

Takoma Park News



August 2023

A newsletter published by the City of Takoma Park, Maryland

Volume 62, No. 8 ■ takomaparkmd.gov

Important Dates

Holiday Closings

City offices and facilities are closed on the following dates:

Labor Day: Monday, September 4

Trash, recycling, and yard waste collection is canceled on these dates.

Thanksgiving: Thursday and Friday, November 23-24

Thursday trash, food waste, and recycling routes will be collected on Wednesday.

Friday trash, food waste, and recycling routes will be collected on Saturday.

Public Meetings and Webinars

City Assistance Opportunity: Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Program

The City will be hosting two webinar on this program (see article on page 4)

August 9, 6 – 7 p.m.

August 28, 1-3 p.m.

Minor Master Plan Amendment Public Hearing

Thursday, September 14, 6 p.m.

In person: Montgomery Planning Wheaton Headquarters 2nd floor Auditorium (2425 Reedie Dr., Wheaton, MD 20902)

Remotely: Takoma Park Community Center (7500 Maple Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912)

Virtually: <https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/meetings/watch-online/>

Note: You must sign up to testify. See Minor Master Plan Amendment article in this edition.

City Council recess: Thursday, August 3 - Wednesday, September 6.

Community Events

Takoma Park Folk Festival

Sunday, September 10

Takoma Park Middle School and Lee Jordan Field

Takoma Park Street Festival

Sunday, October 1, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Old Takoma on Carroll Ave.

Monster Bash

Saturday, October 28, 1 p.m.

Takoma Park Middle School

It's Your Turn to Comment on the Minor Master Plan Amendment



Photo by Sam Kittner

Montgomery County planning staff is developing an updated plan for an area that includes the former Washington Adventist Hospital, Washington Adventist University, the Erie Center, and Maple Avenue (shown here from above). The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) has developed a working draft plan for this area ahead of a September 14 public hearing. Residents of Takoma Park are encouraged to review the plan and provide feedback.

The Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment is a joint effort between the City of Takoma Park and Montgomery Planning. The plan updates portions of the 2000 Takoma Park Master Plan to re-envision the section of the city that includes the Washington Adventist Hospital and University campuses; the Erie Center (located at the intersection of Flower Avenue and Erie Avenue); and multi-family properties, parks and the Takoma Park Community Center located along Maple and Lee Avenues.

According to planning staff, this amendment should realize the following themes:

- new and improved uses for existing spaces and places;
- a resilient community prepared for and able to adapt to, mitigate for, and thrive in the face of climate change; and
- a reconnected community with improved, safe, and inviting ways to get to parks, shopping, and home and a stronger sense of its past.

Community engagement efforts began in fall 2021. The results were used to guide

MINOR MASTER PLAN □ Page 4

Takoma Branch Stream Restoration to Begin

by Daryl Braithwaite
Public Works Director

The City Council recently authorized a contract with Ecotone Inc. for the first phase of restoration of Takoma Branch, a stream that emerges from a stormwater outfall within the open space area known as Sligo Mill/Poplar Mill located behind Poplar Ave., 4th Ave., and New Hampshire Ave. The project will improve water quality by reducing sediment and erosion in the stream valley and will provide restoration credit towards the City's stormwater pollution reduction requirements.

The project will include the restoration of approximately 200 of the 700 linear feet of stream valley located within the City and will include the replacement of the concrete outfall and installation of drop pools and cross vanes and rebuilding of the streambank to enhance and improve the stability of the stream valley. The project design has been reviewed and approved by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC) and the State of Maryland.



Photo by Eric Bond

Takoma Branch feeds vernal pools as it flows to Sligo Creek. Note the broken concrete slabs among the natural stones and rocks

This project was identified several years ago and design development and permitting has been underway for years. The City issued a Request for Proposals

(RFP) and received six responses, selecting Ecotone Inc. Funding for the project

RESTORATION □ Page 12

Mayor & Council
7500 Maple Ave.
Takoma Park, MD 20912

PRE-SORT STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
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TAKOMA PARK, MD
PERMIT NO. 4422

ECRWSS POSTAL CUSTOMER

On the DOCKET

CITY COUNCIL

Individuals interested in receiving a weekly City Council agenda and committee calendar update by email can sign up by sending a message to clerk@takomaparkmd.gov. The public may comment at regular meetings of the City Council in person or via Zoom. To comment over Zoom, you must register by 5 p.m. on the meeting date. There is no need to register to comment in person.

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- Wednesday, August 2 – City Council Regular Meeting, 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center Auditorium
- The City Council is scheduled to be on recess from Thursday, August 3 until Wednesday, September 6. In the event that there is a need to schedule a meeting during the recess, the Council will provide as much advance notice as possible.

Apply to Serve on City Boards and Committees

The City Council welcomes residents with all different types of experience and knowledge to apply to serve on boards and committees. Your experience living in Takoma Park and interacting with our community on a daily basis and/or working in your chosen profession can give you what you need to participate.

City boards and committees are appointed by and report to the City Council and focus on a particular priority area. Meetings are open to the public and residents are welcome to observe anytime.

Appointed board and committee members are eligible to receive \$40 for each meeting they attend.

To apply, go to takomaparkmd.gov/government/boards-commissions-and-committees.

The City Council is accepting applications for the following throughout the fall. Appointments will likely be made in January. Now is the time to sit in on meetings, ask questions, and learn about responsibilities and benefits of serving your community.

Arts & Humanities Committee: Focuses on matters relating to the arts and encourages the appreciation and participation of City residents in the arts and humanities.

Emergency Preparedness Committee: Assists in City planning and preparations for emergency operations

and engages residents in how to plan, prepare, and recover from emergencies.

Sustainable Maryland Committee (Green Team): Supports City efforts to achieve Sustainable Maryland certification, which in turn helps the City Council to meet its environmental goals and priorities.

Recreation and Community Engagement Committee: Concentrates on serving the varied recreation needs of our residents—emphasizing youth, seniors, and diverse resident backgrounds—on uses of City facilities and on a wider range of related community needs, such as health, leisure, education, and enrichment programs.

Commission on Landlord-Tenant Affairs (COLTA): Represents the interest of tenants and landlords and hears cases in matters affecting rental housing in Takoma Park. *Landlords and rental property managers are particularly encouraged to apply.*

Ethics Commission: Certifies compliance with state and city ethics requirements hears complaints on potential City ethics violations and advises on how the City ethics law applies to covered individuals.

Questions? Contact City Clerk Jessie Carpenter, clerk@takomaparkmd.gov or 301-891-7267.

CITY BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Check the calendar on the City website for the most up to date information, including links to access meetings and agendas. Visit takomaparkmd.gov and click on “Events and Meetings.” Most City boards and committees continue to meet virtually, on Zoom. Some are holding hybrid meetings (part in-person/part virtual)

TREE COMMISSION MEETING

Wednesday, August 9, 7 p.m. (Remote/Virtual)

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE

Thursday, August 17, 7 p.m. (hybrid: in-person and virtual)

RECREATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Thursday, August 17, 7 p.m. (virtual)

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Thursday, August 31, 7:30 p.m. (hybrid: in-person and virtual)

ADA NOTICE

The City of Takoma Park is committed to ensuring that individuals with disabilities are able to fully participate in public meetings. Anyone with a disability who wishes to receive auxiliary aids, services, or accommodations at a City of Takoma Park public meeting or public hearing is invited to contact City Clerk Jessie Carpenter at clerk@takomaparkmd.gov or 301-891-7267 as early as possible.

CouncilAction

Only negative votes and abstentions are noted here. All resolutions and ordinances are published after adoption.

June 14, 2023

- Ordinance 2023-12** approving purchase of two electric fleet vehicles for the Police Department (Nissan Ariya Engage and Chevrolet Bolt). The cost to purchase and equip the two vehicles is \$98,871.
- Ordinance 2023-13** Awarding a contract for the Takoma Branch Stream Restoration Project. The contract was awarded to Ecotone, Inc. for \$197,485.
- Ordinance 2023-14** authorizing a contract with Colonial Bus to purchase a 15-person van with a wheelchair lift. The purchase

price is \$126,895.

- Ordinance 2023-15** approving the purchase of two trash trucks. The contract is with Granturk Equipment Company for the total amount of \$599,381.60. (Councilmember Gibson abstained; Councilmember Dyballa voted no.)
- Resolution 2023-17** approving submission of 2024 Legislative Action Requests to the Maryland Municipal League.

July 5, 2023

- Ordinance 2023-16** approving the use of Community Development Block Grant Funds for the Domer Avenue Sidewalk Project. The contract was awarded to NZI Construction Corp. at the cost of \$141,018.

Resident Vacancy on the Police Employees’ Retirement Plan Committee

The Takoma Park Police Employees’ Retirement Plan Committee has an opening for a Takoma Park resident to serve as a voting member of the Committee. The Committee serves as the pension board for the City’s police retirement plan. It consists of seven members: City Manager; Finance Director; Police Chief; Representative of UFCW Local 400; Representative of Police Supervisory Employees; and two Takoma Park residents. Committee members have fiduciary responsibility for the pension plan.

The Committee meets two to four times per year, during business hours, to review plan investments, meet with the plan actuary to receive the annual actuarial valuation, and review recommended amendments to the plan. Other duties of the Board are described in Chapter 4.24 of the Takoma Park Code. Contact City Clerk Jessie Carpenter at 301-891-7267 or clerk@takomaparkmd.gov for additional information or to apply.



Get in touch! City Department Phone Numbers



City Information	301-891-7100
City Clerk.....	301-891-7267
Communications.....	301-891-7236
Finance	301-891-7212
Housing & Community Development.....	301-891-7119
Library	301-891-7259
Neighborhood Services	301-891-7113
Police	301-270-1100 / Emergency 911
Public Works.....	301-891-7633
Recreation/Facilities Rental	301-891-7290

Building COMMUNITY

Folk Festival Returns to Full Scale

by Kevin Adler

For the first time since 2019, the Takoma Park Folk Festival (TPSS) will be back at full strength this year, with the return of all six stages indoors and outside at Takoma Park Middle School on Sunday, September 10.

“Our board talked about the situation and considered having only the four stages outdoors like we did last year,” says TPSS Chair Robin Stearn. “It’s exciting, and even a little inspiring, that we are able to go back to our traditional scale and range of activities.”

Utilizing the inside of the school will provide organizers with flexibility if it rains on festival day, as it did last year, Stearn adds. “It’s just a better experience for everyone, and we’re appreciative that financial support from Takoma Park, the county and state, and others is making it possible.”

It also will allow for more booths for community tables, which Stearn remarked is a key element of making the festival a community-oriented, non-commercial event. (For community tables information, visit the festival’s website, tpff.org.)

Invitations to performers had been sent out as of the *Takoma Park Newsletter’s* deadline, but confirmations were pending, so the organizers could not share details about the lineup. However, Program Chair Debby St. Charles says that visitors will see greater diversity of genres. Bands playing electronic music, hip-hop, and fusions of international styles will likely be onstage this year. “With a few performances, we’re moving beyond what some people might consider folk music. I think people will like it,” she says.

Also, the festival is eliminating short and combined performance slots to give each band a full set of 40 to 45 minutes. “We had situations in recent years with performers only doing two or three songs,” St. Charles says. “That’s just not enough time. We want to give everyone a chance to shine.”

To give a sense of the difference, last year’s four stages had about 45 performers, but this year’s six stages will have about 40.

The Grassy Nook Stage’s programming is undergoing a minor makeover, plus a



Photos by Eric Bond

Scenes from the 2022 Takoma Park Folk Festival.



relocation from the woods behind the school to an open space near the tennis courts. Though still committed to showcasing emerging artists, Grassy Nook musicians will not solely be performers age 25 or younger. “The music still will appeal to families, especially with younger kids. We also are looking at how to have music that appeals to younger audiences at other stages as well,” she says.

Going back to indoor-and-outdoor site usage will enable the crafts show to return to the large gym and thus maximize the number of crafters, says Gina Gaspin, a member of the Crafts Committee. “We have 43 crafters in 38 booths, and many are new exhibitors for our festival. It’s a diverse mix of people and media, with more fine arts than we’ve had in the past.”

One of the newcomers produces zines and comics, as well as prints based on her characters. Another is a woodworker who makes custom furniture, one of three woodworkers this year. Three African American women who produce a range of fabric art and wearable items will share a booth, Gaspin says. A number of painters and photographers will show works inspired by the Delmarva area, “imaginary landscapes” and history and folklore.

“One of the best things about our show is how much the exhibitors like to talk with visitors, whether they’re buying or just looking,” says Gaspin. “It’s a friendly atmosphere, and we see artists also making connections with each other.”

Although most planning for the festival has been completed, there’s still time to get involved this year, says Stearn. “We need volunteers to help us get the word out with publicity efforts, such as handing out flyers at farmer’s markets, posting signs in windows, and through social media,” she says. “We need help for setup on Saturday and then a lot of volunteers for operation and cleanup on Sunday, September 10.”

Volunteers can visit the festival’s website at tpff.org or send an email to volunteer@tpff.org.



Editor's note

English:

Look for this icon next to newsletter articles that you can read online in other languages using the translation feature on the City of Takoma Park’s website. After clicking on the link for the article, look in the upper right hand corner of the web page next to the navigation bar, and select the language you want using the drop-down box.

French:

Recherchez cette icône à côté des articles du bulletin que vous pouvez lire en ligne dans d’autres langues à l’aide de la fonction de traduction disponible sur le site Web de la ville de Takoma Park. Après avoir cliqué sur le lien de l’article, regardez dans le coin supérieur droit de la page Web à côté de la barre de navigation, puis sélectionnez la langue souhaitée à l’aide du menu déroulant.

Spanish:

Busque este ícono junto a los artículos del boletín que puede leer en línea en otros idiomas usando la función de traducción en el sitio web de la Ciudad de Takoma Park. Después de hacer clic en el enlace del artículo, busque en la esquina superior derecha de la página web junto a la barra de navegación y seleccione el idioma que desee con el cuadro desplegable.

Amharic:

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City’s Public Space Management Plan Prepares for Its Big Debut

by Alexander Freedman
City Planner

In July, City staff shared the public review draft of the Public Space Management Plan (PSMP). News about the plan has been quiet in recent months while the consulting team and city staff worked through some fine tuning and updates to the document.

So now it’s time for a re-introduction: Hello! The Public Space Management Plan provides integrated guidance on how public space will be used and maintained in Takoma Park. It creates a decision-making process for how, when, and where the City devotes funding and resources to public spaces. The process began in earnest in 2018 with a mandate from the City Council.

The following years saw internal data analysis by City staff, a large public survey, a hiatus due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the on-boarding of the firm CHPlanning to help get the plan across the finish line.

Planning Division staff are excited to share the public review draft, which represents the input of hundreds of residents and city and county staff. Starting in August, city staff will begin an effort to broadly publicize the draft and allow residents to familiarize themselves with its contents before it goes to the City Council for approval later in the fall.

To check out the plan, visit the city’s Public Space Management page on the City’s website, takomaparkmd.gov.

MINOR MASTER PLAN
From page 1

the planning process and inform the plan's recommendations. Briefings on existing conditions in the plan area, community engagement, and preliminary recommendations were provided to the City of Takoma Park and the Montgomery County Planning Board.

Staff presented the Working Draft of the plan for review to the Takoma Park City Council in public meetings on May 24 and June 7 and to the Planning Board at its public meeting on June 8, where it was accepted as the Public Hearing Draft.

The plan recommends mixed-use zoning that provides for maximum flexibility for market-ready development that is compatible with the existing community and creates opportunities for new public amenities and needed public facilities.

You can submit comments via email to MCP-chair@mncppc.org for the public record. Residents may also provide feedback on the draft plan recommendations to the Planning Board at the public hearing on Thursday, September 14 at 6 p.m. in the Montgomery Planning Wheaton Headquarters 2nd floor Auditorium (2425

Reedie Dr., Wheaton, MD 20902), as well as virtually through the Planning Board's website. An additional remote location for the public hearing will be at the Takoma Park Community Center (7500 Maple Ave., Takoma Park, MD 20912).

You must register in advance to testify: https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/meetings/signup-to-testify/

The Planning Board and its staff encourage you to be part of the public hearing. Translation and interpretive services are available upon request. If you want to testify at the public hearing's livestream at the Takoma Park Community Center, you must follow the same procedure and sign up to testify. For questions pertaining to the Takoma Park remote location please contact Rosalind Grigsby, City of Takoma Park community development manager, at planning@takomaparkmd.gov.

The Public Hearing Draft Plan and Appendix are available online: bit.ly/46ZdyCy. Additionally, hard copies are at the Takoma Park Maryland Public Library, 7505 New Hampshire Ave.

If you have any questions, reach out to Melissa Williams at 301-495-4642 or via e-mail at melissa.williams@montgomery-planning.org.



Be a Local Star

City TV is looking for a group of actors of all ages, to participate in Public Service Announcements. To participate, send an email to CableTV@takomaparkmd.gov with the subject "PSA actors."

Don't Miss the Deadline for the State of Maryland's Homeowner and Renter Tax Credit Programs!

Property owners in Takoma Park should have received their State of Maryland real property tax bill in July. However, there is still time for eligible homeowners and renters to apply for their state tax credits before the deadline on October 1. Please see below for some information on both programs offered by the State of Maryland's Department of Assessment & Taxation.

Homeowner's Property Tax Credit

Program Information and Application: dat.maryland.gov/realproperty/pages/homeowners'-property-tax-credit-program.aspx.

For lower-income homeowners, the Homeowners' Property Tax Credit provides a credit against a homeowner's property tax bill if the property taxes exceed a fixed percentage of their gross income. The credit amount varies based on household income. To be eligible for the credit, homeowners must meet the following requirements:

- You must own or have a legal interest in the property.
- The dwelling on which you are seeking the tax credit must be your principal residence where you live at least six months of the year, including July 1, unless you are a recent home purchaser or unless you are unable to do so because of your health or need of special care.

- Your net worth, not including the value of the property on which you are seeking the credit or any qualified retirement savings or Individual Retirement Accounts, must be less than \$200,000.
- Your combined gross household income cannot exceed \$60,000.

Property owners who have already paid their 2023 tax bill and submit a successful application will receive a refund check. For additional questions, residents can contact SDAT's Homeowners' Tax Credit Program at sdathomeowners@maryland.gov or 410-767-5900.

Renter's Tax Credit

Program Information and Application dat.maryland.gov/realproperty/pages/renters'-tax-credits.aspx.

For lower-income renters, the State of Maryland and Montgomery County offer a tax credit program based on the relationship between a renter's income and rent. Eligibility requirements can vary based on age, income, and rent; renters are encouraged to review the State's webpage to determine their eligibility.

For additional questions, residents can contact SDAT's Renters' Tax Credit Program at sdatterenters@maryland.gov or 410-767-5915.

How to Give Feedback

Written Comments:

The public record remains open until the end of September. Please submit all written comments and feedback to the Planning Board at MCP-Chair@mncppc-mc.org.

All comments emailed to city or county planning staff will NOT be included in the public record.

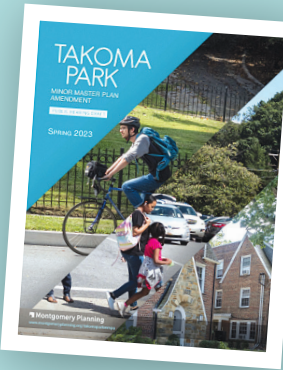
Public Hearing:

The Montgomery County Planning Board has scheduled a public hearing for the plan on September 14 at 6 p.m.

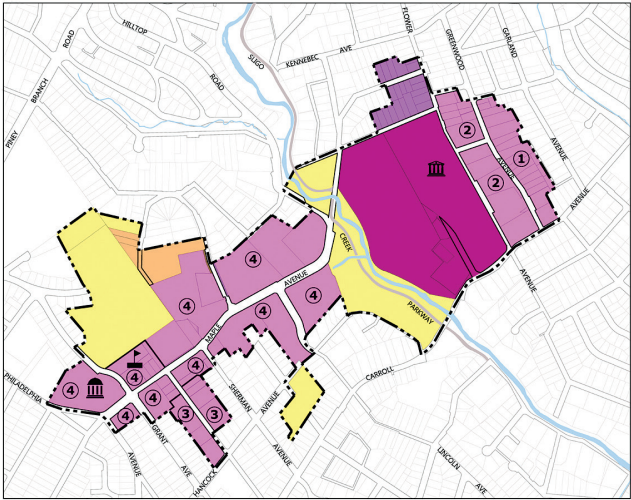
Locations to view/participate:

- In-person: M-NCPPC's Wheaton Headquarters
- Virtual: https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/meetings/watch-online/
- Live stream: Takoma Park's Community Center (7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park)

Sign up to testify by 12:00pm on 9/13: https://montgomeryplanningboard.org/meetings/signup-to-testify/signtestify-form/



The Public Hearing Draft Plan and Appendix are available online: bit.ly/46ZdyCy. Additionally, hard copies are at the Takoma Park Maryland Public Library, 7505 New Hampshire Ave.



Find more maps and details about the Working Draft of the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment at bit.ly/46ZdyCy.

What Is a Minor Master Plan Amendment and Why Are We Doing It?

Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Montgomery County

Each community within Montgomery County has a master plan that creates a comprehensive view of land use trends

and future development, like the 2000 Takoma Park Master Plan. These plans make recommendations related to land uses, zoning, transportation, schools,

Tenants: Would You Like to Buy Your Building?

The City of Takoma Park has funding to help renters in apartment buildings purchase their building. The funding is available to buildings who have an active tenant association. The City can connect you with a group of experts to evaluate if you and your fellow tenants can purchase your apartment building. In some cases, there may be funding available to assist you with the purchase of your building!

Here's how you can take advantage of this program:

1. Learn more about the program at our webinars.

August 9, 6 - 7 p.m. Register at tinyurl.com/3tenhfac.

August 28, 1-3 p.m. Register at tinyurl.com/yb9x7jjc

2. Form a Tenant Association. If you do not have a current tenant association, you will need to form one. You can find out more regarding this online at rb.gy/qrau6. Please note that you will need one-third of the occupied units in the building to agree to form a tenant

association and that you will need to install officers to run and represent the association.

3. See if your landlord is interested in selling their property. Reach out to your landlord to understand if they are willing to sell their building to their tenants. If the building is currently in the process of being sold, please reach out to City staff as soon as possible..

4. Apply for an assistance award. You can apply for a grant from the City to work with a nonprofit who can assist you with identifying loans, connecting you with bankers, and helping draw up a contract to buy the building. The application can be found at tinyurl.com/ykpyjp92.

Questions? Feel free to reach out to the Department of Housing and Community Development. You can email us at housing@takomaparkmd.gov, call us at 301-891-7119 or visit us on the third floor of the Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave.

The ARTS

Takoma Park Arts Series Returns with Lively Performances

After a summer break, the *Takoma Park Arts* series will return this fall with a wide range of free performances and arts events, including concerts, theater, dance, art exhibitions, and film screenings representing a diversity of cultures, incisive commentary, and lighthearted humor.

The City of Takoma Park's Arts and Humanities Division organizes and stages the events at the Takoma Park Community Center auditorium at 7500 Maple Ave.

"We're excited to offer these cultural programs for free to the public, which demonstrates Takoma Park's appreciation and commitment to the arts," Arts and Humanities Coordinator Brendan Smith said. "We're one of just a few venues in the D.C. area which features such a wide breadth of performances across many artistic disciplines."

The City supports performers through honorariums, a professional City TV tech crew, and extensive promotion. Videos of the events also are posted on the *Takoma Park Arts* YouTube channel at <https://bit.ly/3NPfncs>.

"Over the past four years, our events have been viewed more than 80,000 times on YouTube so we're reaching an international audience far beyond the city's borders," Smith said.

Joel Gershon, the director of *Cirque du Cambodia*, screened his documentary to a packed house at the Community Center last February as part of the *Takoma Park Arts* series.

"I am so honored and proud that it was such a well-attended event," he said. "Everyone was professional, helpful, and supportive, and I'm grateful there is this type of local community building with a professional arts venue."

Debra Ambush shared her artwork in the *My Soul Opened Up* art exhibition, which



Mayur Dance Company

showcased the work of three Black female artists.

"I felt that City staff treated us like royalty," she said. "Thank you for caring so much about the work that artists are doing."

Please go to takomaparkmd.gov/arts and sign up for our e-newsletter to receive more info and the dates for upcoming events which are still being scheduled.

Some of the upcoming performances include:

Soul of Langston — In a one-man play, Daron Stewart sketches the life of American playwright, poet, and civil rights activist Langston Hughes.

Anjali: An Offering — The Mayur Dance Company will share a traditional Odissi Indian dance featuring intricate footwork patterns, brightly colored saris, and instrumental music.

Sounds of Silents: Steamboat Bill, Jr. — Pianist Peter Tavalin provides a live score for a classic silent film of the slapstick adventures of Buster Keaton.

iMusical — The iMusical improv group merges the unpredictable playfulness of comedic improv with the emotional power of musical theater by creating a new musical with each performance based on audience suggestions.

D.C. Labor Chorus — A musical ensemble

with more than 20 members of various ages, races, and faith traditions shares songs celebrating the labor movement and the civil rights movement.

Interfaith Comedy — The Interfaith Comedy group includes comedians from different religions who make lighthearted jokes about their own religion in a show built on tolerance and a little irreverence.

Capitol Hillbillies — The Capitol Hillbillies embody the spirit of New Orleans through down-home American roots music spanning blues from the Delta to Chicago, jug band and old-time music, and a sprinkling of Cajun and Appalachian songs.



Capitol Hillbillies



Daron Stewart in *Soul of Langston* Performance



Takoma Park News

Send submissions to: Editor: Eric Bond • editorbond@gmail.com | Assistant Editor: Sean Gossard • TPNewsEditor@takomaparkmd.gov
Questions: Donna Wright Communications Manager • donnaw@takomaparkmd.gov | Eric Bond • editorbond@gmail.com
www.takomaparkmd.gov

The Takoma Park Newsletter is published 12 times a year as the official publication of the City of Takoma Park, takomaparkmd.gov.

RECREATION

For a full list of our classes and to register visit:
bit.ly/TPRDActiveNet (case sensitive).

Registration opens for city residents 8/15
9 a.m. online and in-person.

TOT

DANCE

Combo Tot Dance

Fun and energizing class for your little ones. This is the introductory foundational class consisting of rhythmic movements, into basic tumbling and various styles of dance. Jam-packed with games and toys your little ones won't even realize they are learning to dance. Instructor: Dance Solutions

Takoma Park Community Center
(Dance Studio)
7500 Maple Ave.
Ages 3 - 5
Sundays, 12:15 - 1 p.m.
September 10 - October 29
Resident: \$125 / Non-resident: \$145

SPORTS

Tot Sports

Children are introduced to the fundamentals of sports such as soccer and basketball. The goal of this program is to provide the opportunity for each child to develop motor skills and nurture their growth socially and emotionally through teamwork and good sportsmanship.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
(Gymnasium)
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
Ages 3 - 5
6-week session
Saturdays, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.
September 23 - October 28
Resident: \$60 / Non-resident: \$70

YOUTH



Fun Days

Fun Day is offered on specific days when Montgomery County Public Schools are not in session. The program is designed to provide recreational activities for children enrolled in K - 5. Through structured, socially distanced activities, crafts and presenters, children will socialize, unwind, and release energy. Participants will meet at the Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave. Children **must bring a lunch, snacks, and labeled water bottle.** Activities and performers are subject to change. Registration is required. Paperwork will need to be completed prior to the first day of the program.

Drop off at Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Ave.
Grades K - 5
Fall Dates:
September 25, October 9, November 1
8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Resident: \$55 / Non-Resident: \$65

SPORTS

Basketball Skills Clinic

This skills clinic emphasizes individual improvement as a guiding philosophy. Participants will be provided with excellent coaching that allows each person to

develop a sense of pride and individual accomplishment. This is a basketball class, not league play.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
(Gymnasium)
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
Ages 6 - 12
8-week session
Saturdays, 12 - 1 p.m.
September 9 - October 28
Resident: \$100 / Non-resident: \$110

ADULTS

FITNESS

Boot Camp

This is a total body program that includes a circuit of drills such as jumping jacks, running, push-ups, squats, crunches, and weight training. A challenging workout within a quick hour.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
(Gymnasium)
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
Ages 16+
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
September 12 - October 26
Resident: \$105 / Non-Resident: \$125
Drop-in: \$10

Ker De Zuri DanXercise, Afro Beat

Zuris Sana'a DanXercise combines hip hop, salsa, dancehall, contemporary and African dance moves to create a

memorable workout experience. Our moves are feasible and suitable for all ages. Participants will be able to shed calories and learn fun choreography, all in one class. Instructor: Khady N'Diaye
Takoma Park Community Center
(Dance Studio)
7500 Maple Ave.
Ages 16+
9-week session
Thursdays, 7 - 8 p.m.
September 7 - November 16
Resident: \$60 / Non-resident: \$70
Drop-in: \$10

Zumba Maple Ave

Zumba is a fitness program that combines Latin and other international music with dance moves. Zumba routines incorporate interval training, alternating fast and slow rhythms to help improve cardiovascular fitness. No equipment needed for this class. Instructor: Dance Solutions
Takoma Park Community Center
(Dance Studio)
7500 Maple Ave.
Ages 16+
9-week session
Saturdays, 11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.
September 16 - November 18
Resident: \$100 / Non-resident: \$110
Drop-in: \$10

SPORTS

Takoma Park Volleyball Club

Join the Takoma Park Volleyball Club! Grab a friend or make a new one on the court. The club will meet weekly at the Takoma Park Recreation Center for pick-up games of volleyball. Registration is required to participate. All skill levels are welcome.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
(Gymnasium)
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
Ages 16+
Wednesdays, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
September 20 - November 8
Resident: \$20 / Non-Resident: \$30

Adult Pickleball Drop-in

The entire magic and success of pickleball is the way it has been set up to be a welcoming sport in an informal setting—meaning, you can show up to the courts and join a game. It doesn't matter what your age or skill level is; you can just play. That is the beauty of DROP-IN play.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
(Gymnasium)
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
Ages 16+
Mondays, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
September 18 - November 6
Resident: \$20 / Non-Resident: \$30

55+ Programs

DANCE

Line Dance

Line dancing is great physical and mental exercise. Strengthening of bones and muscles, weight loss, increased stamina and flexibility, and stress reduction are just some of the benefits of dancing. Learn how exercise can be fun with music. No experience necessary. Register for one Line Dance class only, not both. Choose the class that fits your schedule. Instructor: Barbara Brown

Takoma Park Recreation Center
(Gymnasium)
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
Ages 55+
Tuesdays, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.
September 12 - December 12
\$6

Zumba Gold

Active older adults who are looking for a modified Zumba class that re-creates the original moves you love at a lower intensity. The design of the class introduces easy-to-follow Zumba choreography that focuses on balance, range of motion and coordination. Register for one in-person Zumba Gold class only. Choose the class that fits your schedule. Instructor: Yesika Flores
Choose: virtual or in-person

Takoma Park Recreation Center
(Gymnasium)
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
Ages 55+
Fridays, 10 - 11 a.m.
September 15 - December 15
\$6



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ EXTENDED CARE

School year 2023 - 2024 Childcare

The Recreation Department is pleased to again offer both before care and after care at both of our facilities. Morning Addition and Afternoon Addition are held at the Takoma Park Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave. and Before and After the Bell are held at the Takoma Park Recreation Center, 7315 New Hampshire Ave.

Our emphasis is on providing fun leisure and recreation programs before and after the school day, while providing a safe environment for children grades K - 5. Participants will engage in daily indoor/outdoor group activities and holiday-focused events. Children will have time for free play, homework assignments, breakfast (not provided), or preparation for their upcoming day in before care. Each afternoon kids will receive a snack; have a time period to complete homework; and enjoy arts and crafts, sports, board games, free play, and more!

Programs operate when Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) is in session

Beforecare

Resident: \$1,700
Non-resident: \$2,000
Hours: 7-9 a.m.

Aftercare

Resident: \$2,500
Non-resident: \$3,000
Hours: 3:30-6:30 p.m.

Bundle Discount

Resident: \$3,570
Non-resident: \$4,250

Participants who register for both beforecare and aftercare at the same facility in one transaction will receive a discount.

Payment Plan: There is a 20% deposit due at the time of registration. The remaining balance will be divided into monthly payments October.

Takoma Park Recreation Center
7315 New Hampshire Ave.

Before the Bell & After the Bell

Transportation will not be provided through the Recreation department, Please contact MCPS Transportation at 301-840-8130 to change your bus route to Hampshire Towers; we will wait with the children at the bus stop.

Takoma Park Community Center
7500 Maple Ave.

Morning Addition & Afternoon Addition

Staff will escort participants to and from Takoma Park Elementary School and Piney Branch Elementary School.

Morning Addition is full,
please add your child to
the waiting list if you are
interested.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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RECREATION □ Page 7

August 2023

For a full list of our classes and to register visit:
bit.ly/TPRDActiveNet (case sensitive).

RECREATION

RECREATION

■ From page 6

FITNESS

Enhance Your Fitness



A great total body workout using low-impact aerobic movement and gentle resistance training. This class focuses on increasing strength, balance, and flexibility through stretching, breathing, core training, and proper posture alignment using standing and seated exercises, including warm-up and cool-down routines. Instructor: Adriene Buist

Virtual
Ages 55+
Tuesdays, 9 - 10 a.m.
September 12 - December 12
\$6

Rhythmic Drumming

Cardio fitness drumming lets the rhythmic beat move you through tapping and drumstick clapping while standing, and/or sitting to exercise your mind and body. No

drumming experience required. Instructor: Dance Solutions

Takoma Park Recreation Center
(Back Activity Room)
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
Ages 55+
Tuesdays, 1:15 - 2:15 p.m.
September 12 - December 12
\$6

SPORTS/CAMP

Pickleball 55+ Summer Camp for Beginners

Do you feel left out of the fun and want to join your neighbors and friends on the pickleball courts? We are looking for beginners. If you never picked up a pickleball paddle and had no professional training, no problem: this camp is for you. Learn the basics of the sport from a professional instructor and practice with other people who are new to this activity. You'll enjoy a week designed to expand your skills and knowledge while having fun. We provide the basic equipment. You'll also enjoy many creative and fun activities



for the well-rounded summer camp experience. We think you'll like it! Register on-line or in person. Last chance to register! Limited space. For more information contact Paula Lisowski at 301-891-7280 or paulal@takomaparkmd.gov
Takoma Park Recreation Center

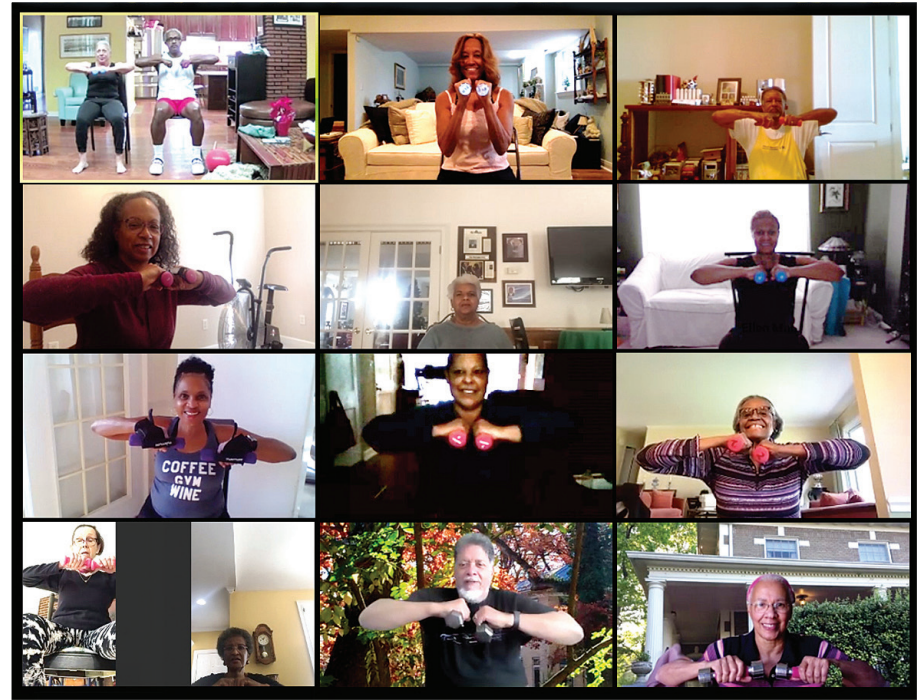
(Gymnasium and Activity Rooms)
7315 New Hampshire Ave.
Ages 55+
Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
August 21 - August 25
Resident: \$95 / Non-resident: \$105

The Virtual Fitness Experience!

The pandemic shook up our lifestyles in many ways, including the way we stayed active. We learned to rely on virtual workouts and at-home exercise equipment. As gyms and recreation centers reopened, the at-home virtual workout is proving that it's here to stay, as people are opting for a more hybrid approach to their fitness routines. We are a social species and prefer to continue to gather together in person and enjoy that live energy—but virtual fitness is still a convenient option for fitness routines.

What are the benefits of virtual workouts?

Convenience and Flexibility: Workouts at home take away the barriers of commuting, while participants fit activity into their busy schedules
Improved Confidence: Exercising from the comfort of home offers a sense of security and safety to those who feel uncomfortable going to a fitness center. Some people simply dislike the gym atmosphere. Virtual fitness provides access to quality instructors and structured classes without leaving home.



There are benefits to both in-person and virtual classes, and a well-rounded recreation program continues to offer both options.

If you are looking for an opportunity to try a virtual fitness class, check out the following classes offered by the Takoma Park Recreation Department:

Adults ages 16+

- Moonlight Qi Gong, Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m.
- Foundation Fitness II, Saturdays, 10:30 a.m.

Adults ages 55+

- Enhance Your Fitness, Tuesdays, 9 a.m.
- Foundational Fitness 55+, Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10 a.m.

- Zumba Gold, Fridays, 10 a.m.

For these and other in-person class descriptions, dates, times, and cost, check out ActiveNet: bit.ly/TPRDActiveNet (be sure to type the URL just as shown here as it is case sensitive).

Don't forget about our scholarship program providing City residents who qualify with an opportunity to apply for a lesser fee than the published amounts. For more information and to download the application visit takomaparkmd.gov and search for "recreation scholarships."

As always, you are welcome to contact the Recreation Department at 301-891-7290 for more information.



Call for Youth Council Applications

The City Council is seeking applicants for the 2023-2024 Takoma Park Youth Council. The 11-member Youth Council is open to youth grades 7-12. Complete information and the application form are now available at the takomaparkmd.gov website.



LIBRARY

Library Calendar

Library and Computer Center hours

Monday-Thursday 10 a.m.-8 p.m.
Friday-Sunday 12 p.m.-6 p.m.

Holiday closings: The Library and Computer Center will be closed on September 3 and 4 for Labor Day.

Our address is 7505 New Hampshire Ave., Suite 205. There is plenty of parking as well as public transportation.

To protect our most vulnerable patrons and staff, the Library strongly encourages everyone to continue to wear a mask while in the library, even though masks are optional in City facilities now.

Internet Hotspots to borrow! The Library has a supply of Verizon JetPacks for patrons to borrow. The hotspots will permit up to 10 devices to connect to the internet. These items will be available only to adult patrons and require a signed user agreement.

Books-to-Go is continuing, and **Books-to-You** (delivery for Takoma Park residents only) is starting back up. Email librarytakomapark@gmail.com to order. Please note: if you are picking up a Books-to-Go order, please call the library's main number, 301-891-7259. .

Programs & Events

SummerQuest continues - it's not too late to start! Get ready for the latest adventure! **SummerQuest 2023: The World Tree.** A mountainous and ancient tree has somehow grown up and around your entire home. Do you climb to see what awaits you in the branches above the clouds? Do you explore the darkness of the tangled roots? Join us on the quest to read all summer long! Come into the Library to choose your characters and get your game board.

Crochet and Cozies (Adult program) - join us at 10:30 Monday mornings for crochet and cozy mysteries. Bring your hooks, needles, and yarn. Don't have any? We'll find some for you. A beginner? You'll find help. Knitters and loom knitters - please join us. Registration is optional, but allows us to contact you if necessary.

Neighborhood Circle Time Join Ms. Kati and/or Ms. Verónica every Tuesday at 10:30 am for Circle Time indoors in our interim library. We sing songs, have fun with fingerplays and rhymes, we dance and do movement exercises. We read a book in the middle of the program.

Jumpstart With the Arts is returning

to Circle Time on the first Tuesday of each month - the next time they will be with us is August 1.

NOW IN PERSON! Canta Juego: Spanish Circle Time every Thursday at 10:30 a.m. ¡Canciones y juegos en español! Join the fun at our weekly Spanish Circle Time, led by Señora Geiza. In this 30-minute program, kids and adults can sing songs and do rhymes and movement exercises in Spanish. Sponsored by Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library. In person at the interim Library location - 7505 New Hampshire Ave.

Chess for Kids - Sundays at 11 a.m. Join us on Sundays for Chess for Kids, caregivers and kids are invited to play. Bring a chessboard and pieces, if possible, but we have plenty. Players of all levels are welcome. This is scheduled before the Library opens, so registration is important.

Lego Club - Come in and play with Legos! Sunday, August 6, 1 - 3 p.m.

Kids' Art - Make a craft with us on Sunday, August 20, 1 - 3 p.m.

Yard Dramas - come to the Crossroads Farmers Market for the 2023 summer season. This is an interactive outdoor storytelling and community building program. Wednesdays at 11 a.m., in-person at the Crossroads Farmers Market.

SKETCH CLUB - is on hiatus until school starts, but we hope you'll join us for Sketch Club at Night.

All-ages Sketch Club at Night - Mondays, 5:30 - 7:30. The popular weekly sketch club makes time in the evening to allow for grown folk with busy schedules to join us to hang out and draw together. Artists, doodlers, scribblers of all (or no) skill level are invited to gather to sketch and hang out in an open drawing session, led by in-house artist Dave Burbank. Occasional prompts and suggestions may occur, but this is mostly an excuse for all to sit in a common space and draw together. If you feel like sharing what you're working on, excellent, if not, that is excellent as well. Paper and some materials provided but feel free to bring your own. Drop in, drop out, come early, come late, all welcome. Runs through Monday, August 28.

Library @ Crossroads Catch us the third Wednesday of August for pop-up Library activities! In-Person at the Crossroads Farmers Market. August 16 while the Market is open, 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Listen to this!

by Anne LeVeque

Octavia's *Parables*, with Toshi Reagon and Adrienne Maree Brown. This review came together in a matter of moments when I saw this podcast referenced in the 7/12/2023 *New York Times* article, "Apocalypse Nowish: Singing the Prophetic Warnings of Octavia Butler," about the opera *Parable of the Sower* with lyrics and music by Toshi Reagon and her mother, Bernice Johnson Reagon. The elder Reagon is best known for her group Sweet Honey in the Rock, while the younger has forged a musical career of her own. The podcast, with writer Adrienne Maree Brown, is a deep dive into, first, *The Parable of the Sower*, the 1993 dystopian novel by Butler, then the sequel, *The Parable of the Talents*, then several more of Butler's works. The two women do a chapter-by-chapter look into the late Afro-futurist's novels. In their discussions, they relate the novel to real-time events in this country. It's a fascinating look at an amazing author's work. Found wherever you get your podcasts.



New Knitting and Crocheting Group Off to a Strong Start

by Phil Shapiro

Monday mornings from 10:30 a.m. to noon, a welcoming, diverse group of individuals meet to encourage each other, learn from each other, and socialize. The topic? Yarn! Oh, and cozy mysteries as an optional topic. Rebecca Brown, Public Services Manager at the Takoma Park Maryland Library, visualized a vibrant knitting and crocheting group meeting weekly on Monday mornings in the Library. Her vision has materialized rapidly. Current members of the Crochet and

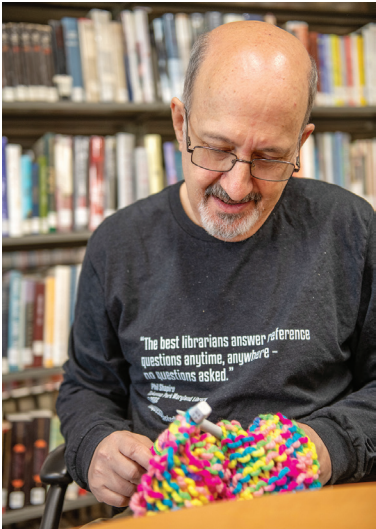


Photo by Eric Bond

Phil Shapiro, dyed-in-the-wool librarian and knitter.

Cozies group vary in age and cultural background, and include community members from Guatemala and Japan, and school-age kids as well as elders. Yes, and fiber arts is also for men. Library staffer Phil Shapiro is a regular at these gatherings.

Newcomers to knitting and crocheting are also welcome. Other attendees will happily help you learn these skills to create useful, beautiful work from yarn. Make something for yourself, a family member, or create apparel to give the

unhoused. We'll supply you with yarn and knitting/crocheting tools.

Meet Bintou, Our Young Adult Librarian-in-Training!

Interview by Verónica Rivera-Negrón

The Young Adult Librarian-in-Training (YALiT, for short) is a paid job opportunity created by the Library as part of the City of Takoma Park Summer Youth Employment Program.

Bintou Sangare was chosen for this inaugural position! She is working under my supervision and mentorship in the Children and Young Adult Services Team. We are so excited to be working with her and want to give her the opportunity to share about her experience this summer!

Hi, Bintou! Please tell us a bit about you and why you applied for this summer position?

Hello, everyone! My name is Bintou Sangare, and I'm going into the 12th grade at Montgomery Blair High School. I love reading, writing poetry, listening to music, and hanging out with my friends. I applied for this summer position because reading is one of my favorite pastimes. When I saw the YALiT position at the Library during



Bintou Sangare

the Summer Youth Employment informational session, I knew that it was the job that I was going to pick!

In your own words, what does the YALiT position entail?

The YALiT position has many different proponents to it, but it mainly entails two things: promoting the YA section and creating different programs at the Takoma Park Maryland Library.

As a YALiT, I create posters with YA book recommendations, develop new programs for people of all ages to do, and find new YA books to add to the library's collection. This job requires a lot of creativity and a good amount of research, but it's a lot of fun and definitely worth it!

What has been surprising about working at the library?

For me, the most surprising thing about working at the Library was how, even as a teenager, I was given the power to add and change its services in so many ways. Since

The Little Chatbot that Could (but Should It?)

by Jessica Jones

It’s hard to read the headlines now and not encounter news stories, think pieces, and personal opinions of varying levels of informed-ness about artificial intelligence (AI). We can feel all kinds of ways about it, but I believe we all have an obligation to do what we can to learn to recognize, use, and coexist with it, in order to mitigate harmful potential.

To be clear, a lite version of AI is what we are seeing now with ChatGPT, Google’s Bard, and Microsoft’s Sydney. None of these are really what we associate with the term “artificial intelligence.” None are *2001: A Space Odyssey’s* HAL, for instance. They are powerful programs and algorithms that can be widely manipulated, though—so for the purposes of this article, when referring to “AI,” I am referencing the likes of ChatGPT, Bard, and Sydney.

Much of my personal background is in the humanities (emphasis on *human*-ities), and I fully recognize that it is a bias I bring to this topic, so efforts have been made to perform due diligence in understanding the positive potential of AI, as well as its pitfalls.

I wanted a more holistic look at the implications of AI in our lives, so I spoke with a friend who has as well-rounded an outlook on it as I could imagine. Dr.



Jason Hemann is a professor of computer science at Seton Hall University with degrees in history, philosophy, and computer science—a perfect combination to put AI in context.

Dr. Hemann says that he has already changed how he teaches based on AI’s accessibility to the public. He believes that the technology isn’t going anywhere and that we need to adapt to it. For instance, in addition to straightforward coding assignments, Dr. Hemann has asked students to give a chatbot instructions to write the code for a program. The students have to learn how to effectively delegate tasks to it and understand its limitations. To demonstrate mastery of the material, he asks them to evaluate the programs that AI writes, as well as scale the programs up to test their flexibility and usability.

This type of assignment is an

excellent example of applied machine learning, a field that is gaining exponential prominence in computer science and engineering curricula. Machine learning is essentially the practice of teaching computers (machines) how to learn and produce the desired outcomes.

Machine learning will facilitate the automation of many tasks, but humans still need to understand the code it generates. AI will never fully replace programmers in the same way that Google hasn’t replaced librarians (as so many people have been predicting ... for years). But, just as the Internet has changed the way libraries operate, AI will likely change the programming landscape.

Will we need as many programmers in five years as we have today? I don’t know, but as AI comes for white collar jobs, I do expect conversations about universal basic income to escalate. But that’s another topic for another day!

One of the benefits of AI and machine learning is that programming and coding will become more accessible to people who do not have extensive experience and training—much of which is expensive and time-consuming. Less gatekeeping can mean more inclusive innovation and fewer barriers to entrepreneurship. It can also be a form of

informal oversight.

A more diverse programming landscape is good for all of us, especially in light of the biases that programmers can bring to their code. *Scientific American* published an article in May 2023 that found that “law enforcement agencies that use automated facial recognition disproportionately arrest Black people. We believe this results from factors that include the lack of Black faces in the algorithms’ training data sets, a belief that these programs are infallible and a tendency of officers’ own biases to magnify these issues.”

The AI bot Midjourney was asked to generate images of professors in different areas of study, and almost all of the generated images appeared to be white people, and the majority appeared to be men. That is not entirely misrepresentational of the demographics of American academia, but is it what academia *should* look like? Is that an impression we want to reinforce? This is a rhetorical question of course, because a diverse instructional body is better able to connect with a more diverse study body, which in turn facilitates better learning outcomes.

Earlier this year, a new Drake and The Weeknd track, “Heart on My Sleeve,” hit streaming services and quickly went to the top of the

chart, but it wasn’t actually Drake and The Weeknd. Their voices, lyrics, and beats were generated by AI. The artists’ record companies immediately mobilized to have the tracks taken down because of copyright infringement, but the other issue that arises is more existential: What is the role of authenticity in our lives now?

Is “Heart on My Sleeve” a *real* song? If the person(s) who wrote the commands that generated the work is not Black, does using Drake’s and The Weeknd’s likenesses count as cultural appropriation? How do we know how to respond to art when we doubt its origins?

I listened to the song, “Heart on My Sleeve,” and it was good! It sounds like Drake’s and the Weeknd’s voices, the lyrics are interesting, and the beat is catchy. If AI can fake art this convincingly, I feel for the English and history instructors out there who are already inundated with AI-generated essays and papers in their grading piles.

AI is a powerful tool, but it is not above criticism. It opens doors, but it can also reinforce problematic practices and ideologies from racism to plagiarism to copyright infringement. Now, none of us is above falling for a fake. Keep questioning, keep fact-checking, and, when in doubt, go to the Library!

BINTOU

■ From page 8

I’m the YALiT and I mostly focus on developing new programs, this leeway is important because it allows me to use my creativity to make a mark on the library in ways that I didn’t even think would be possible for a teenager like me. Obviously, I can’t just do just anything, but I love how the freedom given in this role allows me the space to do my best!


What are you most excited about working on this summer?

I’m most excited about developing different programs at the library. At first, I was scared of the idea, and I wasn’t sure if I would be able to make engaging programs for people to do. However, once I was done with one of the first programs I did, I realized how much fun it was to be able to use my imagination to make things that other people can enjoy. Therefore, I would say continuing to develop programs at this library is what I’m most excited about working on this summer.


While this position is called librarian-in-training, the person selected does not need to want a career in librarianship. How do you think this position can help your future career regardless of which field you choose?

This position can help any future career in many ways because of the skills one gains


5 (Bookish) Facts About BINTOU




Currently reading: **Red, White, and Royal Blue** by Casey McQuinston.




Favorite story growing up: **Keeper of the Lost Cities** series by Shannon Messenger.




Favorite genre: **Definitely Young Adult Fiction!**



Favorite book format: **Print.**



When not reading, I like to: **Watch K-dramas and go running!**



Bintou is working with the Library this summer, as part of the City of Takoma Park Summer Youth Employment Program.

through completing this job. These skills include creativity, organization, research, planning, the ability to work independently. All of these are skills that are important in virtually any career, whether it be in the education sector or at a law firm. The fact that I was able to gain and exercise those skills through the work I’ve done so far will allow me to use those skills in any career path that I go onto.

What would you tell other teens in the community about this library?

I know that there’s a lot of stigma around the Library and

reading in general from teenagers. However, I think you’d be surprised at how amazing and how exciting it can be to read and love a book or book series. I promise you that not all books are mind numbing history textbooks, LOL. If you don’t know where to start, I recommend you come to the YA section of the Takoma Park Maryland Library and use one of the YA readers recommendation posters on the walls for reference. You won’t regret the decision to do so at all.

¡Conoce a Bintou, nuestra Bibliotecaria Juvenil en Entrenamiento!

por Verónica Rivera-Negrón

La posición de Bibliotecaria Juvenil en Entrenamiento (YALiT, por sus siglas en inglés) es una oportunidad de trabajo remunerado creada por la biblioteca como parte del Programa de Empleo Juvenil de Verano de la Ciudad de Takoma Park.

¡Bintou Sangare fue elegida para este puesto inaugural! Ella está trabajando bajo mi supervisión y tutoría en el Equipo de Servicios para Niños y Jóvenes. ¡Estamos muy contentos de trabajar con ella y queremos darle la oportunidad de compartir su experiencia este verano!

¡Hola, Bintou! Cuéntanos un poco sobre ti y por qué has solicitado este puesto de verano.

¡Hola a todos! Me llamo Bintou Sangare y voy a cursar el 12mo grado en Montgomery Blair High School. Me encanta leer, escribir poesía, escuchar música y salir con mis amigos. Solicité este puesto de verano porque leer es uno de mis pasatiempos favoritos. Cuando vi el puesto de YALiT en la biblioteca durante la sesión informativa sobre del Programa de Empleo Juvenil de Verano, ¡supe que era el trabajo que iba a elegir!

En tus propias palabras, ¿en qué consiste el puesto YALiT?

El puesto de YALiT tiene muchas propuestas diferentes, pero principalmente implica dos cosas:

promocionar la sección YA y crear diferentes programas en Takoma Park Maryland Library. Como YALiT, creo pósters con recomendaciones de libros juveniles, desarrollo nuevos programas para personas de todas las edades e identifico nuevos libros juveniles para añadir a la colección de la biblioteca. Este trabajo requiere mucha creatividad y una buena cantidad de investigación, ¡pero es muy divertido y definitivamente vale la pena!

¿Qué te ha sorprendido de trabajar en la biblioteca?

Para mí, lo más sorprendente de trabajar en la biblioteca ha sido que, incluso siendo adolescente, me han dado el poder de ampliar y cambiar sus servicios de muchas maneras. Como soy la YALiT y me dedico sobre todo a desarrollar nuevos programas, es importante poder usar mi creatividad para dejar mi huella en la biblioteca de formas que ni siquiera pensaba que fueran posibles para una adolescente como yo. Obviamente, no puedo hacer cualquier cosa, ¡pero me encanta la libertad que me da este puesto, que me permite dar lo mejor de mí!

¿Qué es lo que más te entusiasma de tu trabajo este verano?

Lo que más me entusiasma es desarrollar diferentes programas en la biblioteca. Al principio, me asustaba la idea y no estaba se-

At Your SERVICE



THE FIREHOUSE REPORT

Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department
tpvfd.org

TPVFD Safety Minute – Grilling

Here are a few tips to stay safe this summer while grilling.

- Make sure your gas grill is working properly
- Never leave equipment unattended
- Keep equipment a safe distance from things that can burn
- Use fuel and fire starters properly
- If a fire breaks out, dial 911

TPVFD Member Spotlight : Jimmy Jarboe



As we approach the one-year anniversary of the passing of James E. “Jimmy” Jarboe, we pause to reflect on his legacy and devote this month’s TPVFD Member Spotlight to Chief Jarboe’s memory.

Former fire chief and 65-year life-member of the Takoma Park Volunteer Fire Department, Jimmy Jarboe, passed away on September 10, 2022, at the age of 84. Chief Jarboe, who retired as fire chief in 2008, joined the fire department in 1956. At the time of his passing, he was the only member in the history of Takoma Park Fire Department to hold every rank: private first class, sergeant, lieutenant, captain, assistant chief, deputy chief and fire chief.

In 1959, Chief Jarboe was hired as a fulltime firefighter with the City of Takoma Park, a career that spanned nearly 30 years. Following his retirement in 1988, he continued serving the department as a volunteer and as a recognized state and national leader in public safety education.

Throughout his career, Chief Jarboe received many awards and accolades for his innovative approach to teaching fire and injury safety to both the young and the old. He loved to interact with children and adults, especially during his many years of volunteer service at the Montgomery County Agricultural Fair.

Chief Jarboe was born and raised in Takoma Park, Maryland, and graduated from Montgomery Blair High School. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Barbara, and son, James E. Jarboe, Jr.

Other TPVFD News

In June several members of TPVFD attended the Maryland State Firemen’s, where they participated in various trainings and workshops. Additionally, members had opportunities to view and test new fire and rescue tools and equipment.



Are You Ready to Get Ready?



by Claudine Schweber, chair
Emergency Preparedness Committee

“You’ve got to be very careful if you don’t know where you are going because you might not get there.”

—Yogi Berra

Don’t wait until there is a disaster to prepare. Below are three situations that you can prepare for. Read and take action now!

Stop the Bleed

Did you ever encounter someone who was bleeding profusely but didn’t know how to safely help? Or have you heard of such situations and realized you wouldn’t know what to do? Takoma Park’s Emergency Preparedness Committee is ready for you with FREE training.

Two *Stop the Bleed* classes are offered this August—open to Takoma Park residents, 16 years of age or older. Class size is limited to 25 seats at this time on a first-come-first-served basis. Class time is 90 minutes. Those who finish the training session will receive a certificate of completion. Both classes will be held in the Azalea Room of the Community Center, 7500 Maple Ave.

To register, search for “stop the bleed 2023” on the City website (takomaparkmd.gov) and complete the application. Those accepted to a class will be notified by email.

Sunday, August 13, 10:30 a.m. - noon

Tuesday, August 15, 7:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Home Safe Home

Takoma Park Police offer a home security survey free of charge. A residential security survey is an inspection of your home, performed by a police officer, in an effort to identify possible improvements to the physical security and to review personal safety and security habits. The goal is to decrease the likelihood that you might be victimized by a crime. Home security surveys are offered to homeowners living in the City of Takoma Park, by appointment. They generally take about an hour of your time and can be set up during evening hours.

To schedule a residential home security survey, please contact the Takoma Park Police Department at 301-270-1100.

High Rise Apartment Fire Safety

If you live in a high rise, make sure that you are prepared to exit if there is a fire.

- Meet with the landlord or building manager to learn about the fire safety features (fire alarms, sprinklers, evacuation plans and more).
- Work together with neighbors to help keep the building as fire-safe as possible
- Make sure you know the locations of all exits on your floor—in case one is blocked.
- Practice getting out of the building! Go to the nearest staircase on your floor, walk down and outside to evaluate if there might be problems. Bonus: you can take the elevator back up, which would not be allowed in fire situation!
- Read more about high rise fire safety on the Montgomery County website: tinyurl.com/bdffpbkz.

Passport Services

Passport Services are available by appointment only, Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Takoma Park Community Center on the second floor. Appointments can be scheduled by calling 301-891-7100. Passport service hours are subject to change without notice. Whenever possible, office closures will be announced on Facebook, Twitter, and the City’s website. Please note the following:

- The City of Takoma Park does not process the DS-82 Renewal Application, which is a mail-in only application.
- Effective with reopening post-COVID, we now only process passports via appointments.
- All forms must be written clearly with no mark outs, scratch outs, etc.

Questions?

Call the State Department at 1-877-487-2778



Chief Tony DeVaul: Motivating Police to Be Community Guardians

by Gayle Stewart
Takoma Park Police Department
Chaplain

Over the summer, several police departments around the country were in searches for police chiefs in addition to being in competition for police officers. Chuck Wexler, the executive director for the Police Executive Research Forum, a police think tank, commented on the police chief searches and said, “It’s a real challenge to find someone who meets the goal of dealing with crime while also reforming a police department.”

When I saw those words, I thought, *We are fortunate*, as I sat across from Chief Antonio DeVaul in his office—his arm was just out of the sling, having undergone shoulder surgery. *We are fortunate in that we have a chief who understands the needs of this community and how to lead a police department.* His office shows his love of policing. It is full of memorabilia, challenge coins, miniature police cars, awards, and certificates detailing his life in policing.

I’ve watched this department ever since I moved here in 1984 when my colleague Tony Fisher was chief. I have watched as officers were hired, advanced through the ranks, and then retired and went to other police departments. In the 1990s, I worked closely with the department in the implementation of community policing.

We’ve had a pretty good police department over those years, but with Chief DeVaul, we have an excellent police department, and he’s been able to do what Chuck Wexler believes is missing in policing: deal with crime and reform the department. During his five years as chief, he’s overseen a turnover of 70% of both sworn and civilian personnel. We have a brand-new police department that is aligned with and responsive to the needs of this community.

Tony Fisher, our first African American police chief, had an impact on 15-year-old Tony DeVaul, whose family moved to Takoma Park when he was 3 years old—such that when DeVaul joined policing, he wanted to emulate Fisher. Like many African American youth, DeVaul had not always had a good relationship with the City’s police, but he admired Chief Fisher and community sports leaders like Lee Jordan.

Tony DeVaul knew he wanted to make a difference when he joined policing, pursuing his career with



Right: Chief Tony DeVaul

Below: Tony Fisher was the Takoma Park police chief when the DeVaul family moved to Takoma Park. Chief Fisher was a role model for young Tony DeVaul. (Undated photo of Tony Fisher with local children. Tony DeVaul is not pictured.)

Bottom: Lee Jordan (center) is a Takoma Park legend as a youth sports mentor. Young Tony DeVaul is in the shadow on the right of this photo.



Photo courtesy the Jordan family

Maryland-National Capital Park Police, before coming back to Takoma Park as the police chief.

Chief DeVaul says that preventing crime means looking at the root causes of crime and disorder and putting programs in place that address those issues. The chief is a proponent of recreational programs like those he participated in. He wants to help make sure that

people have housing, jobs that pay a decent wage, and an education that points to a future. He wants young people to have the upbringing and opportunities he had because he knows that people—particularly young people—who have opportunities, who know they are valued don’t commit crime.

He’s excited about the City’s mental health pilot program,

through which two mental health counselors are embedded with police officers. Calls can be diverted from the police to those counselors, who are trained to handle people who are experiencing mental health crises. This frees up police officers for other calls that require their services.

Chief DeVaul encourages a guardian mentality rather than a warrior mentality. All of this is a culture change for the police and for the community. It takes a strong constitution to advocate for and make these changes—because there will be complaints, there will be pushback from those who want the police to just lock up people and from those who just don’t understand.

He has worked to raise morale among all department employees. Since Tony DeVaul became chief, the starting salary has been increased, and there are other incentives for officers to transfer from other departments. The reward and promotional systems have been changed so fairness is the underlying component. Transparency is also key when it comes to sharing crime data throughout the community. The department is fully staffed, something most departments around the country cannot say.

Diversity is key in the department that serves a diverse community. Across the department, officers speak seven languages. Residents can see themselves reflected in the backgrounds of the police officers, in the racial, gender, and sexual orientation of department members.

Is there still crime? Of course, there is. The only way to eliminate crime is to have a police state—and even then there will be crime. But, here, data are used to deploy officers and to determine how crime is managed. The focus is on serious crime, and officers are assigned to areas where they will have the most impact. Again, the focus is on prevention, with arrests as necessary. There are no arrest quotas in this department. Good police work is rewarded and encouraged.

The Takoma Park Police Department culture gives officers the latitude to make decisions in the best interests of the residents. That is innovative. And it is also difficult in a national climate in which every action of police officers is scrutinized and videotaped.

Chief DeVaul is both thankful for and proud of the department’s per-

sonnel who never know what type of reception they will receive when responding to a call or answering the phone. But there are more compliments than complaints and the chief is quick to praise personnel formally and informally. Personnel have gone out of their way to assist people in need and that is because of the culture that values people regardless of their circumstances.

Police personnel work with the weight of the world on their shoulders and then go home to their own families—that is the goal, to go home to their families. These officers have experienced horrific incidents, and still they keep plugging on.

Under Chief DeVaul’s leadership, the department was among the first police departments in the state to sign the 30/30 pledge which commits the department to having 30 percent of sworn personnel female by 2030. They have signed a pledge committed to transparency concerning body-worn camera footage. The department’s use-of-force policies are consistent with #8CantWait, which requires de-escalation before using deadly force. All operational procedures have been evaluated to ensure that they align with best practices and that they were consistent with the department’s changed philosophy to truly serve and protect.

Personnel have undergone Active Bystandership Law Enforcement (ABLE) training offered by Georgetown University that trains officers to “successfully intervene to prevent harm and to create a law enforcement culture that supports peer intervention” when they observe bad behavior on the part of other officers. His job, according to the chief, is to maintain a culture that encourages personnel to remain.

We have a police department that can serve as an example to others around the country. To be the chief of police is to be the hinge point between the department, the community, and government leaders. It is to be our contact for policing at the country, state, and federal levels.

To be chief is to put a human face on a system that resists reform and is derided by many—sometimes with good cause. And at the end of the day, to be chief is to be that 15-year-old teen who saw something in another chief and ended up leading that very same department.

SPANISH ■ From page 9

gura de si sería capaz de hacer programas atractivos para la gente. Sin embargo, cuando culminé uno de los primeros programas que hice para la biblioteca, me di cuenta de lo divertido que era poder usar mi imaginación para hacer cosas que otras personas pudieran disfrutar. Por lo tanto, diría que seguir desarrollando programas en esta biblioteca es lo que más me entusiasma de trabajar este verano.

Aunque este puesto se denomina “bibliotecaria en entrenamiento”, no es necesario que la persona seleccionada quiera hacer una carrera en bibliotecas. ¿Cómo crees que este puesto puede ayudar a tu futura carrera independientemente del campo que elijas?

Este puesto puede ayudar en cualquier carrera futura de muchas maneras debido a las habilidades que se adquieren realizando este trabajo. Entre ellas están la capacidad de trabajar de forma independiente, la creatividad, la organización, la investigación

y la planificación. Todas ellas son importantes en prácticamente cualquier carrera, ya sea en el sector educativo o en un bufete de abogados. El hecho de haber podido adquirir y ejercitar esas aptitudes a través del trabajo que he realizado hasta ahora, me permitirá utilizarlas en cualquier carrera que emprenda.

¿Qué les dirías a otros adolescentes de la comunidad sobre esta biblioteca?

Sé que hay mucho estigma en torno a la biblioteca y a la lectura en general por parte

de los adolescentes. Sin embargo, creo que te sorprenderá lo increíble y emocionante que puede ser leer y amar un libro o una serie de libros. Te prometo que no todos los libros son aburridos manuales de historia LOL. Si no sabes por dónde empezar, te recomiendo que te acerques a la sección YA (Young Adult) de Takoma Park Maryland Library y utilices como referencia uno de los carteles de recomendaciones para lectores YA que hay en las paredes. No te arrepentirás en absoluto de haberlo hecho.

Grasses in Masses

by Anna Mische John
Vegetation Maintenance Supervisor

Often people only think of grass as the short green stuff in a front yard or play field, but did you know that there are over 200 species of grass native to the state of Maryland? The short stuff (referred to as turf when in a mowed setting) can have utility as a play space and permeable ground cover, but from an ecological perspective, it doesn't offer much.

Native grasses, on the other hand, support insects and birds by offering habitat. And they have ecological benefits including soil stabilization and structure.

Ornamental bunch grasses have been used in gardens and landscapes for decades. Allowed to grow to full height and flower they can be an interesting addition to perennial plantings. However, just like flowers and trees, some of the grasses planted for ornamental use are invasive and may escape from where they are planted, becoming established in natural areas, displacing other plants.

This spring the vegetation maintenance



Photo by Eric Bond

You will find little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) reaching for the sky in the first traffic calming garden why you turn off of Piney Branch Rd. onto Richie Ave.

team replanted six traffic calming areas along Ritchie Avenue between Piney Branch Rd. and Oswego Ave., each featuring a single grass species with an informa-

tional label.

With this project I hope to both spotlight some of the beautiful Maryland grasses for their potential for ecological benefit, as well as offer alternatives to some of the ornamental invasive grasses (namely Miscanthus/Chinese silver grass and Pennisetum/fountain grass). Species were chosen for commercial availability, adaptability to roadside conditions, and “garden worthiness.”

I hope you will enjoy taking a tour of the *grasses in masses* on Ritchie Ave. Come **now** to see them in flower and throughout the year to see how they change with the seasons.

Want more? Continue around the traffic circle to Heffner Park to see Indian Grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*), this tall species was once the dominant grass of eastern tall grass prairies.

For more information

- Maryland Native Plant Society: mdflora.org/2020-Grasses
- Maryland Manual Online: bit.ly/3OGpdiN

AMENDMENT

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parks, and community and public facilities, and they address housing, historic preservation, pedestrian and trail systems, and environmental issues. Planners create new master plans every 15 or 20 years.

A minor master plan amendment, revisits a specific portion of the approved and adopted master plan and reexamines certain elements, often to address a change that was not anticipated at the time the adopted master plan was approved. A minor master plan amendment may offer new recommendations, or it may reconfirm the existing plan recommendations.

In this instance, the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment addresses the need for improved infrastructure, varied housing types, and additional public amenities such as parks and open space. The plan encourages reinvestment and reimagining of underutilized parcels and properties along Maple and Lee Aves., the Erie Center, and the Washington Adventist Hospital and University campuses, as well as surrounding areas.

The key plan recommendations:

- Envisioning a vibrant, mixed-income community where the housing stock, open spaces, and mix of uses meet the needs of an economically, socially, and racially diverse population.
- Promoting safe, healthy, and convenient connectivity within and between the plan's districts, and to high-capacity transit beyond the plan area, the existing trail network, and nearby activity centers.
- Embracing climate-forward planning and design to address the impact of climate change.

- Implementing a green promenade to provide a green, efficient, and attractive pedestrian connection through the plan area.
- Protecting historic resources and providing for the interpretation of community history to promote a unique sense of place.

How will these recommendations, improvements, and amenities be implemented?

Plan recommendations, improvements, and amenities are implemented in one of two ways: private development or public capital projects.

Generally, private development of new buildings will include public amenities required by the Zoning Ordinance and those recommended by the plan. These public amenities can include open space, public facilities, and more, as well as improvements to sidewalks, bike lanes, and roadways along the property frontage.

These amenities and improvements are implemented on a project-by-project basis through the public development review process. To learn more about development review, visit montgomeryplanning.org/development/.

New public facilities or improvements to existing ones like parks and roadways are funded through the Capital Improvement Program for county roads or Montgomery Parks land. Improvements to roads or land owned or controlled by the City of Takoma Park would be through the City.

What happens during the county's development review process and how can I participate?

One of the most important ways the Montgomery County Planning Board im-

plements the vision of the Montgomery County's General Plan and master plans is by reviewing proposed development and deciding on subdivision requests. To learn more about development review, visit montgomeryplanning.org/development.

How does the plan address public-school capacity?

Planning for adequate public-school facilities is a joint effort between Montgomery Planning and the Division of Capital Planning and Real Estate at Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). MCPS planners project student enrollment for the near future at the countywide and individual school levels and develop strategies and long-range facility plans to meet capacity needs appropriately. They also coordinate relevant county and state budgets for the six-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and publish the Educational Facilities Master Plan annually.

Montgomery Planning administers the Annual School Test based on MCPS' projections and scheduled CIP projects and conducts a School Adequacy Analysis for development applications accordingly. Planning staff also produce student generation rates and relevant housing data, which is shared with MCPS to inform their forecasting and facility planning efforts as well.

When a master plan is underway, Montgomery Planning collaborates with MCPS regarding the plan's potential impact on public-school enrollment. To estimate the potential impact, a maximum build-out scenario is hypothesized in which the residential capacity of each parcel is built out to the full extent allowed, and the number of students that can be generated from that scenario is calculated. Based on this Plan's

max build-out scenario, the enrollment impact can be estimated between

- 120 to 350 elementary students
- 50 to 180 middle school students
- 50 to 150 high school students

The lower range of the estimates assumes that new residential development will be multi-family buildings that generate the lowest number of students. The higher range of the estimates assumes that new residential development will be multi-family buildings that generate a higher number of students. For additional information, please see the 2020 Growth and Infrastructure Policy at montgomeryplanning.org.

In reality, it is difficult to gauge the number and type of residential units that will be built and the pace and context of development. Furthermore, master plans generally envision a 20 - 30-year timeline, whereas MCPS uses six-year projections to determine its capital budget and CIP. Therefore, a plan's estimated enrollment impact alone will not warrant immediate action by MCPS to request capital investment in schools serving the area. Instead, MCPS will continue to monitor actual enrollment trends as residential development appears, and reflect the change in its projections annually.

In the meantime, Montgomery Planning will continue to evaluate the projected utilization levels of schools through the Annual Schools Test and impose Utilization Premium Payments appropriately on residential units proposed in school service areas projected to be overutilized.

For more information on growth and infrastructure planning for schools, visit: bit.ly/46ZeuH4.

RESTORATION

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comes from the Stormwater Management Fund.

Sligo Mill/Poplar Mill is a 5.2-acre undeveloped natural open space area in the southern corner of the City that was purchased by MNCPPC in 2001 for a price of \$760,000. The area had been planned for a 23-lot townhouse

subdivision development at that time. The City provided \$110,000 to MNCPPC through a four-year allotment of the City's Program Open Space allocation. MNCPPC and the City finalized a Memorandum of Understanding in August 2003 that stipulated the acquisition, maintenance, and management requirement of the property. The City agreed to perform maintenance of the property, which

included an initial Environmental Assessment. Since that time the City has performed invasive removal and tree removal, as well as cleanup of surface dumping in and around the property. This area experienced significant historical dumping, and much of the buried material remains in place.

The stream, known as the Takoma Branch, starts at a stormwater outfall located behind 6608 Pop-

lar Ave. The area upstream from the watershed includes 355 acres of residential and light commercial land use. The Takoma Branch joins several other small tributaries before meeting Sligo Creek and eventually the Anacostia River. The stream bank slope is moderate-to-steep along the channel and is experiencing severe erosion due to heavy rainfall and the conditions of the stream bank. Lack

of streamside vegetation is also a contributing factor.

Restoration work is expected to cost \$197,485. Additional costs include about \$22,000 for construction management through the City's consulting engineering firm, Rummel, Klepper & Kahl. Details of the design plan can be found on the City's website (search for “stormwater management projects”).