

City Council Priorities 2025-2026

I. Advancing a Community of Belonging

- Further the City's racial equity work.
- Identify needs and prioritize community programming, focusing on youth, families, seniors, and residents facing systemic barriers such as Black, Indigenous, and people of color, immigrants, low-income workers, and those with disabilities.
- Maintain our commitment to being a welcoming and inclusive community where all residents experience a sense of belonging.

Commented [TS1]: Suggested removing this item due to expenditure on COVID funds are coming to an end.

II. Fiscally Sustainable Government

- Develop a long-term fiscal sustainability strategy.
- Explore expanding City revenue options to identify long-term solutions necessary to diversify the City's revenue streams.

Commented [TS2]: Added aspects of improvements in efficiency to this item.

III. Environmentally Sustainable Community

- Climate Change Mitigation: Work towards net-zero greenhouse gas emissions goal by 2035.
- Climate Change Resilience: Improve our ability to adapt and be resilient to local impacts of climate change.

Commented [TS3]: This is important but not a priority. During the meeting, council noted that we don't have control over this but we can educate residents about the tax credits that are available within the city, state, and county and how to access them.

Commented [TS4]: Council discussed the work that the prior council has done to streamline this process. Such as the budget calendar which outlines community engagement as well as the budget process for the year. Council member discussed the inclusion of a council committee on the budget. Members of council noted that the decision about whether something such as a committee is outside of the priorities process and should be discussed separately. It was unclear what the charge of the group would be.

- 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.

IV. Engaged, Responsive, Service-Oriented Government

Commented [TS5]: This has been completed.

- Advance 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 and the Council, including requests for government services, complaint systems, and code enforcement.

V. Housing and Community Development for an Improved & Equitable Quality of Life

Commented [TS6]: Suggestion from council was made to include the word safe and it would be helpful to discuss that matter.

- Ensure that a range of safe, high quality, affordable, green and energy efficient housing options are equitably available in neighborhoods throughout the community.
- Improve transportation planning, design, and implementation to create a safer, more environmentally sustainable and more racially and economically equitable community for all residents, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicle occupants.
- Plan and prepare for development in the City and region while maintaining the special character and economic and racial diversity of Takoma Park.

Advancing a Community of Belonging

I. *Further the City's racial equity work.*

Strategies

- Update approach to address racial equity, including how we organize, institutionalize, and operationalize equity by updating the racial equity framework and racial equity considerations.
- Evaluate how the City is processing and responding to requests and complaints so that they are done in an equitable way across the City.
- Remove unlawful restrictive covenants within the City.

Commented [TS7]: Added the restrictive covenants because this is a priority for the council based on prior resolution.

Desired Outcome

- Continued progress toward a more racially equitable community and government, where all residents of our City experience a sense of belonging.

Commented [TS8]: The data component could be part of the equity approach in the first bullet as it relates to information that was used for the race considerations. It is also in the strategy related to identifying community needs.

Major Projects, Initiatives, and Ongoing Activities

- [Update Race Equity Framework Resolution 2017-28](#)
- [Finalize Restrictive Covenant Work](#)

II. *Identify needs and prioritize community programming focusing on youth, families, seniors, and residents facing systemic barriers such as Black, Indigenous, and people of color, immigrants, LGBTQIA, low-income workers, and people with disabilities.*

Strategies

- Utilize resident surveys, staff and committee reports, program attendance and metrics, racial equity assessment tools, and other evaluative or outreach approaches to determine existing gaps in program offerings and develop programs to close identified gaps.
- Improve equitable access to programming, services, and government decision-making to better reach residents who rarely engage with the City, including residents of color, immigrants (especially those with limited English), and renters.
- Establish a Community Connectors or Navigator system to help assess residents' needs and to help develop updated and improved systems to connect residents with services.
- Coordinate with state, county, non-profit partners, and community groups to address issues such as food insecurity, workforce development, emergency rental assistance, and access to recreation services for youth.

Commented [TS9]: Question for staff about the timing of the metrics work. Also, do we need to revisit tools such as resident surveys and balancing act technology.

Commented [TS10]: Revised to reduce emphasis on COVID broadband and library access given the current progress related to these efforts. Emphasis is more on ensuring less engaged residents have a seat at the table when it comes to programs, services, and decision making.

Commented [TS11]: Added this item which was alluded to under the prior covid priority to address specific programming needs that are either outside of the city's authority or would require external parties to aid in addressing such as grants or local non-profits.

Desired Outcome

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

Major Projects, Initiatives, and Ongoing Activities

- ARPA Social Services Partnerships Program: [Community Connectors](#)
- [ARPA Family Resiliency Programs: Municipal Broadband, WiFi Hotspots, Laptop Lending; Recreation Scholarship & Tutoring](#)

III. ***Maintain our commitment to being a welcoming and inclusive community where all residents experience a sense of belonging***

Commented [TS12]: Should add links to community grants program, food insecurity grants, and keep recreation scholarship and tutoring.

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.

Commented [TS13]: In light of federal efforts, council may want to include resources in the FY 26 budget to support educating and supporting immigrants and refugees in the City.

Desired Outcome

- Remain a welcoming community and strengthen access to programming and information to meet the needs of immigrants and refugees.

Major Projects, Initiatives, and Ongoing Activities

ARPA Social Services Partnerships Program: [Community Connectors](#)

Fiscally Sustainable Government

I. Develop a long-term fiscal sustainability strategy.

Strategy

- Establish policies for the appropriate level of reserves including 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.
- Identify methods to increase cost- saving efficiencies in government operations including recommendations from City Organizational Assessment.

Commented [TS14]: This item was incorporated into the long term strategy focused on cost savings.

Desired Outcome

- Fiscal sustainability for key services.

Major Projects, Initiatives, and Ongoing Activities

- Financial system implementation
- [City of Takoma Park Reserve Policy](#)
- [Organizational Assessment Final Report](#)

II. Explore expanding City revenue options to identify long-term solutions necessary to diversify the City's revenue streams.

Strategies

- Increase advocacy and lobbying activities at federal, state, and county levels to advocate for additional revenue sources for municipalities.
- Identify and analyze potential alternative revenue sources for the City within current authorities, such as railroad and utility tax rate as well as vacant property fee modifications.
- Actively pursue external federal, state, and county grant funding opportunities to meet short-term City goals.

Commented [TS15]: There are bills in Annapolis that address funding to municipalities that the working group are reviewing so it is important to make sure that this is a focus.

Commented [TS16]: Added language from the budget priorities resolution approved by this council.

Desired Outcome

- A more diverse set of revenue sources for the City.

Major Projects, Initiatives, and Ongoing Activities

- Financial Forecast
- [Housing and Economic Strategic Plan Recommendations \(i.e., vacant property tax\)](#)
- [Organizational Assessment Final Report](#)
- [ARPA City Operations: Revenue Replacement](#)

Environmentally Sustainable Community

I. *Climate Change Mitigation: Work towards net-zero greenhouse gas emissions goal by 2035.*

Strategies

- Prioritize and accelerate policies and programs that implement the 2020 Climate Emergency Response Framework strategies for buildings and transportation.
- Continue City sustainability programs with emphasis on equity issues and on engaging all types of city residents in terms relevant to them.
- Coordinate and advocate for climate change mitigation resiliency and sustainability funds and programs with non-profits organizations, County, State, region and federal governments.

Commented [TS17]: In light of the council's FY 26 budget priorities discussion in which climate was identified as an important issue but not as important as housing, traffic and pedestrian safety and recreation, should this be prioritized beyond buildings and transportation?

Commented [TS18]: Is this something that is needed? In the wellbeing we ask staff to focus on equity of its programs based on gaps and needs. Are we asking staff to expand programs when the budget priorities did not prioritize this work for funding?

Desired Outcome

- Progress toward the City's climate mitigation and resiliency goals; more sustainable City operations.

Major Projects, Initiatives, and Ongoing Activities

- [2020 Climate Emergency Response Framework](#)

II. *Climate Change Resilience: Improve our ability to adapt and be resilient to local impacts of climate change.*

Strategies

- Build on the results of the Stormwater Resilience Study to consider actions and planning that address increased stormwater in the City and its impacts on both private properties and public areas, including incentives and code changes, stormwater permitting changes, education, collaboration with the county and other jurisdictions on flooding issues, and a more holistic resilience and adaptation strategy.
- Strengthen City emergency preparedness plans and activities for extreme weather, with an emphasis on exploring ways to plan for high probability events with disproportionate and grave risks to the City's most vulnerable residents.
- Review and prioritize the 2019 resiliency recommendations and take initial steps forward on measures that produce co-benefits to heat island mitigation and equity-based resilience.

Commented [TS19]: We should keep this item. It was something that was communicated at part of the FY 25 budget as a priority but still needs time to complete.

Commented [TS20]: Unclear about what the goal is for this effort and how are they different from the first bullet. The aspects regarding taking steps on measures that produce co-benefits seems to be very long term and research based.

Desired Outcomes

- Improved stormwater management for both the public space and stormwater flows on and between private properties. Improved City readiness for extreme weather events, with an emphasis on reduced risks to vulnerable residents.

Major Projects, Initiatives, and Ongoing Activities

- [Stormwater Resilience Study](#)

III. 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

- Implement the multi-year urban forest management plan, with a focus on no net loss, increased biodiversity, and equity in tree cover and tree maintenance support. Expand 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.
- Consider ways to encourage native plantings and invasive removal on public and private property.

Commented [TS21]: This urban forest plan was adopted: [Urban-Forest-Master-Plan-2023.pdf](#) . Do we want to change this to implement? There is a ton of work outlined in the document.

Commented [TS22]: Will need to confirm with staff regarding the status of this pilot effort.

Commented [TS23]: Staff are currently implementing the Public space management plan. Do we need this?

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
- [2020 Climate Emergency Response Framework](#)
- [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
- [Stormwater Resilience Study](#)

Engaged, Responsive, Service-Oriented Government

- I. **Advance 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's website, and social media tools, low-tech solutions that recognize our community's technological divide, and support for Councilmember communications – to increase public engagement and more easily and effectively share information.
- Adopt 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, representation, trust, and collaboration among residents and City government.

Major Projects, Initiatives and Ongoing Activities

- City website update
- ARPA Social Services Partnerships Program: [Community Connectors](#)

- II. **Improve policies and processes to enhance resident interaction with the City government and the Council, including requests for government services, complaint systems, and code enforcement.**

Strategies

- Identify improved approaches to tracking resident inquiries to ensure that staff are responsive within established timeframes.
- Continue efforts to create more effective and engaged city committees that reflect the diversity of our community. Ensure the City responds to recommendations made by these committees and task forces in a meaningful way.

Desired Outcome

Improved and more equitable policies and processes related to City services..

Major Projects, Initiatives and Ongoing Activities

- [Complete Safe Streets Recommendations](#)
- [My TKPK](#)
- [Task Force on Sustainable Banking and Investments](#)

Commented [TS24]: Staff are working on a new city website. Do we want this to focus more on council communication to residents?

Commented [TS25]: Staff have started to do this.

Commented [TS26]: Would recommend keeping this. It might be helpful as we discuss accessibility for the hearing impaired in terms of notes and accuracy of closed caption.

Commented [TS27]: This language duplicates language in the community of belonging priority.

Commented [TS28]: I feel that we do this. I would prefer that the coordination is focused more on vulnerable populations that was communicated in the community of belonging.

Commented [TS29]: Staff have done a substantial amount of work on this item.

Commented [TS30]: Staff has done a lot of work on this. However, I do think that there is still TA needed to help councilmembers with vehicles for communicating with residents and the need to streamline the complaint process to a approach that is not councilmember centric.

Commented [TS31]: We could include the relevant task force and committee reports that the council wants to prioritize for follow up here.

Housing and Community Development for an Improved & Equitable Quality of Life

- I. **Ensure that a range of safe, high quality, affordable, green and energy efficient housing options are equitably available in neighborhoods throughout the community.**

Strategies

- Continue to build partnerships with nonprofits, foundations, financial institutions, County, State, 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, specifically sections on rent stabilization.
- Continue to work on and advocate for policies related to tenant rights including displacement and Good Cause.

Commented [TS32]: Staff are doing this so it would be helpful to discuss what it is that we want to do here.

Commented [TS33]: The prior council has approved the housing credits so regulations would be developed during this council term.

Desired Outcome

- Meet the current and future housing needs of the community while ensuring affordable housing options for residents of all races, ethnicities, and varying income levels.

Major Projects, Initiatives and Ongoing Activities

- [Housing and Economic Strategic Plan Recommendations \(i.e., recommendations on rent stabilization, PILOT, etc.\)](#)
- Washington Adventist Hospital Campus
- New Hampshire Ave Redevelopment
- [Affordable Housing Partnerships](#)
- [HomeStretch Downpayment Assistance Program](#)
- Review selected County policies that support City housing, equity and sustainability goals.

- II. **Improve transportation planning, design, and implementation to create a safer, more environmentally sustainable and more racially and economically equitable community for all residents, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicle occupants.**

Strategies

- Adopt a Vision Zero initiative; examine potential components such as education/outreach, policy changes, and infrastructure improvements.
- Work with State Highway Administration (SHA) to address safety at dangerous intersections as identified by Montgomery County Predictive Safety Analysis and Takoma Park Police data.
- Advocate for transportation improvements that impact access and safety of Takoma Park residents through regional collaboration and coordinated efforts, including Purple Line construction, Metro, bike lanes, etc.

Commented [TS34]: Do we want to focus on specific intersections that we want to work with SHA on? For example, Takoma Junction?

Commented [TS35]: This is important to keep.

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, including environmental ones, throughout the City; and racially equitable transportation system and outcomes.

Major Projects, Initiatives and Ongoing Activities

- [Complete Safe Streets Recommendations](#)
- [New Ave Bikeway](#)
- Purple Line
- [Maple Ave Connectivity Project](#)
- [Metropolitan Branch Trail Upgrade](#)
- [Resolution on Transportation Safety](#)

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

Strategies

- Continue to provide support for small businesses especially those impacted by Purple Line construction.
- Explore options for providing support services, including through direct assistance and partnerships, for businesses located outside the areas covered by existing business associations.
- Leverage both public and private stakeholders to accomplish the goal of developing a Recreation Center that meets the City's needs.
- Coordinate with the County on planning, zoning and development issues affecting the city.

Commented [TS36]: We need to update this list of ongoing projects.

Commented [TS37]: This is something that staff is doing but we don't have much control over the outcome. So should we remove this from the council priorities but understand that staff will continue to work with partners to attract business to the area.

Commented [TS38]: Do we want to include Public Works as a priority project of focus? The recreation center was identified as part of the budget priorities.

Desired Outcome

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

Major Projects, Initiatives and Ongoing Activities

- [Housing and Economic Strategic Plan Recommendations \(i.e., recommendations on economic development\)](#)
- [Recreation Center Development](#)
- [Library and Community Center Renovation](#)
- [ARPA Small Business Recovery Programs: Façade Improvement Grants, Small Business Incubator, Neighborhood Commercial Center Improvement, TKPK Business Investment Grant](#)
- Purple Line Construction
- Continue to advocate for renovations at Piney Branch Elementary School and increased public school facilities in the City or nearby.