



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – September 6, 2023 Agenda Item 2

Work Session

Resolution Providing City Council's Public Comment on the Minor-Master Plan Amendment Public Hearing Draft

Recommended Council Action

Review the proposed resolution regarding the Minor Master Plan to send to the Planning Board as part of the Public Hearing on September 14, 2023 and public record.

Context with Key Issues

In 2021, in partnership with the City of Takoma Park, Montgomery Planning began a Minor Master Plan Amendment (Plan) to update portions of the 2000 *Takoma Park Master Plan* to re-envision critical resources within the City and the surrounding community. The project area includes the Washington Adventist Hospital and University campuses, Maple Avenue, and Erie Center.

The Montgomery Planning staff, led by Melissa Williams, Project Lead, most recently presented to the City Council on May 24, 2023 with a review of the draft recommendations. The City Council passed a resolution to the Planning Board moving the Plan forward to the Public Hearing phase (Resolution 2023-16). The Montgomery Planning Board reviewed the Minor Master Plan on June 8, 2023 and set the Public Hearing date for September 14, 2023. A resolution during the Public Hearing phase is Council's opportunity to identify for the Planning Board items of support or concern within the Public Hearing Draft.

Council's Resolution 2023-16, passed June 7, 2023, identified the following items for Montgomery County Planning Board consideration:

- Leverage County zoning provisions and incentives for currently undeveloped or underdeveloped property within the plan area to address the City of Takoma Park's need for a range of housing types, specifically affordable homeownership opportunities for low- to moderate- income residents and market rate rentals, both underrepresented housing types.
- Retain and improve the existing stock of affordable housing with the goal of no net loss of affordable housing as a result of redevelopment within the plan area.
- Retain the diversity of local businesses and enhance the neighborhood economy by encouraging ethnic and locally-owned business clustering and compatible retail uses communicated during Master Plan community engagement (i.e., grocery store).
- Ensure that the plan has the flexibility and zoning tools/guidance necessary to develop and identify opportunities for additional public spaces, specifically at the Washington Adventist Hospital site, that provide benefits which are critical to the City, such as schools, recreation amenities (i.e. public pool), health care specifically mental health services, public greenspaces, and community gathering space.
- Strengthen plan elements which emphasize important social factors such as connectivity, pedestrian and bicyclist safety, as well as environmental factors including tree canopy growth, stormwater management, climate resilience, and plan level Climate Assessment.

- Continue to meet the unique community engagement needs in the City of Takoma Park by offering a range of opportunities for residents to offer feedback throughout the plan development process, including setting the public hearing date in mid-September, opening the public record as soon as possible, and keeping the public record open for an additional two weeks after the public hearing to allow for additional resident feedback.
- Elaborate on what will be needed to account for the impact of increasing residential units and retail on service provision across this area, including City services, schools, traffic, and infrastructure.

In the months since Council passed Resolution 2023-16, Council members and staff have held several public meetings and community/neighborhood meetings, including a Wards 4 and 5 meeting on July 18th and a City-wide meeting August 16th with over 100 participants both in-person and virtually. Staff has participated in those meetings, shared information at several pop-up events on Maple Avenue, developed over 15 blog posts and newsletter articles, and responded to Council and community questions. Information from these sessions and other materials have been shared with Council to assist with the development of this Resolution.

Council Priority

Advancing a Community of Belonging

Community Development for an Improved & Equitable Quality of Life

Environmental Considerations

In July 2022, the Montgomery County Council passed [Bill 3-22](#), "Climate Assessments". This law requires the Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) to conduct climate assessments of county bills and requires the Planning Board to conduct climate assessments of Zoning Text Amendments (ZTAs) and master plans. The climate assessment requirement applies only to the Planning Board Draft Plan that is transmitted to the County Council for final approval.

Area master plans typically include recommendations to address environmental issues and the impacts of climate change on particular communities. Montgomery Planning staff incorporate these considerations during each phase of the master plan process—scope of work, community engagement, Working Draft Plan development, and Planning Board review, culminating in the Planning Board Draft Plan approved by the Board that is transmitted to the County Council for its final approval. Climate assessments for bills, ZTAs and master plans are required for the County Council's process and must reflect the item as transmitted to the Council for its review. Master plan recommendations can change during Planning Board review; therefore the climate assessment cannot be completed until the Planning Board Draft Plan is approved by the Planning Board to be transmitted to the County Council.

Fiscal Considerations

Plan recommendations, improvements, and amenities are implemented in one of two ways: private development or public capital projects. Generally, private development of new buildings will include public amenities required by the Zoning Ordinance and those recommended by the plan. Amenities and improvements are implemented on a project by project basis through the public development review process. Public amenities may include:

- open space,
- public facilities,
- improvements to sidewalks,
- sewers and utilities,

- bike lanes,
- roadways along the property frontage.

New public facilities or improvements to existing ones, like parks and roadways, are funded through the capital budgets of their respective jurisdictions. Within the plan area, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT), and the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MD SHA) each have responsibilities for some parks and/or roadways. Improvements to roads or land owned or controlled by the City of Takoma Park would be funded through the City.

Racial Equity Considerations

[The County Racial Equity and Social Justice Act](#) (Bill 27-19) requires the County Office of Legislative Oversight to prepare a Racial Equity and Social Justice Impact Statement for bills and Zoning Text Amendments and the Planning Board to consider racial equity and social justice impacts when preparing a Master Plan.

In accordance with Bill 27-19, Montgomery Planning's Equity Agenda for Planning is an ongoing commitment to systemically dismantle the institutional and structural racism that exists in and has long influenced planning and zoning processes and to prevent that influence in the future. As part of this agenda for Master Plans, Montgomery Planning closely considers equity in examining the history and existing conditions of communities, engaging with the County's diverse residents during plan development, conducting data analysis, and developing plan recommendations.

The Takoma Park Minor Master Plan efforts included:

- analysis of the demographics and history of the planned area
- providing authentic and informative engagement opportunities
- educating stakeholders on how to advocate for their community
- crafting goals that reflect the desires of the community.

During staff work sessions following September 14, 2023 Public Hearing, the Planning Board will consider and discuss the racial equity and social justice impacts of the Minor Master Plan Amendment. The City of Takoma Park adheres to the City's racial equity goals during the process of planning and in evaluating the recommendations and provisions of the Minor Master Plan.

Attachments and Links

- [Takoma Park Minor Master Plan webpage](#)
- [Resolution 2023-16](#)
- [Resolution 2021-22](#)
- [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#) between the Montgomery County Planning Department and the City of Takoma Park
- Draft Resolution for the Planning Board

Introduced by:

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION 2023-XX

**CITY COUNCIL OF TAKOMA PARK PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE PUBLIC
HEARING DRAFT OF THE MINOR MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT
(MONTGOMERY COUNTY)**

WHEREAS, the Minor Master Plan Amendment is a County plan developed by Montgomery County Planning Department, in partnership with the City of Takoma Park, to amend certain elements of the Takoma Park Master Plan (last updated in 2000); and

WHEREAS, the Minor Master Plan Amendment provides an opportunity to reexamine elements of the Master Plan in respect to unanticipated economic and land use changes; and

WHEREAS, the unexpected relocation of the Washington Adventist Hospital opens an opportunity for the City of Takoma Park to consider resources on the campus and surrounding area, including the Washington Adventist University campus, and the multi-family housing areas along Maple Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has been apprised of the Plan at each step of the process to date, and has reviewed and discussed the proposed draft plan recommendations as presented by Montgomery County Planning in consultation with City of Takoma Park staff; and

WHEREAS, the Takoma Park City Council supports the re-envisioning of the Washington Adventist Hospital campus and the enhancement of critical civic, economic, and housing resources in the surrounding neighborhoods along the Maple Avenue corridor in a manner that enhances the quality of life of area residents and is environmentally and financially sustainable; and

WHEREAS, the plan area is within one of the City's most racially diverse communities; and

WHEREAS, the City of Takoma Park's Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan encourages the use of County allowable use and zoning provisions to create and expand housing types that are under-represented in Takoma Park and desired by

existing and new residents of various incomes, needs, abilities and family configurations; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Planning Board will hold a public hearing and accept public comments to hear testimony on the draft recommendations of the Minor Master Plan Amendment; and

WHEREAS, at the City Council's request, Montgomery Planning set the Public Hearing date for September 14th, and extended the period of the open public record to allow for additional resident feedback; and

WHEREAS, City Council has reviewed the Public Hearing Draft of the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan and City Council members have held multiple information sessions and listening sessions for residents to ask questions and provide feedback on the plan, including the July 18, 2023 and August 16, 2023 Information Sessions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that per Council Resolution 2023-16 passed on June 7, 2023, the City Council continues to request that the Montgomery County Planning Board consider ways to address seven aspects of the plan: incentivizing the creation of a range of housing types; retaining and improving existing affordable housing; retaining local businesses; creating new public space opportunities; strengthening social and environmental factors; continuing community engagement throughout the planning review process; and assessing the impact of increasing residential units and retail on the provision of public services in the plan area.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that to address the aforementioned topics, the City Council requests that the Montgomery County Planning Board holds the following work sessions during development of the Planning Board Draft Plan of the Minor Master Plan Amendment:

- Potential Development Impacts in the Flower Avenue District on Adjoining Residential Properties:
 - How do the development requirements, including set-backs, building heights and step downs, lot coverage and density, etc., of the newly proposed zoning for the District impact adjacent single-family housing?
- Existing Density and Future Development of the Maple Avenue District
 - What are the potential impacts of newly proposed zoning on the diversity of housing stock and affordability?
 - How are the Plan stakeholders helping to incentivize and finance the creation and preservation of quality, safe, affordable housing within the Maple Avenue

District?

- Public Space & Amenities Within the Minor Master Plan Area
 - What is the impact of the Plan on public space, recreational facilities, schools, public health and how to ensure adequate services with growth?

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council requests that the Montgomery County Planning Board provide additional details in the Planning Board Draft Plan of the Minor Master Plan Amendment on the following topics:

- Additional documentation and background information on Climate Assessment and Race Equity impacts and how they were developed.
- Work with City staff to provide additional connections within the Draft Plan of the Minor Master Plan to demonstrate alignment with City of Takoma Park adopted plans and policies: the Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan, the 2019 Sustainability and Climate Action Plan, the City’s Rent Stabilization ordinances, Council initiatives on climate action and race equity, and City policies and ordinances related to stormwater, tree protection, and City right-of-way.

Adopted this ____ day of September, 2023.

ATTEST:

Jessie Carpenter, CMC
City Clerk