



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – March 8, 2023

Agenda Item 4

Work Session

Discussion of City Council Priorities for the 2023-2024 Term

Recommended Council Action

Continue discussion of Council priorities.

Context with Key Issues

The City Council held a priorities retreat on January 30 of this year to consider priorities to be developed for the City Council's 2022-2023 term. At the retreat, the 2021-2022 City Council priorities were reviewed, and members shared preliminary ideas. In the interim, City Councilmembers have been preparing their suggestions for additions, deletions, and revisions to the current priorities.

Additionally, the prior City Council adopted two resolutions committing to follow up on the recommendations of the Sustainable Banking and Investments Task Force (Resolution 2022-14) and on the recommendations of the Complete Safe Streets Committee (Resolution 2022-41 on Pedestrian and Transportation Safety). Those resolutions are attached for the Council's reference.

Work session discussions on Council priorities are scheduled for March 8 and March 15. A resolution adopting updated priorities is scheduled for March 22.

Council Priority

The prior City Council adopted six broad priorities: 1) Mitigate the Impact of COVID-19 on the Community and City Operations; 2) A Livable Community for All; 3) Fiscally Sustainable Government; 4) Environmentally Sustainable Community; 5) Engaged, Responsive, Service-Oriented Government; 6) Community Development for an Improved and Equitable Quality of Life.

Environmental Considerations

As the Council is adopting its priorities, environmental considerations will be included in the process.

Fiscal Considerations

The priorities adopted by the City Council will inform consideration of the FY 2024 budget.

Racial Equity Considerations

The City of Takoma Park has adopted a racial equity initiative with four main goals: 1) Apply a racial equity lens in a systematic way in decision-making processes with the goal of continuing to build an inclusive, equitable community for all Takoma Park residents; 2) Examine seemingly neutral policies and practices to determine whether they are contributing to racial inequity; 3) Engage in open and honest dialogue with experts on the subject of racial equity; and 4) Explore and institute methods that have working in cities around the country to improve government policies, practices, and programs and address racial disparities.

Attachments and Links

2021-2022 City Council Priorities

Resolution 2022-14 Implementing Recommendations of the Sustainable Banking and Investment Task Force, Resolution 2022-41 on Pedestrian and Transportation Safety

2021-2022 City Council Priorities

Adopted by Resolution 2021-6

1. Mitigate the Impact of COVID-19 on the Community and City Operations

- Reopen City functions using a phased approach to ensure 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.
- Ensure residents have access to the emergency assistance they need to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Support our small businesses in weathering the economic downturn due to the pandemic so that they recover and thrive in the future.

2. A Livable Community for All

- Ensure that a range of safe, high quality, affordable, and stable housing options are equitably available in neighborhoods throughout the community.
- Identify the need for and explore the development of programs to address food insecurity in the community.
- Identify programming needs in the community and develop approaches to meet those needs, emphasizing youth, families, seniors, and residents who tend to face barriers to opportunities such as Black, Indigenous, and people of color, those with unsustainable lower-paying jobs, immigrants, and people with developmental disabilities.
- Defend our status as a Sanctuary City and maintain our commitment to being a welcoming and inclusive community for all residents.
- Improve transportation planning and outreach to create a safer and more racially equitable community for all residents, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicle occupants.
- Further the City's racial equity work.

3. Fiscally Sustainable Government

- Explore and advocate at county and state levels for expanded funding flexibility for municipalities beyond property taxes and continue to advocate for long-term solutions to tax duplication.
- Explore ways to provide property tax adjustments to residents in need, advocate at county and state levels for changes in property taxes to assist residents in need, and work for a more equitable property tax assessment system.
- Continue to build on improvements in the budget process, presentation of budget information, and communication to residents.
- Adopt sustainable investment and banking policy and practices.
- Maintain adequate reserves in the various City reserve funds for long-term fiscal sustainability.

4. Environmentally Sustainable Community

- Climate Change Mitigation: Work towards net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2035.
- Climate Change Resilience: Improve our ability to adapt and be resilient to climate change.
- Manage Our Community's Natural Resources Sustainably: Protect, maintain, and improve the health of our urban forest, natural resources, and water quality, with an emphasis on equity.

5. Engaged, Responsive, Service-Oriented Government

- Hire and onboard a new City Manager.
- 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.
- Improve policies and processes to enhance resident interaction with the City government, including requests for government services, complaint systems, and code enforcement.
- Put in place improvements and review the overall structure and purpose of existing Council-appointed committees.
- Review and reform the City's approach to public safety to ensure racial justice and work toward a safer, more livable community for all residents.
- Improve service delivery and reduce administrative burden by updating internal policies, IT infrastructure, and software.

6. Community Development for an Improved & Equitable Quality of Life

- Plan and prepare for development in the City and region while maintaining the special character and economic and racial diversity of Takoma Park.
- Redevelop the Takoma Park Recreation Center.

Priorities, Goals and Strategies

1. Mitigate the Impact of COVID-19 on the Community and City Operations

Goal: Reopen City functions using a phased approach to ensure 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:

- Analyze and plan for potential budgetary impacts of COVID-19 on City finances now and in the future.
- Encourage permanent changes in City functions, 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.

Goal: Ensure residents have access to emergency assistance they need to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Strategies:

- Allocate COVID- 19 Relief Funds to programs that ensure residents have access to emergency assistance they need in terms of food, housing, health care, childcare and other needs.
- Explore how best to address housing needs due to the impact of COVID-19, with a focus on residents who may face evictions or foreclosures, landlords, and condo communities.
- Support residents unemployed due to the pandemic to obtain new employment through emergency workforce development programs and technical assistance.
- Coordinate with state, county, and nonprofit stakeholders to encourage the availability of COVID-19 testing and vaccination locations in the City for residents to access.
- Coordinate with local nonprofits and community groups providing emergency food distributions to residents in the City.

Desired Outcome: Residents have access to the services and programs they need to stay healthy, in their homes, and working during the pandemic.

Goal: Support our small businesses in weathering the economic downturn due to the pandemic so that they recover and thrive in the future

Strategies:

- Provide financial assistance through the COVID-19 Relief Fund to support small businesses experiencing financial hardship due to the pandemic.
- Offer technical assistance to businesses to ensure that they are able to maintain the health and safety of their employees and patrons during the pandemic.
- Coordinate with state, county, and nonprofit stakeholders to encourage the availability of COVID-19 testing and vaccinations for frontline and essential workers in the City.

Desired Outcome: Businesses have access to the services and programs they need to stay in business to ensure the health and safety of their employees and patrons.

2. A Livable Community for All

Goal: Ensure that a range of safe, high quality, affordable, and stable housing options are equitably available in neighborhoods throughout the community.

Strategies:

- Implement the Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan. Specifically:
 - Continue to build partnerships with nonprofits, foundations, financial institutions, Montgomery County, the State of Maryland, and other outside entities to expand affordable housing options in the City.
 - Explore the needs of and create programs to assist common ownership communities.
 - Revise sections of the Housing Code, including sections on rent stabilization.
 - Review and make changes to the HomeStretch Downpayment Assistance Program aimed at expanding eligibility.
 - Develop a formal policy and criteria regarding the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program (PILOTs).
 - Continue collaboration and coordination of the City's housing and sustainability staff on key projects to meet Council goals.
- Review staffing levels necessary to implement the Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan, and examine ways to leverage cross-departmental collaboration among housing and sustainability staff to meet Council housing and sustainability goals.

Desired Outcome: Meet the current and future housing needs of the community to ensure affordable housing options for residents of varying income levels and of all races and ethnicities. Improved living conditions for renters.

Goal: Identify the need for and explore the development of programs to address food insecurity in the community.

Strategy: Identify advocates, nonprofits, and community groups that provide food to residents and convene partners, such as the iSchool/iConsultancy team at the University of MD, to explore ways to address food insecurity in the City.

Desired Outcome: Identify and explore the feasibility of programs and systems to address ongoing food insecurity in the community.

Goal: Identify programming needs in the community and develop approaches to meet those needs, emphasizing youth, families, seniors, and residents who tend to face barriers to opportunities such as Black, Indigenous, and people of color, those with unsustainable lower-paying jobs, immigrants, and people with developmental disabilities.

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 and develop programs to close identified gaps.
- Improve equitable access to programming and services using innovative strategies and technology, such as exploring ways to fill gaps in access to technology and library services, to reach residents, including residents of color and renters, who rarely engage with the City.
- Explore establishing a pilot Community Ambassador or Navigator system to help assess residents' needs and to help develop updated and improved systems to connect residents to services.

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

Goal: Defend our status as a Sanctuary City and maintain our commitment to being a welcoming and inclusive community for all residents.

Strategies:

- Continue advocacy efforts focused on immigrant rights and needs, including connecting those in need of assistance to appropriate area organizations.
- Explore new ways to share information with and provide services to immigrant and refugee communities through improved community outreach and engagement processes, including through translation and Community Ambassadors structures.
- Continue efforts to lobby at state level for legislation supporting and protecting immigrants and refugees.

Desired Outcome: Remain a welcoming and strong Sanctuary City and grow access to programming and information to meet the needs of immigrants and refugees.

Goal: Improve transportation planning and outreach to create a safer and more racially equitable community for all residents, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicle occupants.

Strategies:

- Explore adopting a Vision Zero initiative; examine potential components such as education/outreach, policy changes, and infrastructure improvements; and continue to revise processes for traffic calming and sidewalk requests.
- Advocate for transportation improvements that impact Takoma Park residents through regional collaboration and coordinated efforts, including on Purple Line, safety, and transit access.

Desired Outcome: Improved traffic safety resulting in eliminating serious vehicle, pedestrian, and bike collisions; improved comprehensive transportation planning throughout the City with a data-driven approach that takes into consideration impacts throughout the City; and racially equitable transportation system and outcomes.

Goal: Further the City's racial equity work.

Strategies:

- Build on the work underway to address racial equity issues, including how we organize, institutionalize, and operationalize the racial equity framework; explore possible task force on racial equity.
- Evaluate how the City is processing and responding to requests and complaints so that they are done in an equitable way across the City.
- Continue to provide racial equity training to members of the City Council, staff, and Council-appointed Committees and other residents.

Desired Outcome: Continued progress toward a more racially equitable community and government.

Major Projects, Initiatives, and Ongoing Activities

- Public-Land and Open Space Management Plan – finalization and implementation of the plan
- Cultural Plan – continued implementation of 2018 Plan

3. Fiscally Sustainable Government

Goal: Explore and advocate at county and state levels for expanded funding flexibility for municipalities beyond property taxes and continue to advocate for long-term solutions to tax duplication.

Strategies:

- Continue efforts to more fully address county tax duplication issues.

- Increase advocacy and lobbying activities.

Desired Outcome: A more diverse set of revenue sources for the City.

Goal: Explore ways to provide property tax adjustments to residents in need, advocate at county and state levels for changes in property taxes to assist residents in need, and work for a more equitable property tax assessment system.

Strategies:

- Explore City property tax credits, deferrals, and other options for residents in need and advocate for such options at the county level
- Continue to examine and advocate for changes to the property assessment process to ensure an equitable approach.
- Promote economic development to increase the tax base, consistent with the Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan.

Desired Outcome: A sustainable and equitable property tax process and system.

Goal: Continue to build on improvements in the budget process, presentation of budget information, and communication to residents.

Strategy: Consider, in the current budget cycle and in future years, innovative budget processes to identify ways to present summary as well as detailed budget information and continue to provide opportunities for resident feedback with an emphasis on equitable access and outreach.

Desired Outcomes: Continued work toward greater clarity and transparency in the budget process and increased resident understanding of the City budget.

Goal: Adopt sustainable investment and banking policy and practices.

Strategy: Identify and work with consultant to determine potential next steps in adopting sustainable investment and banking policies and practices, taking into account the concerns raised by the Nuclear Free Committee about Truist Bank and considering required City staff resources and financial cost to implement.

Desired Outcome: Work to align the City's banking and investments with the community's social responsibility values.

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.

4. Environmentally Sustainable Community

Goal: Climate Change Mitigation: Work towards net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2035.

Strategies:

- Prioritize and accelerate policies and programs that implement the 2020 Climate Emergency Response Framework strategies for buildings, transportation, renewable energy, and a fossil fuel-free community.
- Continue and expand City sustainability programs with emphasis on equity issues.
- Coordinate and advocate for climate change mitigation resiliency and sustainability with county, state, region and federal governments.
- Integrate City climate goals and strategies with other City policies and programs, such as urban forest, housing, economic development, and Vision Zero transportation goals.

Desired Outcome: Progress toward City's climate mitigation and resiliency goals; more sustainable City operations.

Goal: Climate Change Resilience: Improve our ability to adapt and be resilient to climate change.

Strategies:

- Consider ways to address increased stormwater in the City and its impacts, including incentives, stormwater permitting, and green infrastructure.
- Explore ways to address and mitigate stormwater impacts on private properties.
- Implement new stormwater management fee structure.

Desired Outcome: Improved stormwater management for both the public space and stormwater flows on and between private properties.

Goal: Manage our Community's Natural Resources Sustainably: Protect, maintain, and improve the health of our urban forest, natural resources, and water quality, with an emphasis on equity.

Strategies:

- Incorporate the overarching goals and priorities of no net loss, increased biodiversity, and equity adopted in 2020 into the City’s urban forest management program.
- Adopt the multi-year urban forest management plan.
- Begin a pilot project for collaborative planting of trees in select neighborhoods, with the aim of helping to address inequities in tree distribution within the City.

Outcome: No net loss of urban forest canopy citywide, more equitably distributed tree canopy over time, increased biodiversity, and improved maintenance of mature trees citywide.

Major projects, initiatives and ongoing activities:

- Enforcement, education, and outreach related to City codes in such areas as recycling; plastic bag ban; snow clearing. Cooperation with county and state where applicable.
- Climate Action Framework strategy development and implementation
- City sustainability programs and initiatives
- Implement additional Sustainable Maryland Certified goals
- Implement urban forest program and revised tree ordinance provisions
- Green stormwater management projects to meet State and Federal mandates for 2025

5. Engaged, Responsive, Service-Oriented Government

Goal: Hire and onboard a new City Manager.

Strategies:

- Conduct a successful search with community input and the assistance of a consultant.
- Successfully onboard the new City Manager and work together to develop further plans and priorities, including adjusting to post-COVID near-term realities and working toward community-identified visions of the future.

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.

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.
- Review lessons learned from recent community engagement efforts and investigate new ways to enhance and put in place new initiatives to improve public input, engagement, and collaboration.
- Investigate ways to improve accessibility of community meetings especially for residents whose dominant language is not English, those who are deaf, and others who may face barriers to engagement with the City government.

Desired Outcome: Facilitate and enhance involvement, trust, and collaboration among residents and City government.

Goal: Improve policies and processes to enhance resident interaction with the City government, including requests for government services, complaint systems, and code enforcement.

Strategies:

- Review process for traffic calming; sidewalk requests, repair and maintenance; residential/commercial boundary conflicts over noise, lights, etc.; the impact of utility work on neighborhoods; and review of Neighborhood Services citation procedures.
- Review recommendations from the Complete Safe Streets Committee and implement appropriate improvements.
- Update the sign ordinance and other City ordinances as needed.

Desired Outcome: Improved and more equitable policies and processes related to City services, such as traffic calming, sidewalk requests, maintenance and repair, and other City services.

Goal: Put in place improvements and review overall structure and purpose of existing Council-appointed committees.

Strategy: Continue to evaluate and put in place ways to improve appointment processes and establish a common committee structure to increase efficiency and effectiveness; attract new members so that committees more closely reflect the diversity of the community; and explore innovative methods to engage and collaborate with residents who may face barriers to participating.

Desired Outcome: Enabling diverse, engaged, productive, and rewarding resident involvement and collaboration with City government.

Goal: Review and reform the City's approach to public safety to ensure racial justice and work toward a safer, more livable community for all residents.

Strategy: Review, explore, and put in place appropriate changes recommended by the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force.

Desired Outcome: A more equitable and just approach to public safety that meets the needs of residents.

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.

Major projects, initiatives and ongoing activities:

- Redistricting
- Elections
- Council Compensation

6. Community Development for an Improved & Equitable Quality of Life

Goal: Plan and prepare for development in the City and region while maintaining the special character and economic and racial diversity of Takoma Park.

Strategies:

- Implement the Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan. Specifically:
 - Provide support for small businesses especially those impacted by Purple Line construction.
 - Increase workforce development programs and assistance.
 - Explore options for providing support services, including through direct assistance and partnerships, for businesses located outside the areas covered by existing business associations.
 - Attract new businesses to Takoma Park and facilitate the growth of existing businesses, particularly those that help meet workforce development and local ownership goals.

Desired Outcome: Implementation of the Strategic Plan, prepare and plan for development activity, and support local businesses and workers.

Goal: Redevelop the Takoma Park Recreation Center.

Strategy: Develop a shared vision for the Recreation Center using an evidence-based approach and improve community engagement around the City's recreational needs and the future Recreation Center.

Desired Outcome: Leverage both public and private stakeholders to accomplish the goal of developing the Recreation Center that meets the City's need for recreation services and affordable housing.

Major projects, initiatives and ongoing activities:

- Library Renovation
- Takoma Junction Development
- Purple Line Construction
- Economic development along New Hampshire Ave
- Washington Adventist Hospital Campus
- Montgomery College Math Science Building construction
- Continue to advocate for renovations at Piney Branch Elementary School and increased public school facilities in the City or nearby
- Review selected county policies that support City housing, equity and sustainability goals as they are proposed

Introduced by: Councilmember Dyballa

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-14

Implementing Recommendations of the Sustainable Banking and Investment Task Force

WHEREAS, the City Council in its 2021 Council Priorities identified adoption of sustainable investment and banking policies and practices as part of its goal for a Fiscally Sustainable Government; and

WHEREAS, the Nuclear Free Zone Act, adopted in 1984, contemplates a socially responsible investment policy (Section 14.04.050), specifically to address any City investments in industries and institutions which are knowingly and intentionally engaged in production of nuclear weapons; and

WHEREAS, the City's Climate Emergency Response Framework (2020) identifies updated sustainable investment and banking policies and practices as a priority strategy for moving to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2035, including phasing out the use of financial funds or institutions that support or benefit from the fossil fuel industries, as feasible; and

WHEREAS, the City's Nuclear Free Committee has made recommendations concerning the City's sustainable banking policies and the City's Committee on the Environment has informally recommended that the City adopt fossil-fuel-free policies including sustainable investment and banking policies; and

WHEREAS, the City Council established a short-term Task Force on Sustainable Banking and Investment in Sept. 2021 (Resolution 2021-31), with two purposes:

1. Define and identify steps to implement sustainable banking and investment policies that fulfill both the City's nuclear-free and climate change goals; and
2. Review and recommend updates to the implementation specifics of the nuclear-free ordinance, to best fulfill the purposes of the ordinance and to coordinate with the city's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals and other priorities; and

WHEREAS, that Task Force made a final report with recommendations to the City Council on April 6, 2022; and

WHEREAS, the City Council deeply appreciates the diligent work of the Task Force members, and thanks them for their time and effort in producing a thoughtful, comprehensive document in a limited amount of time, operating under pandemic conditions; and

WHEREAS, City implementation of these recommendations will extend beyond the term of this current city council.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City Council accepts the final report of the Sustainable Banking and Investment Task Force, for further review and implementation of many of the recommendations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City Council, to further its goal of adopting sustainable investment and banking policies, incorporates into City policy, and supports implementation of, the following policies and actions based on the Task Force recommendations, taking into account the City staff timetable and future analysis as provided for in the final resolved clause of this resolution:

- **Socially Responsible Investment Policy.** Adopt an investment policy that integrates ESG (environmental, social and governance) principles in all City investment decision making, by updating the current City investment policy adopted in 2001; and prohibiting City investments in companies included in the Carbon Underground 200™, and any industries and institutions engaged in the production of nuclear weapons.
- **Banking Services.** Initiate the adoption of sustainable banking services for the City by identifying financial institutions operating in our region that incorporate an ESG policy prohibiting financing to nuclear weapons producers or for fossil fuel extraction, and, depending on the results of that analysis, proceed with the issuance of a Request for Proposals.
- **Certificates of Deposit.** Investigate options for the purchase of CDs from socially responsible, or ESG-friendly, financial institutions, such as those who have committed to ESG, green, and inclusive banking goals, or are certified as B Corporations.
- **Police Pension Fund.** Encourage the Police Pension Fund to consider ESG criteria and/or divestment on its own by adopting, at a minimum, the ESG policies of the SRPS in the current MSRA Investment Policy manual.
- **Maryland Local Government Investment Pool.** Work with other governmental agencies participating in the Pool (MLGIP) and State legislators to encourage the MLGIP to consider more explicitly the social impact of its investments.
- **Sustainable Banking and Investment Committee.** Identify specific tasks for a Sustainable Banking and Investment Committee to assist City staff in implementing these policies and tasks, and establish such committee if there's a determination that the tasks are impractical for City staff to handle, based on their capacity and workload.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City Council directs city staff to report to the Council by September 2022 with a timeline to implement these policies and actions, including evaluating options and potential impacts which may affect the speed and method of implementation.

Adopted this 25th day of May, 2022.

Attest:


Jessie Carpenter, CMC
City Clerk

Introduced by: Councilmember Kostiuk

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION 2022-41

RESOLUTION ON PEDESTRIAN AND TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

WHEREAS, the City Council identified a goal of improving transportation planning and outreach to create a safer and more racially equitable community for all residents, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicle occupants, in Resolution 2021-6; and

WHEREAS, Resolution 2021-6 also outlined strategies of exploring adopting a Vision Zero initiative, examining potential components such as education/outreach, policy, changes, and infrastructure improvements, and continuing to revise processes for traffic calming and sidewalk requests; and

WHEREAS, other goals outlined in Resolution 2021-6, such as climate change mitigation and improved city policies and processes to enhance resident interaction with the city, support this goal of improved transportation planning and outreach; and

WHEREAS, the City has identified inequities in the existing traffic calming and sidewalk request policies; and

WHEREAS, the Takoma Park Complete Safe Streets Committee developed a set of recommendations to improve decision-making and prioritization related to pedestrian safety initiatives in the City of Takoma Park and presented those recommendations to the City Council in March 2021; and

WHEREAS, those recommendations include, among other things: utilizing data-driven and evidence-based criteria as the basis for decisions; balancing the weight of “public input” by giving more weight to other criteria, including racial equity; proactively considering traffic data; considering a variety of traffic-calming measures as options in addition to speed humps; planning more holistically for traffic calming and pedestrian safety across larger geographic areas; utilizing a variety of methods for resident outreach and education; and creating criteria for prioritizing locations for new sidewalk installation; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County is undertaking a number of initiatives to improve pedestrian safety, including the Action Plan for Vision Zero, the Pedestrian Master Plan, the Predictive Safety Analysis, the RideOn Reimagined Study, and the Bicycle Master Plan, that may inform and help support work on these issues in Takoma Park; and

WHEREAS, many of the most dangerous locations for traffic safety, as identified in the Montgomery County Predictive Safety Analysis and Takoma Park Police data, are located on State Highway Administration roads in the city; and

WHEREAS, State law now allows municipalities in Montgomery County to decrease speed limits down to 15 MPH after performing an investigation; and

WHEREAS, during an October 12, 2022, work session, City staff presented about ongoing work and progress on safety improvements for pedestrians, transit-users, and people riding bicycles in the City; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has held work sessions on development of a Public Space Management Plan that is anticipated to be adopted in the near future and will outline key recommendations related to use of public space and evaluation criteria that may further inform changes to pedestrian and transportation safety.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City Council directs City staff to develop and present revised traffic calming, sidewalk request, and street safety policies and prioritization procedures for City Council consideration that:

- Prioritize safety and equity in decision-making processes and planning;
- Emphasize the wellbeing and safety of the most vulnerable roadway users and prioritize the best use of the public space for the community as a whole;
- Consider holistic approaches addressing larger geographic areas, including investigation of reduced speed limits, and integration of other City plans and priorities such as sustainability efforts, public art initiatives, and other projects;
- Utilize data-driven criteria for evaluating and prioritizing sidewalk and traffic calming installations and other traffic calming approaches such as reduced speed limits (as allowed by state law), and for planning and identifying where safety measures are needed;
- Allow for multiple avenues for initiating consideration of locations that may need traffic calming or sidewalks, speed limit reductions, or other measures;
- Make progress toward a more comprehensive approach to transportation and public space planning that prioritizes pedestrian and non-vehicle safety.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council supports continuing periodic meetings between State Highway Administration representatives and City staff and/or Councilmembers to further progress toward substantially improving pedestrian, bike, and automobile safety on State Highways, and directs City staff to work with SHA to ensure that such meetings take place quarterly or as frequently as practicable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council directs staff to report back on the status of implementing this resolution within six months from the date of adoption.

Adopted this 26th day of October, 2022.

AYES: Stewart, Kovar, Dybala, Kostiuk, Seamens, Smith, Searcy
NAYS: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

Attest:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jessie Carpenter", is written over a horizontal line.

Jessie Carpenter, CMC
City Clerk