



City of Takoma Park

## City Manager Comments

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### Report of September 30, 2020

#### COVID-19 Related Information

##### **Extension of Homeowner and Renter Tax Credits**

The State of Maryland has extended its deadline for lower-income households to submit applications for the [Homeowners](#) or [Renters](#) Tax Credit program. The deadline had been October 1, but it has been extended to October 31. (Note, persons over 70 may be able to take advantage of the program even if they miss the deadline.) Persons who receive a credit through either program automatically also get a credit from the City of Takoma Park. Montgomery County also automatically gives an additional credit to those who receive the Homeowners Tax Credits. There are several other [tax credit programs](#) available in Montgomery County, some of the more popular ones are for seniors or veterans.

##### **Halloween – Planning to Have Safe Fun!**

Following up on last week's announcement, we are urging residents to:

- Decorate their home, apartment or business for Halloween – we'll even have a contest for best decorations!
- We will have two virtual Halloween parties, both family friendly – one on Friday at 7 pm with a Virtual Magic Show, and one on Saturday at 7 pm with Storytelling.
- All day long on Halloween, folks can take a stroll along Sligo Creek Parkway; then from 1-3 pm, help draw chalk decorations on the roadway to celebrate the fun day.
- Rather than going door-to-door trick or treating, we are looking at safe “no-knock” Halloween Walk-Thru collection of treats from 3-5 pm on Saturday, October 31. We will have locations across the City where the Recreation staff will put out treats, and we encourage residents or businesses to put out treats on tables or other safe places along sidewalks during this two-hour period. While we want to keep children on the sidewalks and in the parks, we will put out lots of messages to watch out for trick or treaters during this two-hour window. Here are the Recreation Department's likely sites, which will continue to be refined:
  - Laurel and Carroll Avenues
  - VFW at 4<sup>th</sup> and Orchard
  - Forest Park
  - Carroll and Ethan Allen Avenues
  - Piney Branch Elementary School
  - Winslow and Cambridge Apartments
  - Takoma Park Recreation Center
- A mask reminder – most Halloween masks don't protect for COVID-19. When you're out and about in costume, please remember to also wear a regular cloth or disposable mask to protect others.

## **Other Information**

### **Thank You, Grace Zhou!**

We recently said goodbye to our Economic Development Intern, Grace Zhou. She has been a wonderful bright spot during an incredibly challenging year. Grace helped the Economic Development Division transition to online platforms for business and community engagement, completed national research on the creative economy and housing programs, assisted in grant management for the Healthy Business Initiative and the Small Business Mini-Grant, and above all, maintained consistent and informative communication with our small businesses during an economic and public health crisis. Her work during this pandemic was awesome and made a huge difference to our business community. We wish her the best – whoever hires her will get a star!

### **Planning Board to Hear Briefing on Renaming Streets and Facilities**

Rebecca Gallo of the Historic Preservation Commission staff sent us an email with the following message: Thank you for speaking with me this summer regarding the Council directed project to have MNCPPC study our streets and public facilities for names associated with Confederates and others who do not reflect the County's values. I wanted to let you know that our team at Park & Planning have completed a great deal of research on this topic and are preparing to brief the Planning Board this Thursday morning (October 1<sup>st</sup>).

The link to the hearing is available here: <https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/agenda-item/october-1-2020/> We are Item #4 and will be going around 9:15; we are scheduled to speak for about 45 minutes and are seeking comments and direction from the Planning Board.

### **Ballot Drop Boxes**

The City of Takoma Park has been working with Montgomery County on having ballot drop boxes installed. At the Community Center, a Montgomery County drop box and a City of Takoma Park drop box are being installed in the Maple Avenue parking lot under the pedestrian bridge and a City of Takoma Park drop box will be installed at the Takoma Park Recreation Center on New Hampshire Avenue. Welcoming directional signs are expected on Monday. We are working to ensure it is friendly, easy and safe to drop off ballots.