



TAKOMA PARK,
MARYLAND

CITY MANAGER





TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND CITY MANAGER

GovHR USA, LLC is pleased to announce the recruitment and selection process for the City Manager position for the City of Takoma Park, Maryland. The City is seeking candidates to serve as its next City Manager who are experienced leaders with the following traits: collaborative, supportive, innovative, visionary, diplomatic, fiscally minded, enthusiastic, and possess a good sense of humor.

This brochure provides background information on the City of Takoma Park as well as the requirements and expected qualifications for the City Manager's position. Additional information about Takoma Park can be found on the City's website: <https://takomaparkmd.gov>.

THE COMMUNITY

The City of Takoma Park is situated in Montgomery County and shares jurisdictional borders with Montgomery County, Washington D.C. and Prince George's County. The City is approximately 5 miles from downtown Washington, D.C., making it a popular residential area for commuters. Takoma Park, often referred to as the Azalea City, is a thriving and dynamic community. Takoma Park's unique blend of history, diversity, and progressive values makes it a distinctive and lively community.

Takoma Park is compact, consisting of 2.4 square miles with a population of nearly 18,000 - a model of urban convenience and walkability, with a regionally enviable tree canopy. It is a community with a shared sense of commitment to fostering the City's neighborly, multicultural small-town flavor, in which all are welcome and thrive.

The City is home to residents from various ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds. The majority of residents are of color – Black or African American 35%, Native American 1%, Asian 5%, two or more races 6%, Hispanic or Latino 13%, and white not Hispanic or Latino 42%. Foreign born residents account for 32% of the population. Median household income is \$86,644, per capita income is \$50,021, and persons in poverty account for 7.9% of the residents. About half the residents are homeowners and about half are renters. Rental units range from attached dwelling units and duplexes to larger multifamily buildings, with long-standing City rent stabilization laws. Several small commercial districts lie within the City, including a historic Main Street and the vibrant Crossroads.

Students attend the excellent Montgomery County School system which serves the Takoma Park community with four elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. There are two college campuses in the community, Washington Adventist University, a liberal arts university and Montgomery College, a two-year institution. The quality of educational opportunities for residents is considered excellent.



MUNICIPAL ORGANIZATION

Takoma Park operates under a Council-Manager form of government as defined in its Charter.

Takoma Park's municipal budget provides funding for a full-service police department, public works (including stormwater), finance, recreation, city clerk, communication, housing and community development, human resources, information technology, and library. The FY24 Approved General Fund Budget is \$31,294,353 and the Budget of all funds is \$43,863,733.

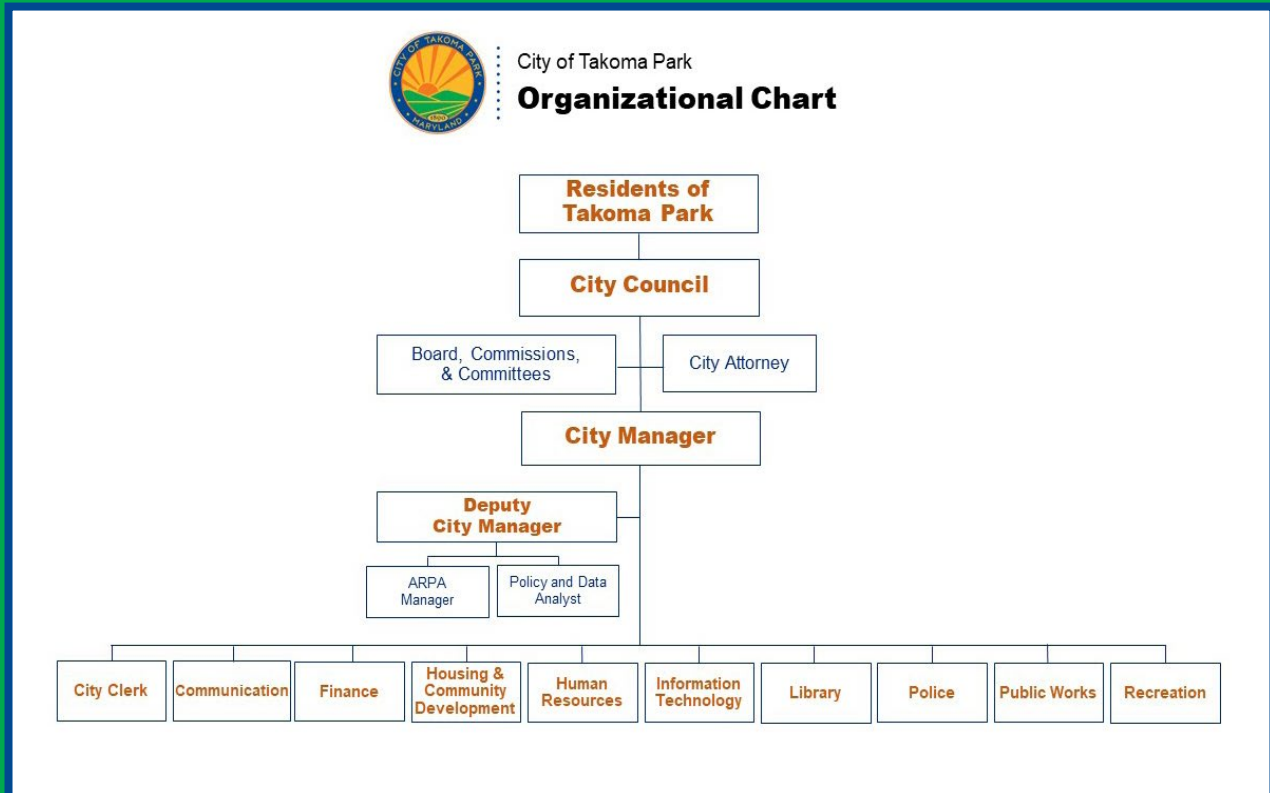
Mayor and City Council

Legislative and policy-making authority is vested in the Mayor and Council members. They have the authority to enact ordinances and regulations; adopt an annual budget; appoint resident commission, board, and committee members; establish administrative agencies and procedures; appropriate and expend municipal funds; issue bonds for a public purpose; determine policies; appoint the City Manager and City Attorney, and exercise other authorities as defined by the Charter and State law. The City Council establishes annual and long-term priorities to guide the City.

The City Council consists of seven members. Six Council members are elected by ward, and the Mayor is elected at large. The regular term of the Councilmembers and the Mayor is two years or until their successors have been elected and duly sworn. The current City Council was elected on November 8, 2022. Four of the members are in their first term.

City Manager

The City Manager of Takoma Park oversees the day-to-day management of City operations and works to ensure that City staff provide excellent services to the community and adhere to best practices in managing City finances. The City Council appoints the City Manager, who implements the policies set by the Council, and prepares an annual budget for their consideration. The City currently employs a total of 204 full- and part-time staff, including 10 department heads.



MANAGER MAJOR FUNCTIONS

- Directs the delivery of municipal services by coordinating work across departments.
- Coordinates the development of the City's annual proposed budget and Capital Improvement Program and monitors the adopted budget throughout the year.
- Represents the City in maintaining and developing intergovernmental agency relationships.
- Coordinates inquiries from the City Council and the general public and oversees proactive communication and public engagement.
- Coordinates the City's efforts related to racial equity and City Council priorities.
- Attends and participates in weekly City Council meetings, provides appropriate staff reports, and makes recommendations to the City Council.
- Participates in union contract negotiations, serves as hearing officer for grievances, oversees general personnel policies, and approves personnel changes.



THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

Experienced: A strong background in municipal management or related fields. Previous experience in leadership roles within local government is an asset.

Collaborative: Adept at working with various stakeholders, including City Council members, municipal employees, other governments, and community members, to move projects forward and achieve goals established by the City's budget and other planning documents.

Culturally Competent: Understanding of Takoma Park's unique culture and experience engaging with a culturally and economically diverse population, achieving racial equity, and harnessing human resources and financial investments to implement City Council priorities.

A Leader: Demonstrated leadership qualities and the ability to establish strong working relationships with staff at all levels of the organization. Accessible, approachable, empathetic, and able to motivate staff, and who truly understands and takes active interest in the work that is being performed.

Fiscally Minded: Demonstrated ability to develop and propose a balanced, well thought out annual operating and capital budget and tax rate, understand and explain long-term fiscal trends, oversee and manage the City's debt, conduct collective bargaining with the City's two unions, and maintain transparency.

Innovative: Ability to think creatively and propose innovative solutions to address the City's challenges and opportunities. Possess the ability to understand and support functions that are going well and to challenge and change functions that are not.

Visionary: Ability to identify evolving issues and develop responses, articulate a vision for the organization, and work with diverse stakeholders. Willing to actively listen to new, "outside the box" ideas, be innovative and creative when incorporating those ideas into solutions and projects and communicate effectively with the public.

A Communicator: Effective communication skills are vital to foster transparency, convey the City's vision and plan to both the public and staff, and to engage, build and manage strong relationships with staff, City Council, other elected officials, and members of the community.

Supportive: Ability to be a supportive staff leader is important in nurturing a positive and productive work environment for City employees. Ability as a collaborative and facilitative leader, to: empower its high-performing, competent staff, provide clear expectations and be an effective team builder who instills confidence and pride in staff, and utilizes the talent and capabilities of employees.

Trustworthy: Known for integrity and ethical conduct in all aspects of the role of City Manager.

Enthusiastic: Enthusiasm for the City and its future prospects is essential for a successful City Manager.

A Listener: Commitment to listen respectfully to various opinions and suggestions and carefully consider what was heard in arriving at a decision or recommendation that is best for the circumstances and community.

Diplomatic: Not political, with the maturity, self-confidence, and strength of professional convictions to communicate administrative insights to the City Council, boards, committees, staff, and other stakeholders. Ability to firmly and diplomatically present professional views and carry out administrative decisions in a timely, fair, and impartial manner.

A Sense of Humor: Possess a sense of humor, a positive attitude, and the ability to be flexible with the City's stakeholders. Someone who follows through and does the right thing for the right reasons.

Committed: A deep commitment to the community and all its stakeholders is an important quality.



OPPORTUNITIES & PRIORITIES

The City is now in the midst of notable changes - inside and outside of its borders. Given Takoma Park's proximity to Washington DC, a rich legacy of activism, and a reputation for producing policies and politicians with ripple effects beyond the City's boundaries, the City Manager position offers a unique opportunity to impact change.

Supportive Mayor and City Council

The City Council and the Mayor are looking forward to hiring and supporting a permanent City Manager to conduct day-to-day operations; to deliver City services to the community; and to assist them in their policy, budget; and legislative roles.

A Welcoming, Belonging Community for All

Takoma Park is increasingly diverse in every sense. City officials, residents, and businesses are committed to the principles of equity and inclusion and have made a serious effort to ensure that hiring and policy decisions represent the diversity found in the community. However, the voice of all groups is not always expressed or heard. A challenge going forward is to find innovative ways to reach out to those communities and wards who have been historically less engaged and to ensure that the outcomes are to the benefit of all. For example, half the population are renters, and many are immigrants, but both groups are less apt to become involved in community discussions. The City Manager should be able to provide leadership and guidance on the issues of equity and belonging, including more diversity in the City's workforce.

Actively Involved Community

Many residents of Takoma Park have higher than average levels of experience in public policy and governance, especially at the federal level. A core of residents is forthcoming in expressing their public policy views and has been influential in advancing City priorities such as Sanctuary City status, sustainability and climate action, reimagining public safety, rent stabilization, non-citizen voting, affordable housing, community policing, and nuclear free procurement policies. Residents from many walks of life are active volunteers in the community or serve on the City's many boards, commissions, and committees, or participate in local civic groups. Many residents of Takoma Park want and expect to be heard. Residents expect and receive transparency and access to information, but more effort is needed to explain and reach out with complex information.



OPPORTUNITIES & PRIORITIES

Talented and Team Oriented Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team is composed of vibrant and capable professionals that are well suited to managing their respective operations, while committed to working as a team. They will work well under an experienced manager who leads and guides them, and encourages interdepartmental cooperation across established siloes, while at the same time trusting them to oversee their respective operations. Improving employee satisfaction, fostering a sense of accomplishment, organizational clarity, and building trust in the City Manager position will go a long way to improving working conditions and morale, and it will foster needed innovation across the government and the community.

Economic Development and Housing

Takoma Park is small in size and relatively built out. However, there are several opportunities for new development, renovation, and infill. The County, in consultation with the City, has issued a draft plan for a section of the City around a 20 acre, now-vacant hospital site, to update the City master plan. Like other communities, Takoma Park has an aging housing stock and a need for affordable housing. The City also has a need to create "missing middle" housing. However, the City is unique in its housing policies, like its long-standing rent stabilization, which create opportunities to advance its housing goals. The City's Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan defines its commitment and approaches to housing and development issues.

Climate Change, Sustainability and Resilience

City officials, staff, and residents support efforts to address the issue of climate change, to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas emissions and strive to meet City, county, and state GHG targets and implement the City's climate action framework. The community has a well-earned reputation of being a leader on sustainability and climate issues. However, there needs to be a renewed focus and funding of initiatives that have not been achieved, especially during COVID, to meet established goals. The City has been proactive and committed on the issues of sustainability and resilience, particularly in the areas of tree canopy protection and stormwater management, but City officials, staff, and the community have expressed the opinion that even more needs to be done. The City Manager can foster creative, interdepartmental solutions.

Financial Stability

Takoma Park is a financially stable residential community. The community has an AA+ credit rating. However, the increasing cost of staff and services, lack of economic growth, and interest in limiting property tax increases has made it challenging to maintain the status quo, never mind funding new innovations or services. Often-mentioned challenges going forward are to develop alternative and innovative funding sources and find ways to modernize or streamline services for more efficient delivery.





OPPORTUNITIES & PRIORITIES

Management of Expectations

Takoma Park is an innovative community that wants to advance a wide array of initiatives but lacks resources and staff capacity to accomplish everything. The City Manager will need to access the resources and funding required, establish clear mechanisms for prioritization and goal setting, and provide management towards meeting Council's goals.

American Rescue Plan Act Funding

Takoma Park was fortunate to receive \$17.6M in ARPA funding. Most of these funds have already been allocated to over 25 separate programs and priorities with a significant portion committed to serve the needs of the more vulnerable. The commitments need to be followed through to completion, with the remaining funds to be allocated by federal deadlines.

Infrastructure and Facilities

The City is updating its facilities. Currently, the City is renovating the library and is actively planning to renovate its recreation facility. However, the cost of the projects and the budget constraints will require the City Manager to establish priorities and seek alternative funding sources for these improvements.

Standard Policies, Systems, and Documents

Several of the standard policies, systems, and documents have not been updated or modernized in some time, including, but not limited to, its personnel policies, employee handbook, job descriptions, budget systems, technology and software policy, and performance review policies and instruments. A systematic, prioritized approach will need to be implemented over the next few years.

Area Projects Impacting the Community

There are several projects in the area that will have or are having an impact on the community, such as the new Purple Line transit. Since a key goal of the new transit line is to improve equity across the region, the City Manager will need to be proactive in guiding the project's impact on the City toward this goal, across all sectors.

INFORMATIVE LINKS

- Municipal Charter for City of Takoma Park
[City Charter & Code | City of Takoma Park \(takomaparkmd.gov\)](https://www.takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-council/resolutions/2023/Resolution-2023-13.pdf)
- Resolution 2023 Establishing the City Council's Goals and Priorities
<https://documents.takomaparkmd.gov/government/City-council/resolutions/2023/Resolution-2023-13.pdf>
- Adopted Budget Fiscal Year 2024
<https://documents.takomaparkmd.gov/government/finance/budgets-and-financial-documents/adopted-budget/FY24AdoptedBudget%20-%20Final09.22.23.pdf>
- Housing and Economic Development Strategic Plan
https://documents.takomaparkmd.gov/initiatives/project-directory/Housing-Econ-Dev-Strategic-Plan/HCD-20190827-HED-SP-combined_web.pdf
- 2020 Climate Action Resolution and Framework
<https://documents.takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-council/resolutions/2020/resolution-2020-06.pdf>
- 2019 Climate Action Plan
<https://documents.takomaparkmd.gov/government/city-council/agendas/2019/Documents/SCAP-Opportunities-for-Action-Report.pdf>
- Public hearing draft of Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment
<https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/TPMMA-Public-Hearing-Draft-Final-6.21.pdf>





EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

The successful candidate will have a combination of education and experience that demonstrates an ability to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position, including the following:

A minimum of five (5) years of progressively responsible public sector management and leadership experience in municipal government or an organization of comparable population and complexity, preferably (3) years of executive leadership experience.

A bachelor's degree with major course work in public or business administration, political science, public policy, finance, or a related field, or designation as an ICMA-Credentialed Manager. A master's degree in public administration, or a related field and/or fluency in another language (Spanish, French, or Amharic) will be considered a plus.

Demonstrated experience working effectively with an elected governing body.

Experience with budgeting, capital project management, environmentally and financially sustainable economic development/redevelopment, housing affordability, racial equity and inclusion, multi-lingual and multi-cultural community engagement, environmental and energy conservation, and intergovernmental and nonprofit partnerships.

Experience working in a similar full-service City with community communication and relations, financial management, public works and transportation planning, economic and housing development, human resources management, community planning, police, library, and recreation management, and emergency management.

Takoma Park will consider any combination of education and experience that allows for successful performance in this role. The City's goals include hiring the candidate who is best able to meet the objectives of the position. The City encourages people with non-traditional skill sets and experiences to apply, even if candidates believe they do not meet 100% of the qualifications and hiring criteria described. Takoma Park is actively seeking and encouraging a diverse candidate pool.

COMPENSATION AND APPLICATION

The City of Takoma Park offers competitive compensation and a comprehensive benefits package for its City Manager position. The starting annual salary range for the position is \$195,000 to \$220,000 +/- depending on qualifications.

Candidates interested in confidentially applying should submit an updated résumé, cover letter, and contact information for five (5) professional references, by November 15, 2023, online to [Career Center - GovHR USA](#). Questions regarding recruitment should be directed to the consultant Michael Jaillot on 781-760-3658.