

Introduced by: Councilmember Searcy

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION 2019-47

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE CITY OF TAKOMA PARK
HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN**

WHEREAS, the City of Takoma Park acknowledges the fundamental human right to adequate housing as part of the right to an adequate standard of living as recognized in the [1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) and in the [1966 International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights](#); and

WHEREAS, human rights are interdependent, indivisible, and interrelated, and therefore, the human right to adequate housing is interrelated with the right to work, earning a living and education, as well as other rights; and

WHEREAS, as a City we have the responsibility to enact legislation and take other measures within our available resources to facilitate realization of these rights and ensure safe, habitable and affordable housing; steady economic, social and cultural development; and full and productive employment; and

WHEREAS, the City of Takoma Park is a small, densely developed community in the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. region and, as such, is affected by regional market, transportation and environmental forces; and

WHEREAS, the City has been able to withstand pressure on residential rent prices due to its long-standing rent stabilization program, but has been increasingly affected by rising home purchase prices in the region; and

WHEREAS, there has been little new development in the City since the 1970's, which has limited the financial stability and growth of Takoma Park businesses and has led to a lack of diversity of housing types in the community; and

WHEREAS, a very large portion of the commercial and residential building stock is older and not energy efficient, with 70% of residential structures built before 1940; and

WHEREAS, the City has a relatively small commercial tax base and no industrial base and its largest employer – the Washington Adventist Hospital – has recently moved; and

WHEREAS, the Purple Line light rail transit line is being constructed on the northern side of the City, bringing with it both opportunities and challenges; and

WHEREAS, many Takoma Park residents have financial pressures due to inadequate income and high expenses, particularly high housing costs; approximately 27% of homeowners and 43% of renters have housing expenses that represent 30% or more of their monthly income, thereby meeting the Federal definition of housing burdened; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned issues, along with the impacts of climate change and the City's commitment to actively use race equity as a guiding principle in decision-making, caused the City Council and City Staff to identify a need for and develop a Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan for the period 2019 through 2030; and

WHEREAS, the themes of the Strategic Plan fall into these categories:

- Preserve existing businesses and affordable housing in Takoma Park, including in revitalizing areas
- Produce more housing and opportunities for businesses to start and grow across the income spectrum and in neighborhoods across the City to meet the diverse housing and economic needs
- Protect renters, homeowners, and local businesses from discrimination and displacement; and protect our environment from destruction; and

WHEREAS, the Plan calls for increased efforts to support the existing residential and business communities while also increasing the number and types of housing units and improving economic self-sufficiency of residents and business owners throughout the City; and

WHEREAS, the Council acknowledges its responsibility to assist the larger region on meeting affordable housing goals and greenhouse gas reduction targets; and

WHEREAS, to implement this Strategic Plan, Council will need to take action on some of the strategies, including:

- Adoption of housing targets, consistent with the regional targets adopted by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and those to be considered by Montgomery County
- Criteria for use of the City's Housing Reserve and other City funding sources
- Enhancements to the effectiveness of the Rent Stabilization program, including consideration of modification of the capital improvement process for ease of use
- Criteria for the granting of Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs)
- New or modified real property tax credits
- Adoption of criteria for assessing a higher vacant building property tax
- Recommended changes to the County's zoning and allowable use provisions; and

WHEREAS, a schedule for such Council actions should be established by February 2020; and

WHEREAS, other steps to advance this Plan are to be prepared by City staff, including presentation of indicators to measure success, the preparation of annual implementation plans, and biannual presentations to Council on the status of work on the Plan; and

WHEREAS, this Strategic Plan significantly advances the Council's Priorities for 2019-2020 and will guide this and future Councils when setting policies and adopting budgets, will assist City staff in the development of annual implementation plans and work plans, and will be reviewed and, if necessary, updated periodically as conditions and needs change in the City of Takoma Park.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Council of the City of Takoma Park hereby adopts the 2019-2030 City of Takoma Park Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan.

Adopted this 16th day of October, 2019.

AYE: Stewart, Kovar, Dyballa, Kostiuk, Seamens, Searcy

NAY: Smith

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

Attest:



Jessie Carpenter, CMC
City Clerk