

Montgomery Planning

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Montgomery County Planning Department and the City of Takoma Park

Introduction

In partnership with the City of Takoma Park (City) this Minor Master Plan Amendment (Plan) will update portions of the 2000 *Takoma Park Master Plan* to re-envision the Washington Adventist Campus and surrounding areas.

Equity Statement

[The Montgomery County Racial Equity and Social Justice Act](#), which the County Council signed into law in December 2019 to actively address racial disparities within the county, requires the Planning Board to consider racial equity and social justice impacts when preparing a Master Plan. Pursuant thereto, all Plan process elements will be implemented with the lens of equity.

I. Purpose and Identification of Parties

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) represents an agreement between the City and the Montgomery County Planning Department (Planning Department), part of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, concerning the roles and responsibilities to be undertaken by each party in the conduct of the Plan process. The City and the Planning Department agree that a coordinated cooperative approach is essential to ensuring an equitable, transparent, and fruitful Master Plan process.

II. Duration

This MOU is effective from the signing of this document until the Plan is approved by the Montgomery County Council and adopted by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and the County Council approves the associated Sectional Map Amendment. The duration may be extended for implementation and phasing strategies recommended by the Plan, as approved by the City and the Planning Department.

III. Roles and Responsibilities

This section describes the roles and responsibilities of the Planning Department, and the City of Takoma Park in the Plan process. **The Takoma Park City Council (City Council) and the Montgomery County Planning Board have review and approval authority described by law and are not included in or subject to this MOU.**

Roles

The Planning Department is the Lead Agency in the administration, engagement, development, quality assurance, and production of all deliverables for the Plan through all phases of the planning process. The Department will have final approval of all engagement, communications, and deliverables (as described below).

The City will provide support and collaborate in the engagement, development, quality assurance, and production of all deliverables for the Plan through all phases of the planning process.

Responsibilities

The Department maintains ultimate responsibility for and control of all Plan elements through all phases of the Plan process, except after the Planning Board Public Hearing and subsequent preparation of the Planning Board Draft Plan, when the Planning Board asserts ultimate control, and again after delivery of the Planning Board Draft Plan to the County Council, when the County Council asserts ultimate control.

The City will provide partnership support for stakeholder engagement, data collection for existing conditions, environmental planning particularly related to the City's Tree Ordinance and stormwater management authorities, communication, and development of recommendations covering all aspects of the Plan including in particular economic development, housing, and potential school sites. The City will have the opportunity to review the creative approach on communications and engagement materials during the Communications Strategy process, but all deliverables and communications materials will be managed and approved through the Montgomery Planning Communications Division.

Consistent with the Communications Plan, outlined below and to be finalized separately from this MOU by the Planning Department with consultation and coordination with the City, the Planning Department maintains ultimate responsibility for and final approval of all Plan engagement and communication deliverables.

IV. Plan Phases, Deliverables, and Anticipated Schedule

Phase	Deliverable(s)	Anticipated Schedule
Pre-Kick-Off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process Briefing by County and City Planning staff to Takoma Park City Council 	March 24, 2021
Kick-Off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Engagement and Communications Plan Scope of Work and Plan Area Boundary Report 	April – May 2021
Existing Conditions Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement Existing Conditions Analysis Report Presentation to Community Presentation to City Council Presentation to Planning Board 	May – November 2021
Visioning & Development of Preliminary Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement Visioning & Preliminary Recommendations Presentation Presentation to Community Presentation to City Council Presentation to Planning Board 	December 2021 – April 2022
Preparation of Staff Working Draft Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff Working Draft Plan Presentation to Community Presentation to City Council Presentation to Planning Board Work sessions with City Council Work sessions with Planning Board 	May – September 2022
Planning Board Public Hearing Draft and Public Hearing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Hearing Draft Plan Public Hearing 	September 2022
Planning Board Worksessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worksession Staff Reports and Presentations 	September – December 2022
Planning Board Draft Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Board Draft Plan 	December 2022
County Council Public Hearing		January 2023
County Council Committee Worksessions and Full Council Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As requested Approved Plan 	February – May 2023

Preparation of Approved Plan for Adoption by M-NCPPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved and Adopted Plan (Final) 	June 2023
Sectional Map Amendment (SMA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sectional Map Amendment Zoning Maps • Planning Board Staff Report for Request to File SMA • SMA Application to County Council 	July – September 2023
SMA Public Hearing		
SMA Worksessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As requested 	
SMA Approval by County Council and M-NCPPC (Full Commission)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Revised Zoning Maps 	

V. Plan Elements to be Explored

Below is a list of elements the Plan will explore. It is possible that additional elements could be added as the engagement effort and existing conditions analysis begin. No issue is studied in a vacuum; all Plan recommendations will be considered as part of a holistic approach to shaping the future of the area. All Plan elements will consider Racial Equity and Social Justice impacts.

- Land Use
- Zoning
- History/Historic Context
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Transportation
- Environment
- Parks and Open Space
- Urban Design/Neighborhood Character
- Schools
- Community Facilities
- Implementation
- Utilities and Public Facilities

VI. Meeting and Information Sharing

The Planning Department Plan Team will meet with the City at least twice monthly, or as necessary and agreed to by the Planning Department and City to coordinate regarding Plan elements, schedule, process, and other issues. These meetings may take place virtually or in person.

The Planning Department and City will share all information pertaining to the Plan effort, including correspondence, meeting materials, and Plan-related data.

VII. Engagement & Communications Plan

Montgomery Planning's communication makes it easy for *all* Montgomery County residents, business owners and leadership to understand, value, and take part in the planning process.

All communications work is grounded in strategy: marrying our understanding of audiences with clearly identified desired outcomes to develop approaches for effective outreach and engagement. Montgomery Planning's Communication Division takes an equitable, audience-centric approach to communications and engagement during the master planning process. This includes:

- Development of a Strategic Communications Plan (Comm Plan) – including pre-Scope of Work discovery and collaboration with the City of Takoma Park. This work also includes the creation of messaging, look and feel of the Plan and marketing deliverables.
- Production of all digital and hard-copy marketing materials through in-house resources.
- Support of language translation for live, video, audio and written materials for the Plan.
- Promotion of all Plan milestones through online and offline channels described in the Comm Plan.
- Execution of media pitching to local and regional press and bloggers.
- Production of the planning documents including mapping, layout and copy-editing support.

The Comm Plan will guide everything from messaging and visuals to the outreach and engagement methods to employ and engagement avenues to explore. It also serves as a roadmap for engagement roles and responsibilities and key milestones over the Plan Process with timing considerations for communications planning, production, and promotional time needed to reach goals. The Comm Plan development is an evolving process; therefore, the Comm Plan is a “live” document that can include proof-of-performance (POP) elements, updates to messaging and any other revisions to messaging which inevitably occur during the planning process. The Comm Plan will:

- Cement the purpose and desired outcome of the Plan's communications;
- Define and prioritize target audiences and identify their influencers (e.g., key community organizations and individuals, press, bloggers, community advocates, etc.);
- Identify communication strengths, opportunities, potential roadblocks, and vulnerabilities; as well as seek out opportunities for additional or enhanced engagement.
- Develop lists of outreach partners;
- Set communication goals and objectives;
- Draft core messaging for the Plan and component work - developing message frames that tell audiences what's at stake and why they should care about the Plan and motivate them to engage in the process;

- Recommend communication strategies, the overall approaches (not specific tactics) to achieving communication goals, generating interest, and motivating engagement and participation;
- Strategies will consider:
 - How will you go about accomplishing your communication goals and objectives?
 - Given your target audience groups and the actions you want them to take, what are the best ways to educate and motivate them?

To inform the preparation of the Comm Plan, the Planning Department and City must provide:

- the primary recommendations of the 2000 *Takoma Park Master Plan* and their impact on the Plan Area approved by the Planning Board;
- information on key audiences including sharing research and demographic data;
- information on communication methods preferences for key audiences; and
- a system for communications coordination between the Planning Department and the City (needed for branding, version control and feedback loops).

VIII. Project Contacts

a. Montgomery County Planning Department

Primary Point of Contact:

- Leslye Howerton – Master Planning Supervisor, DownCounty Planning
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Project Team:

- John Marcolin – Lead Planner, DownCounty Planning
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- Elza Hisel-McCoy – Chief, DownCounty Planning
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- Bridget Broullire – Director of Communications
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b. City of Takoma Park:

Primary Point of Contact:

- Rosalind Grigsby, Community Development Manager
301.891.7205, rosalindg@takomaparkmd.gov

Signatures

Suzanne R. Ludlow

Suzanne Ludlow
City Manager, City of Takoma Park

03/24/2021

Date

Gwen L. M. Wright

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Montgomery County Planning Director

March 23, 2021

Date