are reentering the community after release from incarceration.</p> <p>40. Create a Takoma Park mentorship program.</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Recreation Department currently partners with groups for youth and teen mentoring. New RFP going out soon. The Department also partners with local businesses as part of the City's Summer Youth Employment program which pairs teens with summer job and skill building opportunities. This program was cancelled in 2021 due to COVID but will resume in 2022. Full-time Youth Outreach position that focuses on connecting with teens and young adults ages 17-24 with developmental and skill-building opportunities. 	<p>Discuss as part of ARPA discussions on workforce development proposal.</p> <p>Request staff briefing on specific efforts during budget process.</p>



New and Expanded Programs

Recommendation	Status/Proposed Action	Next Steps
<p>44. Establish funding for Know Your Rights/Street Law training for all students enrolled in any school in Takoma Park</p>	<p>NEED TO DO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal - Work with Youth Outreach staff to assess programs currently in local schools and investigate working with non-profits who offer this training. 	<p>Update from City manager and future presentation on the feasibility of this work</p>
<p>46. Create grants for Takoma Park teachers to encourage attendance of teacher-specific training</p>	<p>NEED TO DO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal - Meet with local schools leaders to assess the need for this effort and whether the County has similar programs in place. 	<p>Update from City manager and future presentation on the feasibility of this work</p>
<p>48. Offer courses that allow Takoma Park residents and staff to: learn about the breadth of identities in Takoma Park, enhance cultural competency and anti-racism practices, explore the cultural diversity of Takoma Park through fostering conversations and team building scenarios, and provide communities with divergent backgrounds a vehicle to explore their commonalities and shared humanity.</p>	<p>In progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on the trainings that were offered through What's My Bias and GARE to offer additional programming might include add to Community Grant program and release RFP for group to provide programming in the community. 	<p>Update from City manager and future presentation on the feasibility of this work</p>



Council External Advocacy

Recommendations

43. The Takoma Park City Council should pass a resolution reinforcing that Takoma Park continues to support not having Montgomery County School Police/Resource Officers (SROs) in public schools located in Takoma Park.

45. Advocate to Montgomery County that school administrators and teachers receive training/increased training regarding the unequal distribution of discipline and lack of praise regarding students of color.

47. Takoma Park shall request disaggregated data on public schools from MCPS (discipline, tardies given, suspensions), and use that to determine if community engagement suggestions are working or need to be adjusted.



Council External Advocacy

Recommendation	Status/Proposed Action	Next Steps
<p>43. The Takoma Park City Council should pass a resolution reinforcing that Takoma Park continues to support not having Montgomery County School Police/Resource Officers (SROs) in public schools located in Takoma Park.</p>	<p>NEED TO DO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal -Create a subgroup of the Council to research current status of program in MCPS and discussions and report back to Council on recommendation for action. 	<p>Council work session on findings from the council sub-group.</p>
<p>45. Advocate to Montgomery County that school administrators and teachers receive training/increased training regarding the unequal distribution of discipline and lack of praise regarding students of color.</p>	<p>NEED TO DO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal - Create a subgroup of the Council to research current status of programs in MCPS, particularly the restorative justice work, and discussions and report back to Council on recommendation for action. 	<p>Council work session on findings from the council sub-group.</p>
<p>47. Takoma Park shall request disaggregated data on public schools from MCPS (discipline, tardies given, suspensions), and use that to determine if community engagement suggestions are working or need to be adjusted.</p>	<p>NEED TO DO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While we can request MCPS data, this recommendation is based on whether and how recommendations related to MCPS are implemented 	<p>Update from the City manager on the feasibility of this work as it relates to other recommendations under this theme.</p>



Policing Policies

Recommendations

Mental Health

3. Establish a 24-hour line and an online system where residents can request a non-armed police response
4. Train 911 dispatchers and establish protocols to refer mental health emergencies and other non-police calls to non-police resources

Inter-Jurisdictional

28. Continue efforts to create and/or strengthen mutual agreement/MOU
29. Review and update cross-jurisdictional coordination protocols for incidents and encourage joint training

Technology

26. Update the police department's body-worn camera (BWC) policy to ensure accountability and transparency.
30. The Task Force was unified in their agreement that emergent and rapidly changing policing technologies are an important issue deserving of additional study and public input.
31. A majority of Task Force members recommend eliminating all funding for the current use of and the purchase of additional LPR technology.
32. A minority of Task Force members recommend that the City Council request information from TPPD about how LPRs have been employed and the investigative value that they provide



Policing Policies

Recommendation	Status/Proposed Action	Next Steps
Mental Health		
3. Establish a 24-hour line and an online system where residents can request a non-armed police response	In progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal - Staff and council can work with D20 delegation and County regarding state implementation of 988 or other mental health crisis hotlines. 	Council advocate in Annapolis on proposed legislation.
4. Train 911 dispatchers and establish protocols to refer mental health emergencies and other non-police calls to non-police resources	In progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ARPA pilot for mental health counselors. 	Confirm with the Chief that this project would include working with dispatchers to establish protocols (CHECK W/ CHIEF)
Inter-Jurisdictional		
28. Continue efforts to create and/or strengthen mutual agreement/MOU	In progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief has been working to establish MOU with neighboring jurisdictions. 	Update from Chief on what the Council might be able to do to assist with moving this forward.
29. Review and update cross-jurisdictional coordination protocols for incidents and encourage joint training	NEED TO DO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal- Ask the Chief's Advisory Committee to review and update the Council on edits needed. 	Work session from the Chief's Advisory Committee once review is complete.



Policing Policies

Recommendation	Status/Proposed Action	Next Steps
Technology		
<p>26. Update the police department’s body-worn camera (BWC) policy to ensure accountability and transparency.</p>	<p>NEED TO DO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal: The city has a BWC policy (TAKOMA PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT - GENERAL ORDERS). Schedule a work session to discuss updates to BWC policy. 	<p>Update from Chief and work sessions</p>
<p>30. The Task Force was unified in their agreement that emergent and rapidly changing policing technologies are an important issue deserving of additional study and public input.</p>	<p>NEED TO DO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal: Schedule a work session to discuss City policing technology and invite advocacy groups to present on their work in the County, such as Silver Spring Justice Coalition. Mayor has been collecting information and discussing issue with national ACLU. 	<p>Update from Chief and work sessions</p>
<p>31. A majority of Task Force members recommend eliminating all funding for the current use of and the purchase of additional LPR technology.</p> <p>32. A minority of Task Force members recommend that the City Council request information from TPPD about how LPRs have been employed and the investigative value that they provide</p>	<p>NEED TO DO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal: City has LPR general order (policy) (TAKOMA PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT - GENERAL ORDERS) Schedule a work session to discuss City use of LPR technology and updates to the current general order. 	<p>Update from Chief and work sessions</p>



Policing Policies (continued)

Recommendations

Traffic Stops, Searches, and Fines

18. The TPPD shall use their discretion to end police traffic stops for low-level offenses

20. Create a poverty exemption/fine reduction program for recipients of speed camera tickets

21. An officer may not search a vehicle or a residence unless they have appropriate probable cause, or they obtain written, informed consent in a language with which the driver understands

22. The establishment of additional speed camera zones should be the subject of properly noticed public engagement and focused on areas with high rates of traffic accidents



Policing Policies (continued)

Recommendation	Status/Proposed Action	Next Steps
Traffic Stops, Searches, and Fines		
18. The TPPD shall use their discretion to end police traffic stops for low-level offenses	Complete. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy in place and being used as a model and lessons learned by the County. https://r.takomaparkmd.gov/police-data-webpages/index.html 	Continue to review policy and practices to ensure officers are following procedures and examine additional ways to reduce disparities in traffic stops. Incorporate updated information as part of the police Annual Report.
20. Create a poverty exemption/fine reduction program for recipients of speed camera tickets	NEED TO DO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal - Have a work session to discuss the feasibility of establishing a program that might address this issue. 	Update from from staff on feasibility.
21. An officer may not search a vehicle or a residence unless they have appropriate probable cause, or they obtain written, informed consent in a language with which the driver understands	In progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal - City has policy on searches. Have a work session on whether updates are needed. (Insert link to general order) 	Update from Chief and work sessions
22. The establishment of additional speed camera zones should be the subject of properly noticed public engagement and focused on areas with high rates of traffic accidents	Complete <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City policy is restricted by state law in placing of additional speed cameras. 	Confirm with Chief that the state process for establishing speed cameras include public engagement.



Policing Policies (continued)

Recommendations

Other Policies

23. Support community-oriented policing services, procedures, and partnerships

24. TPPD should continue practicing “guardian policing,” and to reinforce this, all officers should have annual de-escalation refreshers/training

25. Quantify instances where officers attempted to use and successfully used de-escalation techniques and create an award/bonus to incentivize de-escalation and crisis avoidance

33. A majority of the Task Force recommends eliminating all funding for the use of canines

34. A minority of the Task Force supports future canine use for tracking and detection purposes

37. Post reports online documenting investigations into resident complaints filed against police officers

49. The Takoma Park Police Department does not currently participate in the federal 1033 program or other federal programs that transfer military equipment to civilian law enforcement agencies, or otherwise purchase military equipment for use. The Task Force recommends that the Department continue to follow this prohibition

50. The council should review practices related to the use of civil asset forfeiture



Policing Policies (continued)

Recommendation	Status/Staff Input	Next Steps
Other Policies		
23. Support community-oriented policing services, procedures, and partnerships	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City has implemented community policing activities including bike and foot patrols (staff Nov 3rd presentation) 	Report from staff on programs as part of Police annual report.
24. TPPD should continue practicing “guardian policing,” and to reinforce this, all officers should have annual de-escalation refreshers/training	<p>Complete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TPPD is committed to practicing “Guardian policing.” This philosophy is reinforced by police department policy/culture and through a resolution passed by the city council. The guardian approach is also reinforced through our evaluation and reward system. Officers are rewarded for community engagement and problem solving. A demphasis was made on quantity enforcement actions with a refocus on serious public safety issues has led to a large reduction of the number of arrests and traffic citations issued by TPPD officers, a reduction in arrests for low level offenses and an increase in arrests for serious crimes. Even though arrests and citations have gone down, crime has been reduced in the city. “Guardian Policing” is also reinforced through training. All staff are required to attend annual d-escalation and crisis avoidance training. All sworn staff recently attended Active Bystander for Law Enforcement (ABLE) training. This reinforces the need for officers to intervene when other officers are not performing their duties professionally. In addition, all of our officers attend implicit bias training on an annual basis. 	Council continue to monitor and receive updates as part of the Police Department Annual report. Council will also update 2017 resolution.
25. Quantify instances where officers attempted to use and successfully used de-escalation techniques and create an award/bonus to incentivize de-escalation and crisis avoidance	<p>NEED TO DO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal - Have staff report on the feasibility of implementing this recommendation. 	Report from City Staff on next steps.



Policing Policies (continued)

Recommendation	Status/Proposed Action	Next Steps
Other Policies		
<p>33. A majority of the Task Force recommends eliminating all funding for the use of canines</p> <p>34. A minority of the Task Force supports future canine use for tracking and detection purposes</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City's last active K-9 retired. City Council will need to discuss the use of K-9s in the City including whether MOUs with neighboring jurisdictions are needed. 	<p>Council work session (CHECK W/Chief on whether he is proposing a K-9 unit in dept budget)</p>
<p>37. Post reports online documenting investigations into resident complaints filed against police officers</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Previously state law prohibited the release of police disciplinary records, as they were considered "personnel records" under the Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA). SB178 The Maryland Police Accountability Act (Anton's Law), which took effect October 1, 2021, declared administrative or criminal investigations of misconduct by police officers not to be deemed "personnel records" and thus releasable to the public via the MPIA. The city has started to report on resident complaints and plans to fully comply with SB178. 	<p>Report from staff on compliance with new state law and the posting of resident complaint data.</p>
<p>49. The Takoma Park Police Department does not currently participate in the federal 1033 program or other federal programs that transfer military equipment to civilian law enforcement agencies, or otherwise purchase military equipment for use. The Task Force recommends that the Department continue to follow this prohibition</p>	<p>Complete.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The city has a policy in place [confirm whether this is part of our procurement policies] 	<p>Confirm with staff that this is in our procurement policy.</p>
<p>50. The council should review practices related to the use of civil asset forfeiture</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal - Council can have a work session to discuss these policies. 	<p>Council Work Session</p>



City Organizational Structure & Training

Recommendations

Budget

A majority of the Task Force recommends reevaluating plans for funding for the construction of a new dispatch area and additional spaces for TPPD,

A minority of the Task Force recommends proceeding with the budgeted improvements given the subpar conditions of the current space

A majority of Task Force members recommend the funding of the above scholarships should be accomplished through reallocation of any TPPD funding

A minority of Task Force members believe that determining the specific source of the funding is not of primary importance to for these recommendations, and that they should be invested in from any available resources,

Organizational Structure

Create a Community Assistance Office and Community Safety Team

Establish a Neighborhood Services Division in Takoma Park government that is separate from TPPD

City Resource Coordinator

Create a public safety auditor



City Organizational Structure & Training

Recommendation	Status/Proposed Action	Next Steps
Budget		
<p>A majority of the Task Force recommends reevaluating plans for funding for the construction of a new dispatch area and additional spaces for TPPD</p> <p>A minority of the Task Force recommends proceeding with the budgeted improvements given the subpar conditions of the current space</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City's is currently reviewing the atrium fill in project as part of ARP proposals. 	<p>Council will discuss during ARP funding work sessions.</p>
<p>A majority of Task Force members recommend the funding of the above scholarships should be accomplished through reallocation of any TPPD funding</p> <p>A minority of Task Force members believe that determining the specific source of the funding is not of primary importance to for these recommendations, and that they should be invested in from any available resources,</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Council can discuss this point during the FY 2023 budgeting process. 	<p>Staff should prepare a presentation as part of budget briefings that explain how the City's policing funding is obtained and budgeted.</p>



City Organizational Structure & Training

Recommendation	Status/Staff Input	Next Steps
Organizational Structure		
Create a Community Assistance Office and Community Safety Team	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City is undergoing an organizational assessment. The scope of the project includes aspects of these recommendations. Assessment expected to be complete in March 2022. 	Discuss these recommendations as part of work sessions on the organizational assessment results.
Establish a Neighborhood Services Division in Takoma Park government that is separate from TPPD		
City Resource Coordinator		
Create a public safety auditor		



City Organizational Structure & Training (continued)

Recommendations

Staffing

Adding additional staff to the Takoma Park Housing and Community Development Department

Victim-Witness Coordinator position should be two roles

Provide training and update protocols to ensure sensitivity, cultural competency, and fairness in official statements released by all City agencies

The Takoma Park City Council shall ensure that the police employee assistance program has appropriate funding

The Takoma Park City Council shall also pass a resolution stating that that the City of Takoma Park supports the right of all Takoma Park employees to have access to confidential mental health, stress management, and/or peer support services without fear of retaliation.

Explore the viability of rental housing subsidies and programs to ensure that officers can live in Takoma Park



City Organizational Structure & Training (continued)

Recommendation	Status/Proposed Action	Next Steps
Staffing		
Adding additional staff to the Takoma Park Housing and Community Development Department	In progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City is undergoing an organizational assessment. The scope of the project includes aspects of these recommendations. Assessment expected to be complete in March 2022. 	Review organizational study recommendations.
Victim-Witness Coordinator position should be two roles	In progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City is undergoing an organizational assessment. The scope of the project includes aspects of these recommendations. Assessment expected to be complete in March 2022. 	Review organizational study recommendations.
Provide training and update protocols to ensure sensitivity, cultural competency, and fairness in official statements released by all City agencies	In progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City is undergoing procedural changes to ensure that this is occurring. 	Update from City Manager and Director of Communications
The Takoma Park City Council shall ensure that the police employee assistance program has appropriate funding	In progress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal - City staff should present to Council about the police employee assistance program including current use and whether additional funding is needed. 	Work session update from the Chief, HR Director, and Finance Director.



City Organizational Structure & Training (continued)

Recommendation	Status/Staff Input	Next Steps
Staffing		
<p>The Takoma Park City Council shall also pass a resolution stating that that the City of Takoma Park supports the right of all Takoma Park employees to have access to confidential mental health, stress management, and/or peer support services without fear of retaliation.</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Council can draft resolution to address this issue. 	<p>Schedule work session.</p>
<p>Explore the viability of rental housing subsidies and programs to ensure that officers can live in Takoma Park</p>	<p>In progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is part of the City's Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan. Work session from HCD staff on the current state of implementing the plan. 	<p>Update from staff on next steps to put in place.</p>



Next Steps

- Develop work session schedule
- Confirm priority activities associated with each theme for ongoing monitoring

