



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – July 24, 2024 Agenda Item 6

Work Session

Code Enforcement Update

Recommended Council Action

Listen to the presentation and provide feedback to HCD on upcoming activities.

Context with Key Issues

The Code Enforcement Division is responsible for code enforcement (including environmental code enforcement), and education and outreach regarding City ordinances and regulations. Current staffing includes one Code Enforcement Officer and one Code Enforcement Manager.

Code Enforcement staff are responsible for ensuring that properties within Takoma Park are maintained in a safe and sanitary manner in accordance with the Property Maintenance Code. These standards apply to all existing residential, commercial, institutional and accessory structures and premises as well as vacant land. These code provisions constitute minimum standards for property maintenance in the city.

ENFORCEMENT PROCESS

Inspections

An inspection can be triggered by a complaint, a referral from another agency, or included as part of an overall strategy to improve conditions in a specific neighborhood or business district. Code Enforcement staff conduct general property maintenance code inspections city wide, and investigate any potential violations of the City Environmental Initiatives. Montgomery County's Code Enforcement Division conducts rental housing inspections and inspections for buildings under construction.

Courtesy Notice

When the inspector has identified property maintenance code violation(s), a Courtesy Notice will be issued. The Courtesy Notice, a simple door hanger that is placed on the front entrance to the building, identifies the code violation(s) that have been observed by the inspector and encourages the owner to contact the inspector if they have any questions. The inspector will return to the site after a specified period of time (15 days) to re-inspect. If the violation(s) have been corrected, the case is closed. If one or more items remain unresolved, a Notice of Violation is issued.

Notice of Violation

If violations are observed when the property is re-inspected, the inspector prepares a Notice of Violation and the owner is given a specific deadline for the correction of the violation(s) (20 days). Once the deadline has passed, the property will be re-inspected. If the owner has made the required repairs, the case is closed. If work to correct the violation is underway or the weather has prevented the owner from fully addressing the violation, the owner may request additional time to

correct the outstanding violation(s). Requests for extensions are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. If the owner has not been responsive and the violations remain, the inspector will issue a municipal infraction citation for each code violation.

Municipal Infraction Citations

Municipal citation infractions carry fines ranging from \$200 to \$1,000 per violation depending on the severity of the violation. In addition to the fine, the City will request an order from the Court requiring that the violation(s) be corrected (an Abatement Order). If the owner fails to correct the problem within the timeframe set by the Judge, the City may bring the owner back to Court for failure to comply with the Abatement Order. The Abatement Order also allows the City or its agent to enter onto the property, make the required repairs, and charge the owner for the cost of correcting the code violation. If the owner fails to pay for the repairs, the City places a lien against the property and initiates legal actions to collect this lien.

CURRENT STATUS

During FY 24, there were 357 Property Maintenance Cases opened and closed. 148 Notices of Violation were issued, 43 properties received Municipal Infraction Citations, and three cases went to Court. Presently, we have 81 open cases that have yet to be resolved. We performed monthly inspections on several vacant properties; these cases stay open until occupied. We have 61 properties that are on our monthly litter patrol; these are multi-family residential and commercial buildings. We had 22 environmental cases that were opened and closed; these cases were used to enforce our environmental initiatives. We have also visited every commercial retail business in the city to promote our Environmental Initiatives.

We have received an Aging in Place Grant from MD Department of Aging (\$26,000.00) and have performed a partnership with the Village of Takoma Park to implement the grant. We have a grant pending for MD DHCD Community Health and Safety Works, Environmental Justice Category (\$92,250.00) and another from MD DHCD National Capital Strategic Economic Development Fund (NED) \$150,000.

UPCOMING STEPS

In the 2025 fiscal year, the Code Enforcement Division has prioritized identifying funding to support property owners who may have financial or technical issues in addressing property maintenance concerns. To date, the City has applied for three relevant grants:

Aging in Place Grant (MD Department of Aging): A partnership program with the Village of Takoma Park to provide repairs and accessibility modifications for Takoma Park's senior residents.

6500 Sligo Mill Illegal Dumping & Maintenance Improvements (MD DHCD Community Health and Safety Works): Funding to deter illegal dumping by reorienting the existing roadway and setting up a mobile detection camera.

Homeowner Maintenance Assistance Program (DHCD NED): Funding to support income-restricted Takoma Park owners with addressing code violations.

Council Priority

Engaged, Responsive, and Service-Oriented Government

Environmental Impact

The Code Enforcement Division enforces the various environmental codes (business/multi-family recycling, plastic bags, polystyrene, plastic straw and Safe Grow) and educates the public about the requirements and environmental benefits. The team minimizes fuel consumption by using two fully electric vehicles.

Fiscal Impact

While Code Enforcement infractions may yield minor revenue for the City, the division's primary objective in any case is compliance with the Code rather than revenue generation. As such, almost all fines are waived upon the completion of work.

Racial Equity Impact

Code Enforcement routinely inspects all Wards of the City to ensure fairness and equity. Future grant funds are intended to support lower-income homeowners, who may lack the means to address outstanding maintenance violations.

Attachments and Links

- <https://takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-clerk/city-charter-and-code/>
- <https://takomaparkmd.gov/government/housing-and-community-development/code-enforcement/>
- <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mcg/countycode.html>

City of Takoma Park
Code Enforcement
We would like to help you
Avoid a Violation

During a general survey of the neighborhood, we noted the following item(s) that are potentially a violation of the Takoma Park Property Maintenance Code:

Date of Issue: _____/_____/_____

Address: _____

To avoid a **Notice of Violation**, please address the issue written above by this date:

**For questions, please call the
Code Enforcement Division at:**

Phone: _____

For complete information regarding the Takoma Park Property Maintenance Code, please visit:

<https://takomaparkmd.gov/government/housing-and-community-development/code-enforcement/property-maintenance-code/>

Thank you!
Code Enforcement Manager
Rick Baravechia, #8454
City of Takoma Park
301-891-7113





City of Takoma Park
Housing & Community Development
Code Enforcement

Notice of Violation

Not a citation, please call us to discuss today!

Name

Date

Address

City, State, Zip

PROPERTY ADDRESS:

Takoma Park, MD 20912

ISSUANCE DATE:

COMPLETION/DUE DATE:

This document from The City of Takoma Park Code Enforcement Division is notifying you of the following Code violations at the above referenced property. Contact us today regarding the elimination of the violations at your property.

Code	Violation	Required Action(s)

Please be aware that the stated violation(s) must be corrected by the above referenced completion date. Failure to comply with the directives of this Notice of Violation may result in the issuance of a Uniform Civil Citation and other administrative actions within the provisions of the law.

If you have any questions regarding this Notice of Violation, contact the City of Takoma Park Code Enforcement Division at 301-891-7113

Name: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
Officers name, Badge #
HCD--Code Enforcement
301-891-xxxx, xxxxxx@takomaparkmd.gov
Case #

VIA REGULAR & CERTIFIED MAIL

Duane (Rick) Baravechia: Supervisor, 301-891-7113 | Takoma Park Code Enforcement

7500 Maple Avenue Takoma Park, MD 20912



City of Takoma Park
Housing & Community Development
Code Enforcement

Failure to Abate a Notice of Violation

Name: _____ **Date** _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip _____

Property Address: **1234 Main Street**
 Takoma Park, MD 20912

Dear Property Owner:

On "date", the City of Takoma Park Code Enforcement Division issued a Notice of Violation in which you were notified to correct the conditions at the above-referenced property as per the attached Notice of Violation. You were to comply with the Notice on or before "date".

An inspection on "date" revealed that abatement of the violations is not complete.

At this time, the Code Enforcement Division is requesting that you comply with the Notice of Violation. The City will proceed with issuance of municipal infraction citation(s) and fine(s) if the conditions are not corrected by "date". You have the option of requesting an extension of the abatement period. The request needs to be submitted on the enclosed form and returned to the Code Enforcement Division Office no later than "date".

Please contact this office immediately to inform us of your actions to comply with the Notice.

Sincerely,

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Officers Name, Badge # XXXX

HCD -- Code Enforcement

301-891-XXXX, XXXXXXXXXXXX@takomaparkmd.gov

Case #xx-xxxxxx

Enclosures(s): GOV-QA

Duane (Rick) Baravechia: Supervisor, 301-891-7113 | Takoma Park Code Enforcement

7500 Maple Avenue Takoma Park, MD 20912



City of Takoma Park
**Housing & Community Development
Code Enforcement**

City of Takoma Park Code Enforcement Division

Name **Date**
Address
City, State, Zip

**Property Address: 1234 Main Street
Takoma Park, MD 20912**

Regarding Citation Number(s):

Dear Property Owner:

Please be advised that you have been served with the enclosed citation(s).
Although you may receive several citations, only one fine payment is due per violation.

If you decide to have the matter heard in District Court, please follow the instructions on the citation(s). Written notice of your request for a trial must be submitted to the City of Takoma Park at the following address on or before the date noted on the citation(s).

City of Takoma Park Maryland
Housing & Community Development
Code Enforcement Division
7500 Maple Avenue
Takoma Park MD 20912

If you have any questions concerning this matter, you may contact me at 301-891-XXXX.

Sincerely,

xxxxxxxxxxxx

Officers name, Badge #XXXX
HCD - Code Enforcement
301-891-XXXX, XXXXXX@takomaparkmd.gov
Case #XXXXXXXXXX

Certified/Restricted and Regular Mail

Enclosures: Citations



City of Takoma Park
Housing & Community Development
Code Enforcement

Failure to abate Citation(s)

Name:

Date

Address:

City, State, Zip

Re: Street Address, Takoma Park, MD 20912

Regarding Citation(s):

Dear Property Owner:

On DATE, the City of Takoma Park issued a citation(s) in which you were charged with City code violation(s) for the above referenced property. The code violation(s) were to have been abated by DATE. A recent inspection and review of the charges on DATE revealed that the Code violations remain valid as listed below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

At this time, the City Code Enforcement Office is requesting that you comply with the Citation charges by abating the cited violations. Please contact this office immediately to inform us of your actions to abate the violation(s). The City will proceed with legal action if the violations are not corrected by DATE.

Sincerely,

XXXXXXXXXXXX

Officers Name, Badge # XXXX

HCD - Code Enforcement

301-891-XXXX, XXXXXXXXX@takomaparkmd.gov

Case #

Cc:

File

Duane (Rick) Baravechia: Supervisor, 301-891-7113 | Takoma Park Code Enforcement

7500 Maple Avenue Takoma Park, MD 20912

Duane (Rick) Baravechia: Supervisor, 301-891-7113 | Takoma Park Code Enforcement

7500 Maple Avenue Takoma Park, MD 20912



City of Takoma Park Housing & Community Development Code Enforcement Division

Name
Address
City, State Zip

Date

Re: Property Address, Takoma Park, MD 20912

Dear Homeowner:

A recent re-inspection of the property on "Date" found that the items previously noted by Code Enforcement staff as violations of the property maintenance code have been corrected. This case has been closed as a result. No further action is required.

Thank you for your efforts to keep your property safe, clean and up to Code.

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact me at 301-891-XXXX

Sincerely,
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Officers Name, Badge #: XXXX
301-891-XXXX, XXXXXXX@takomaparkmd.gov
HCD - Code Enforcement
Case #:

CC
File

Duane (Rick) Baravechia: Supervisor, 301-891-7113 | Takoma Park Code Enforcement

7500 Maple Avenue Takoma Park, MD 20912



0Z41585719

UNIFORM CIVIL CITATION

WITNESS

RELATED CASE # / CITATION(S) →

Citation Number

District Court of Maryland for

Address

County/Municipality/State of Maryland vs.

Agency

Defendant's (Last) Name

First

Middle

Current Street Address

Apt. No.

City

County

State

Zip

DOB

Height

Weight

Sex

Race

Hair

Eyes

Telephone No. Day/Night:

E-mail:

Based on personal knowledge of the undersigned officer the attached affidavit, the Defendant is charged with

at _____ Time AM PM on _____ / _____ / _____

at _____ Location of Offense

County, MD in violation of: Md. Ann. Code Municipal Infraction/County Ordinance/Public Local Law/Local Code COMAR

Document/Article Section Sub Section Paragraph

Each day a violation continues is a separate infraction subject to an additional citation.

I sign my name as a receipt of a copy of this Citation and not as an admission of guilt. I will comply with the requirements set forth in this Citation.

Defendant's Signature

INSTRUCTIONS

YOU MUST APPEAR IN COURT. A notice of trial date will be mailed to you.

YOU MAY PAY A FINE of \$ _____ (entire amount required) by _____ Date to the:

District Court. Payment of the fine will not close the case if abatement action is pending.

Agency/Municipality _____

at _____ Payment Location

and AVOID TRIAL. This will be deemed an admission of guilt and a trial date will not be set.

YOU MAY ELECT TO STAND TRIAL by sending your request in writing to the:

District Court

Agency/Municipality _____

in writing by _____ Date at _____ Address

DO NOT SEND PAYMENT OF FINE. The District Court will mail you a notice of your trial date, time, and location. AT TRIAL the Court may impose a fine up to the maximum allowed by statute plus court costs.

IN ADDITION, _____ Agency/Municipality is seeking abatement of this infraction.

You may be ordered to abate this infraction or be assessed the costs for the abatement, as well as a fine of up to \$1,000, plus court costs. Payment of the preset fine will not satisfy the abatement action and an order of abatement may still be entered against you.

FAILING TO APPEAR OR PAY THE FINE MAY RESULT IN A WARRANT BEING ISSUED FOR YOUR ARREST.

FAILING TO PAY THE FINE OR REQUEST A TRIAL DATE:

will deem you liable for the fine assessed; the fine may be doubled and/or a judgment on

affidavit may be entered against you including an order of abatement;

you may be found guilty of a Code violation and the maximum fines and costs can be imposed.

FAILURE TO APPEAR FOR A REQUESTED TRIAL DATE:

the fine may be doubled and a judgment on affidavit entered against you;

you may be found guilty of a Code violation and the maximum fines and costs can be imposed.

I solemnly affirm under the penalties of perjury, and based upon personal knowledge or the attached affidavit, that the contents of this citation are true and that I am competent to testify on these matters.

The Defendant is not now in the military service, as defined in the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.

Issuing Officer's Signature

Officer's Printed Name

Date

Agency

Sub-Agency

I.D. No.

Telephone

DC-028 (Rev. 10/2016) Print Date 08/2016

MUNICIPALITY/COURT COPY