

City of Takoma Park, Maryland

Office of the City Council

Tel: (301) 891-7230

Fax: (301) 270-8794



7500 Maple Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912
www.takomaparkmd.gov

Kate Stewart, Mayor

February 21, 2019

County Executive Marc Elrich
Montgomery County
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear County Executive Elrich,

As you prepare your first budget, we hope that you will remember to address, and finally rectify, a long standing and very important issue – municipal tax duplication.

You know first hand – from having served on the Takoma Park City Council – that many services we provide in the City of Takoma Park, but Montgomery County does not, are not fairly reimbursed from Montgomery County. For too long our residents have been taxed twice for services they receive once.

We look forward to working with you to update the tax duplication provisions in the County Code to ensure that municipalities are fairly compensated. An important first step is for the County to pay the full formula amount for road maintenance to all municipalities in FY20.

We ask that you continue to pay the Takoma Park Police reimbursement amounts in FY20, and work with the City of Takoma Park to update the formula for police services to reflect the amount the County would actually pay if it were responsible for police services.

As you know this situation has gone on far too long, and in fact the payment amounts have been frozen in the \$8 million range since 2012 (with some modifications by cuts and minor restorations), but the calculations from the formulas would total over \$14 million now, as calculated by the County staff.

We know you understand this situation better than most. As you stated many times when you were a City Councilmember and then again as a County Councilmember, this is an issue of fundamental fairness. Thank you for the remarks on September 10, 2012 to the Takoma Park City Council, quoted below and on video. We look forward to working with you on this issue.

“Some of us on the [County] Council understand municipalities. Some of us understand that you deliver services in some ways less expensive than we do and we could never provide at the local what you provide at the local level for the amount of money that we give you to do it. You are really going to have to continue to raise awareness and engage the (County) Council in those discussions. I understand that people were not too happy with how things turned out so far with the Executive’s recommendations. But I think there are at least some of us who are sympathetic and who understand that this is really a fundamental issue of fairness. The Council looks at it as you’re an expenditure. And I really think the right way to look at this is that you provide services that we do not provide and you are actually a savings to us and it is actually good for us to support municipalities that do this work. So I am hopeful the discussion will move in a positive direction once it gets to the Council.”

It is time for Montgomery County to treat all of its residents fairly and recognize the complementary work done by the County and the municipalities in making our communities safe, attractive and welcoming. We are looking to you to finally rectify this long-standing inequity.

Regards,

Kate Stewart

Kate Stewart
Mayor

cc: Takoma Park City Council