

Public Space Management Plan

July 19, 2023

Presented by:

Alex Freedman, Planner
Housing and Community Development Department
alexanderf@takomaparkmd.gov | 301-891-7213



What is “Public Space”?

- Owned by the **City of Takoma Park**
- **Accessible** to everyone who lives, works, plays, studies and prays in the city

Examples include:

- City parks
- Sidewalks
- Curbside dining
- Roadways
- Parking spaces
- Playgrounds
- ...and more!



What Public Space Policies Exist Now?

The city currently maintains a patchwork of policies used to manage public spaces:

- Multiple **departments & divisions**
- Multiple policy and programmatic **formats**
- Mostly addressed on an **as-needed basis**
- Developed over time **without comprehensive review** or consideration of equity goals



What is the Public Space Management Plan?

The Public Space Management Plan **provides integrated guidance** on how public space will be used and maintained in Takoma Park.

It **creates a decision-making process** for how, when, and where the City devotes funding and resources to public spaces.

It creates a **framework** with actionable steps.



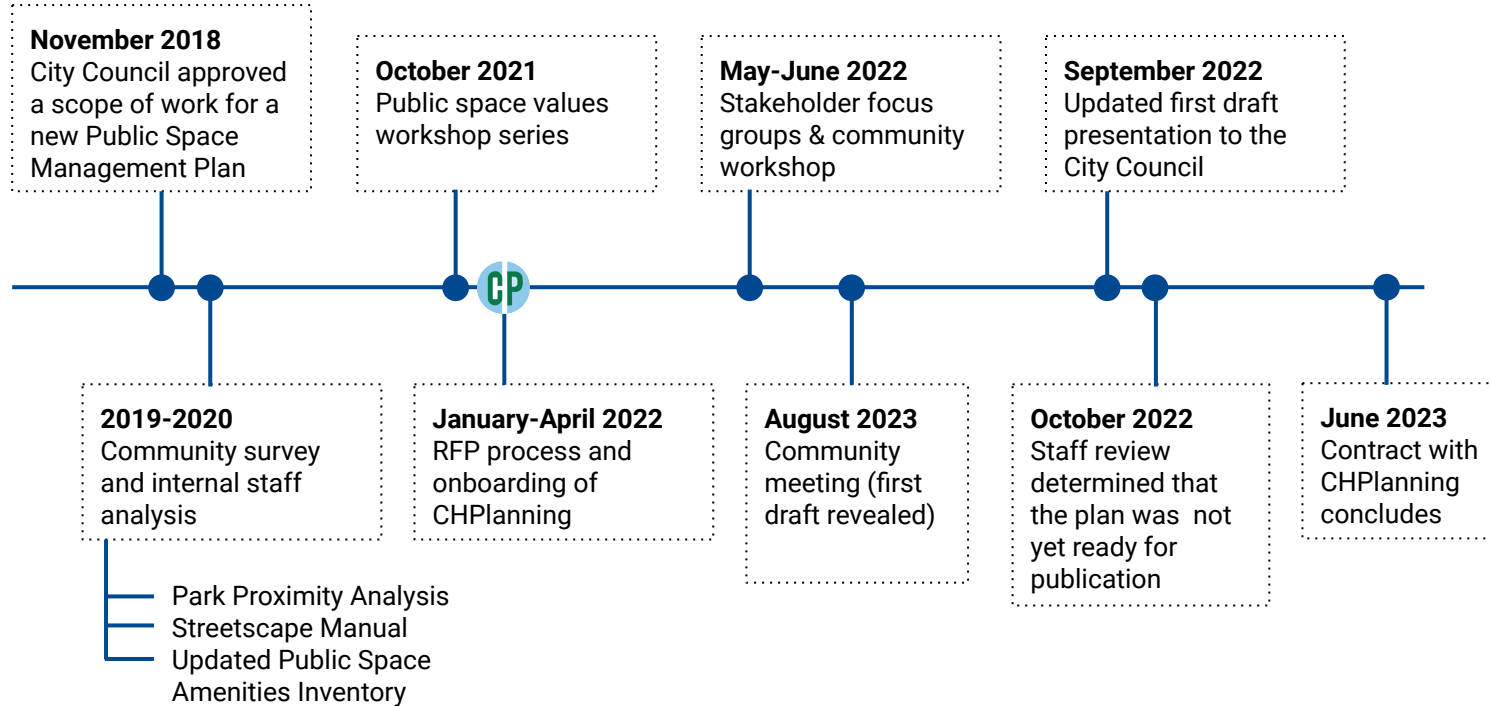
What isn't the Public Space Management Plan?

The Public Space Management Plan is **not**:

- Capital Improvements Plan
- Acquisition Plan
- Recreation Plan
- Code/policy change
- Programmatically prescriptive
- Funded directive
- A single solution to every issue encountered in public space



Background



Community Engagement

City Council Work Sessions

- November 2018
- January 2020
- September 2022

Community Survey

- September 2020 - March 2021; n = 225

Public Space Values Workshop Series (5 sessions)

- November 2021

Community Meeting/Workshops

- August & June 2022

Focus Groups (3 sessions)

- June - July 2022

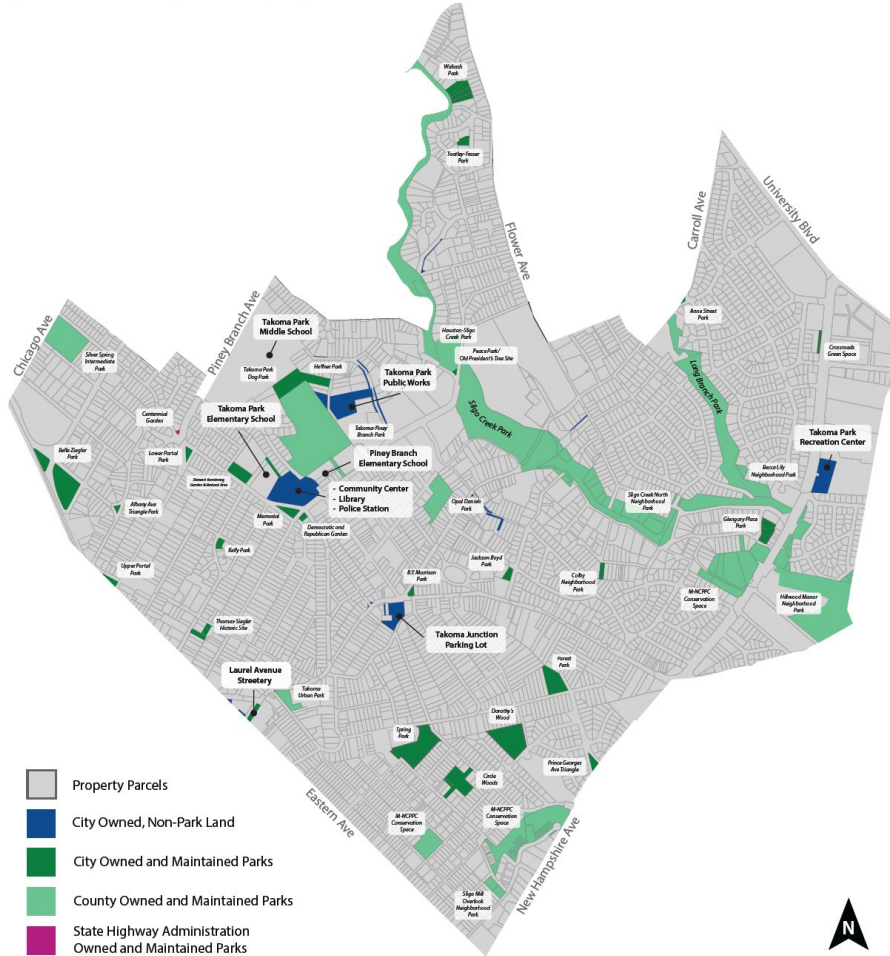


Public Space Manager

1. Existing Conditions
2. Community Engage
3. Strategies
4. Case Studies
5. Recommendations
6. Evaluation Scoreca
7. Appendices



Map of Takoma Park Green Space

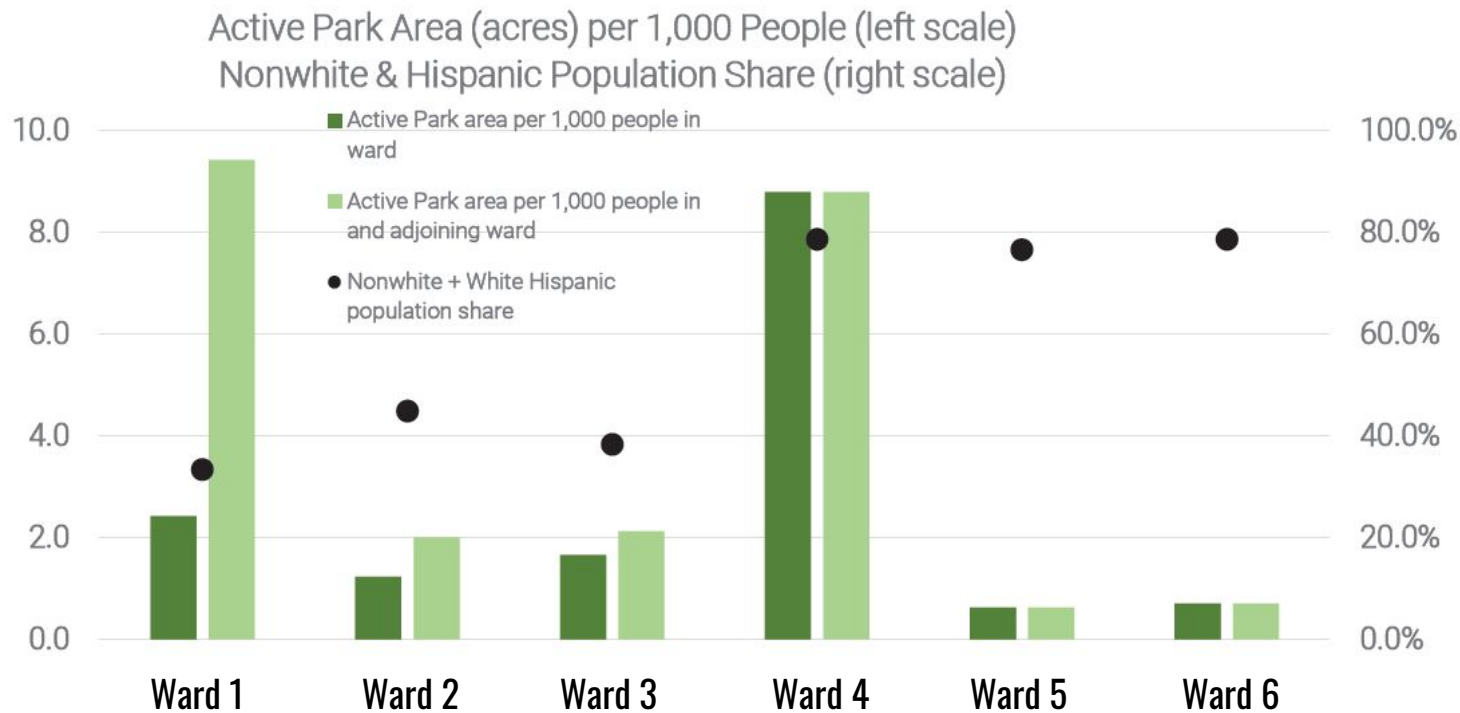


Key Findings

- Outside jurisdictions manage large amounts of public space:
 - 77% of local green space are managed by M-NCPPC
 - Seven largest roadways managed by MSHA, MCDOT, or DDOT
- Ward 5 has the lowest access to park space *and* the lowest median income and access to a vehicle
- Highlighted the need for a systematic, data-based approach with an equity lens



Active Park Area (acres) per 1,000 residents



Recommendations

Guided by three values that emerged in the engagement process as high priorities:

- Racial Equity
- Sustainability
- Safety

Each recommendation includes:

- 'Lighter Lift' vs 'Heavier Lift' designation
- Description
- Implementing Departments
- 2023-2024 City Council Priorities
- Estimated Cost



Recommendations

37 recommendations
divided into seven categories:

1. Budget & Funding
2. Community Engagement & Planning
3. Facilities Development
4. Maintenance & Operations
5. Programs & Permits
6. Property Acquisition
7. Sustainability & Resilience



Project Evaluation Scorecard

Purpose

- Incorporate a standardized set of criteria into project evaluation
- Allow different kinds of projects to be compared to each other
- Add a tool to help in decision making

How will this be used?

- As an attachment with Council cover memos
- On project web pages to support actions
- An analysis tool for City Council members
- As blank templates for anyone to use



Project Evaluation Scorecard

Project Evaluation Scorecard

Scoring Method

This tool helps select priority projects for implementation by scoring them across eight categories of community benefit. Priority areas of project benefit are listed for each benefit category. Other benefit areas may be added if relevant. A project earns one point for addressing one benefit area in a substantial way. A project may earn two points for delivering exceptional benefit in an area, over and above typical benefits for other areas. Scores in the categories of Safety, Equity, and Sustainability are increased by a multiplier and so deliver extra value toward a project's overall score.

3 = Project provides benefit in three or more areas, provides exceptional benefit for at least 2 areas, or provides exceptional benefits in one area as well as benefits in other area(s)

2 = Project provides benefit for two areas or provides exceptional benefit for 1 area

1 = Project provides benefit for one area

0 = Project provides no significant benefit in any area

Benefit Categories

Benefit Category	Score up to 3	Multiplier	Weighted Score
Safety	0	2	0

- Is essential to reduce risk of physical injury (current hazard)
- Improves visibility for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Intends to reduce vehicular & pedestrian crashes and deaths
- Applies specific strategies to reduce crime

- Improves City owned property, and addresses code compliance or hazardous condition (measured by 311 calls)
- Other

Equity	0	2	0
---------------	---	---	---

- Located in area where sizable proportion of benefit goes to low-income or minority residents and/or users
- Provides resources/programs at low/no cost to residents, or else has mechanism to support use amongst vulnerable populations
- Promotes goals of housing affordability, neighborhood conservation, environmental justice, food security, and/or community development for low-income and minority populations

- Prioritizes needs of underserved and vulnerable populations
- Addresses need initiated or supported by the community
- Creates/utilizes partnership opportunities with community-based organizations (CBOs) providing project services/benefits to vulnerable communities
- Generates economic opportunities for low-income/minority populations and/or minority owned businesses
- Other

Sustainability	0	2	0
-----------------------	---	---	---

- Improves local water quality
- Improves stormwater management
- Prevents or reduces soil erosion
- Improves habitat (such as through attention to stream buffers, steep slopes, wetlands, or rare, threatened or endangered species)

- Improves air quality
- Reduces energy use or impacts
- Increases native tree inventory and/or tree canopy area
- Addresses urban heat impacts
- Other

Implementation Feasibility	0	1	0
-----------------------------------	---	---	---

- Utilizes City-owned land
- Paves no legal or liability concerns beyond usual for City property
- No zoning variances, special permits, or plan changes needed

- Avoids obstacles related to site control, management, liability, etc.
- No environmental cleanup required
- Maintenance/operations responsibility is determined
- Other

Placemaking (Social & Aesthetic)	0	1	0
---	---	---	---

- Expected to increase use of space or extend hours of operation
- Increases use/program opportunities appealing to a range of ages and interests
- Includes green space, public art, landscape amenities, seating and/or other facilities enhancing function and appearance

- Provides high quality spaces improving community wellness and quality of life
- Creates opportunities for more social interaction
- Provides public health benefits
- Creates opportunities for physical recreation/fitness
- Other

Connectivity	0	1	0
---------------------	---	---	---

- Fills gap in existing infrastructure
- Improves access to key community assets (such as school, library, community center)
- Improves ADA accessibility
- Improves or expands multi-modal transportation choices

- Improves multi-modal access, file network gaps
- Improves safe routes to school(s), with emphasis on routes serving communities of color and/or lower income
- Expands existing green space adjacent to right-of-way
- Other

Identified Needs	0	1	0
-------------------------	---	---	---

- Addresses one or more priority strategies identified in the 2023 Takoma Park Public Space Management Plan
- Addresses strategies identified in the approved local, county, regional, or state long-range plans

- Addresses significant issues and serves a purpose
- Adds new use/program based on community needs assessment
- Creates/utilizes partnership opportunities with community-based organizations (CBOs)
- Other

Economic Impact	0	1	0
------------------------	---	---	---

- Will not adversely affect capital or operating budgets
- Supports private property values in City, with emphasis on communities of color and/or lower income
- Immediate and/or future funding source identified and viable

- Delivers equitable economic benefits for Takoma Park
- Will help attract public and private investment to support established community empowerment initiatives
- Other

Total Score	0		
--------------------	---	--	--

Up to 33 points

Safety

Improves physical conditions and integrity of public spaces to promote safety

$$0 \times 2 = 0$$

- Is essential to reduce risk of physical injury (current hazard)
- Improves visibility for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Intends to reduce vehicular & pedestrian crashes and deaths
- Applies specific strategies to reduce crime

- Improves City owned property, and addresses code compliance or hazardous condition (measured by 311 calls)
- Other

Equity

Prioritizes needs of underserved and vulnerable populations

$$0 \times 2 = 0$$

- Located in area where sizable proportion of benefit goes to low-income or minority residents and/or users
- Provides resources/programs at low/no cost to residents, or else has mechanism to support use amongst vulnerable populations

- Addresses need initiated or supported by the community
- Creates/utilizes partnership opportunities with community-based organizations (CBOs) providing project services/benefits to vulnerable communities
- Generates economic opportunities for low-income/minority populations and/or minority owned businesses
- Other

- Promotes goals of housing affordability, neighborhood conservation, environmental justice, food security, and/or community development for low-income and minority populations

Sustainability

Improves environmental quality

$$0 \times 2 = 0$$

- Improves local water quality
- Improves stormwater management
- Prevents or reduces soil erosion
- Improves habitat (such as through attention to stream buffers, steep slopes, wetlands, or rare, threatened or endangered species)

- Improves air quality
- Reduces energy use or impacts
- Increases native tree inventory and/or tree canopy area
- Addresses urban heat impacts
- Other



When to Use the Evaluation Scorecard

The scorecard will be completed for all public space-related projects

- **New** projects
- **Infrastructure & Acquisition** projects
- **Budget** planning
- **TBD** - this is a new tool, and there will be some tweaking and iterating as new use cases arise!



Next Steps

August-October

- Reintroduction Tour
Evaluation Scorecard
Hands-on Exploration
- Develop Action Plan

Late October/Early November

- Bring finalized PSMP and
Action Plan to the City
Council for a vote



Questions

For more information visit:

<https://bit.ly/publicspacemanagementplan>
-or-

Search for 'Public Space Management Plan on
takomaparkmd.gov

Alex Freedman

Planner

Housing & Community Development Dept.

alexanderf@takomaparkmd.gov |

301-891-7213

