



City of Takoma Park

## City Manager Comments

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### Report of November 13, 2020

#### COVID-19 Related Information

##### **What is Your Holiday Plan? COVID-19 Cases are Rising at a Scary Rate**

It is the top news across the country right now: COVID-19 cases are increasing at an alarming rate in every state, including Maryland. In my family, my son is not coming home for the holidays – we will have a virtual Thanksgiving – and my brother-in-law, who is a critical care physician in Wisconsin, is living separately from his wife for the coming weeks to protect her. The most common place for coronavirus transmissions in Maryland is family gatherings. Please do not think you are the exception or that your friends will be careful – plan for celebrating only with the people you live with or by phone or video. We have to do this right to protect our community!

So, stay strong and hang in there. There is an end in sight. It might not be until late summer or fall before vaccines are widely available, but we just need to work together to protect each other for a period of time and we can do this!

#### Welcome to our Incoming Council and Thank You Elections Staff!

The Board of Elections provided its report on the City of Takoma Park 2020 elections last night. This past election in Takoma Park was like no other. Having 6500 people vote, by ballots sent to all registered voters by mail, and processed and counted during a pandemic, is certainly one for the Takoma Park history records. Congratulations to the current Councilmembers who all won reelection. Thank you to ALL candidates for your desire to serve the people of Takoma Park. The Council has a particularly heavy work load in the coming year. I am very grateful for their service.

Besides the long hours spent by the candidates and their supporters during this election, there was so much hard work done by City staff and the members of the Board of Elections to ensure this year's election would be done well. They succeeded extraordinarily well under difficult circumstances! Board of Elections members worked such long hours! They worked with City Clerk Jessie Carpenter to organize the process, and then they handled problems carefully and diplomatically. I really admire Jessie. She does the work of three people, and does it thoughtfully. Her staff of Irma and interns Blake and Dash helped with ballot preparation, mailing, processing and counting. Work done by Communications and City TV staff (thanks Donna, Alvaro, Bien and John!) and our IT staff (particularly Lars who oversaw the recording and secure storage of video of the County's Presidential ballot drop box, and also provided key computer assistance), our Facilities staff who decorated the Community Center and kept it sanitized for elections staff, and the others from multiple City departments who helped out as needed, all made the elections process work. Thank you all – you make Takoma Park proud!