



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – July 10, 2024

Agenda Item 1

Presentation

Presentation on the FY25 Community Quality of Life Grant Award Recommendations.

Recommended Council Action

Adopt the 12 Grants Review Committee FY25 Community Quality of Life Grant Award Recommendations.

Context with Key Issues

The City of Takoma Park's Community Quality of Life Grants Program provides between \$5,000 and \$10,000 for programs, projects, and events that improve the quality of life for City residents by providing greater access and opportunities for participation in the arts and science for predominantly low-and-moderate-income residents. While not required, the City encourages applications for programming that connects arts and sciences with skills that promote workforce development and entrepreneurial programs

The program is administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development and staffed by the City's Grants Coordinator. A Grants Review Committee comprised by residents appointed by the City Council review all completed applications and develop funding recommendations annually. Funding recommendations are forwarded to the City Council following review and deliberations by the Grants Review Committee. In FY25, \$50,000 was allocated from the General Fund, and \$60,000 was allocated from ARPA funding, for a total of \$110,000 available for grant awards.

This year, 17 applicants requested a total of \$144,112 in funding. Six applications were from organizations that have not received previous funding from this grant program. The Grant Review Committee recommends funding the following 12 programs at the levels requested:

Two STEM/Workforce Development programs

Ethiopian Community Center's "Bilingual Career and Service Navigator" to increase the employability of 100 low-skilled low-income Takoma Park residents with limited English proficiency; and

Upwardly Global's "Building a Vibrant Takoma Park Through Immigrant Workforce Inclusion" to empower 10-12 un- and underemployed immigrant and refugee residents from the City of Takoma Park area with the skills, coaching and social capital needed to rebuild their lives and careers in the U.S.

Three STEAM-focused programs

Community Food Forest Collective's "Takoma Park ES Food Forest" to install a food forest at TPES and weave the food forest into the school's curriculum to deepen the students' knowledge of the living world and of ecologically-sound food systems; and

Rolling Terrace PTA's "Addressing Educational Equity through After-School Tutoring" to address the achievement gap for Rolling Terrace students by providing twice-weekly tutoring in math and literacy to improve academic performance; and
So What Else's "So What Else: Takoma Park" to offer nearly 200 Takoma Park children ages 5-18 year-round, instructive, holistic, and 100% free after-school programs, healthy nourishment, and volunteer opportunities at a variety of locations around the City.

Seven Arts and Humanities programs

Action Youth Media's "Takoma Park in (Moving) Pictures," a free media arts/social justice program for middle school and high school students of Takoma Park, documenting the stories of key community members; and

Carpe Diem Arts' "Arts Programming for Educational Enrichment at the Elementary School Level" to support Takoma Park ES and Rolling Terrace ES with two arts-based programs, Jump Start with the Arts for pre-K classrooms, and Assemblies, with age-appropriate content, for the whole school; and

Community Bridges' "Community Bridges Girls Program," to support the development, delivery and the use of literary, performing, visual, and culinary arts within the Community Bridges Girls Program at Takoma Park Middle School and Montgomery Blair High School; and
Dance Exchange's "Takoma Park Arts Exchange," to build capacity among emerging arts organizations, artists, and entrepreneurs; and

Docs in Progress' "Village Reels," an intergenerational filmmaking program to put a spotlight on TP stories that are hiding in plain sight; and

Enterprise Community Development's "Community Engagement through the Arts" to provide introductory drawing and painting courses for children and for adults at Essex House; and
Historic Takoma's "Stories from the African American Community," to complete interviews and final production of their film telling the story of Takoma Park's Black community thru oral history interviews.

Council Priority

Advancing a Community of Belonging

Community Development for an Improved & Equitable Quality of Life

Environmental Considerations

The Takoma Elementary School Food Forest will increase the environmental literacy of students with hands on experience including planting edible plants, understanding native plants and soil health, and a wider understanding of ecosystems.

Fiscal Considerations

The dollar-for-dollar match requirement of the Community Grant Program is met (and often exceeded) by every Quality of Life grantee. For this reason, the program's value to the City is much larger than the City's investment/cost. If the GRC's FY25 funding recommendations are adopted, the City's initial investment of \$110,000 from the General Fund and ARPA funds will be leveraged by grantees with an additional nearly \$231,973 in funding and resources.

Racial Equity Considerations

The Community Quality of Life grant application requires that every applicant for funding explain how their proposed project incorporates racial equity, and the Grants Review Committee scores those responses. The average race equity score for the 10 recommended programs is 4.32 out of 5. Historic Takoma's project in particular is designed to amplify the voices of Takoma Park's Black residents.

Attachments and Links

- Single Reading Ordinance
- Recommended Project Summaries
- FY25 Community Quality of Life Grants Presentation

**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND
ORDINANCE 2025-**

**AUTHORIZING AWARD OF
FY25 COMMUNITY QUALITY OF LIFE GRANT FUNDS**

WHEREAS, the Community Quality of Life Grants program, established by Resolution 2016-14 on June 15, 2016, provides financial support for specific programs, projects and events that improve residents’ quality of life by providing greater access and opportunities for participation in the arts and sciences; and

WHEREAS, the availability of grant funding was announced in April 2024; and

WHEREAS, seventeen (17) applications were received and forwarded to the Grants Review Committee for review and evaluation; and

WHEREAS, a total of \$50,000 has been budgeted for the FY25 Community ‘Quality of Life’ Grants Program from the General Funds, and \$60,000 from ARPA Funds;

WHEREAS, the funding recommendations of the Committee were presented to the Council for consideration on July 10, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Council concurs with the Committee’s funding recommendations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND THAT:

SECTION 1. FY25 Community Quality of Life Grants are awarded for the following projects:

Grantee	Project Name	Grant Amount
Action Youth Media	Takoma Park in (Moving) Pictures	\$5,000
Carpe Diem Arts	Arts Programming for Educational Enrichment at the Elementary School Level	\$5,652
Community Bridges	Community Bridges Girls Program	\$10,000
Community Food Forest Collective	Takoma Park ES Food Forest	\$9,760
Dance Exchange	Takoma Park Arts Exchange	\$10,000
Docs in Progress	Village Reels	\$8,200
Enterprise Community Development	Community Engagement through the Arts	\$10,000
Ethiopian Community Center	Bilingual Career and Service Navigator	\$10,000
Historic Takoma	Stories from the African American Community	\$10,000

Rolling Terrace PTA	Addressing Educational Equity through After-School Tutoring	\$10,000
So What Else	So What Else: Takoma Park	\$9,500
Upwardly Global	Building a Vibrant Takoma Park Through Immigrant Workforce Inclusion	\$10,000

SECTION 2. The City Manager is further authorized to execute any documents and take any action necessary to carry out the intent of this Ordinance.

SECTION 3. This Ordinance shall become effective upon adoption.

FY2025 Community Quality of Life Funding Recommendations Project Summaries

Action Youth Media	Various Locations	
Total Project Cost: \$10,600.00	Requested: \$5,000	Recommended: \$5,000
<p>Takoma Park in (Moving) Pictures “Working with local organizations, we will film short documentaries about community members. We’ll include older residents with stories of growing up in TP, Azalea Award winners who have contributed to the spirit of the TP community and those who currently have a prominent role in our city. We will offer the program on days when school is not in session to offer students an opportunity to fully participate in the program. In these “pop-up” projects, students will learn media arts skills, filmmaking, creative expression, and social justice advocacy.”</p>		

Carpe Diem Arts	Takoma Park and Rolling Terrace Elementary Schools	
Total Project Cost: \$11,305.00	Requested: \$5,652	Recommended: \$5,652
<p>Arts Programming for Educational Enrichment at the Elementary School Level “Carpe Diem Arts proposes to support Takoma Park ES and Rolling Terrace ES with two arts-based programs in the 2024-25 school year, Jump Start with the Arts for pre-K classrooms and Assemblies, with age appropriate content, for the whole school. Jump Start with the Arts is an arts integration program delivered in the pre-K classroom, supporting curricular goals. We help develop social, motor, and cognitive skills and improve kindergarten readiness. We provide a broad range of engaging, interactive programs representing diverse cultural traditions of music and storytelling, creative movement, theater, and puppetry. Arts-based Assembly programs help convey important messaging through an enriching and memorable experience for students and staff. Assemblies can provide general social emotional learning and wellness or be tailored to more specific messaging, such as anti-bullying, environmental awareness, drug misuse/opioid awareness, etc.”</p>		

Community Bridges	Takoma Park Middle and Blair High Schools	
Total Project Cost: \$111,116.00	Requested: \$10,000	Recommended: \$10,000
<p>Community Bridges Girls Program “The CB Girls Program runs for year-round beginning in September through the end of the school year and summer programming. Facilitation of program focuses on areas that support academic excellence, positive leadership, personal health and team building by involving all participants in planned and monitored activities at their schools and in the community. Program activities are held after-school at the school. A grant investment will support the development, delivery and the use of literary, performing, visual and culinary arts within the Community Bridges Girls Program. This grant will allow CB to utilize community partners to expand current lesson plans through art and enhance our annual end of year showcase, Our True Colors. During the year we expose the girls to learn all aspects of the arts such as dance, spoken word, music, theater, sculpture, painting and multimedia. After the girls have explored all aspects of the arts they begin to plan Our True Colors.”</p>		

Community Food Forest Collective	Takoma Park Elementary School	
Total Project Cost: \$44,853.00	Requested: \$9,760	Recommended: \$9,760
<p>Takoma Park ES Food Forest “This grant will be used to further integrate the food forest into the life of the school in a way that enhances the environmental literacy of students. The long-term aim of the project is for the food forest to become an outdoor classroom where students learn about food production, healthy eating habits, and the importance of looking after the living world. We will continue to fund the afterschool gardening club, which teaches children the science of plants, food, and soil by helping them to grow edible plants, tend the soil, water plants, and harvest food. We will create a new Nature Club that will run through the year. Club participants will tend to the food forest and planting beds, expanding their knowledge of gardening, ecosystems, native plants & soil health, with the extra aim of growing their awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the living world.”</p>		

Dance Exchange	Dance Exchange 7117 Maple Avenue	
Total Project Cost: \$25,080.00	Requested: \$10,000	Recommended: \$10,000
<p>Takoma Park Arts Exchange “Dance Exchange will launch the Takoma Park Arts Exchange to bring individuals, non-profits, and small businesses together to learn from one another and strengthen the ways we build towards a sustainable future, and an even more vibrant community. Sessions might include: Climate Education & Engagement; Advancing Racial Equity; Intergenerational Collaboration and Community Building; our founder's Critical Response Process for giving and receiving feedback; Grant writing; Marketing; and Budgeting.”</p>		

Docs in Progress	Blair HS and other locations	
Total Project Cost: \$17,145.00	Requested: \$8,200	Recommended: \$8,200
<p>Village Reels “Village Reels is one of Docs In Progress' Young Artists' Program alongside our legacy and successful summer teen filmmaking workshops. Villagers share their ‘Stories of Life’ on such topics as segregation, immigration and a life in the arts. Their stories reflect the diversity of religions, cultures, ages and economics within our communities. For the students, Reels not only becomes a personal learning experience, but it also teaches critical team building and workforce skills. We strive to identify 2-3 ‘starring’ villagers who are willing to share their particular life experience with 2-3 production teams of 3-4 students each.”</p>		

Enterprise Community Development	Essex House	
Total Project Cost: \$73,215.00	Requested: \$10,000	Recommended: \$10,000
<p>Community Engagement through the Arts “As a means of strengthening the immigrant community, we provide community engagement and wrap around supports for African immigrant families at and near Essex House. Essex House's Arts and Humanities program will support residents by providing an introductory course in drawing and painting by a trained art instructor. Participants will learn to work with line, space, composition, tonal observation, perspective and rendering, while learning the basics of simple color mixing and use of color palettes. Additionally, participants will learn how to apply paints with different brushstrokes, and develop the ability to draw, then paint drawings. The program will support community engagement efforts by providing art programming for up to 25 youth (aged 6-12) and up to 15 adults.”</p>		

Ethiopian Community Center	Virtual and Various Locations	
Total Project Cost: \$24,550.00	Requested: \$10,000	Recommended: \$10,000
<p>Bilingual Career and Service Navigator “Through the Career and Service Navigator Program, ECC aims to increase skills and employment outcome for 100 low-skilled and low-income Takoma Park residents with limited English proficiency. Takoma Park's significantly large immigrant residents make pivotal contributions to the local economy. However, they are disproportionately concentrated in low-wage jobs due to cultural and linguistic barriers. The proposed program plans to eliminate these barriers by providing individualized culturally/linguistically appropriate career counseling, ongoing case management, linkage to social services and monthly peer support. While the program will primarily target English language learners enrolled in ECD's vocational ESOL program offered weekly to residents of Maple Avenue corridor, services will be provided to all eligible Takoma Park residents.”</p>		

Historic Takoma	Various Screening Locations in Takoma Park	
Total Project Cost: \$19,280.00	Requested: \$10,000	Recommended: \$10,000
<p>Stories from the African American Community “The third and final video in the series will also draw on intimate, first-person interview narratives about, for example, the three Black neighborhoods: “the Hill,” “the Bottom,” and Lincoln Avenue. And what it was like to attend the Black (Rosenwald) elementary school on Geneva Avenue during segregation—and to transition to White schools in the fall of 1954. Screened in public venues/schools, to increase awareness & understanding among all residents, particularly minorities, who have often also been marginalized. ”</p>		

Rolling Terrace PTA	Rolling Terrace Elementary School	
Total Project Cost: \$43,352.00	Requested: \$10,000	Recommended: \$10,000
<p>Addressing Educational Equity through After-School Tutoring</p> <p>“Rolling Terrace Elementary School (RT) is a vibrant community of 642 K-5 students and 120 staff dedicated to multilingualism and excellence. Despite this, a significant achievement gap persists, as evident in test score differentials with neighboring schools. To address this, our project will replicate a previously successful model of high-dose tutoring that directly supports students’ success in literacy and math and aligns with grade-level STEAM curricula. Crucially, this project will fund RT classroom teachers as tutors as they are best positioned to provide continuity of instruction and expertise in our Two Way Immersion model, and they are trusted and familiar to our parents/caregivers. Fifteen teachers will provide 2 8-week, hour-long sessions (fall / spring), meeting twice weekly; with 60 students enrolled per session.”</p>		

So What Else	Various Locations	
Total Project Cost: \$56,642.00	Requested: \$9,500	Recommended: \$9,500
<p>So What Else: Takoma Park</p> <p>“So What Else will offer instructive, holistic, and 100% free after school programs, healthy nourishment, and volunteer opportunities for 195 children ages 5-18 throughout Takoma Park. Locations and curricula will be developed based on outreach to Takoma Park community centers and apartment buildings, beginning with centers and homes that we are familiar with through our food relief and distribution programs. 12-week fall and spring semesters will be held with approximately 20 students per class, with an additional 2 classroom aides to assist youth development providers in content, learning, and classroom management. “</p>		

Upwardly Global	Virtual and Various Locations	
Total Project Cost: \$20,000.00	Requested: \$10,000	Recommended: \$10,000
<p>Building a Vibrant Takoma Park Through Immigrant Workforce Inclusion</p> <p>“Building off our established partnership with Takoma Park, funding will enable us to reach the region’s community of immigrant job seekers through targeted relationship-cultivation with local community partners. We expect to serve 10-12 job seekers from Takoma Park and neighboring Silver Spring. Job seekers will access job readiness training, industry-specific career pathways coaching, re/upskilling opportunities, and networking with Upwardly Global’s network of employer partners and volunteer professionals. Upwardly Global will focus on connecting job seekers to high-opportunity roles including in STEM fields, leading to sustainable, well-paying employment outcomes.”</p>		