



Dear candidates for elected office in the 2026 Takoma Park City Council election,

Thank you for standing for election to public office. It is a vital function in our democracy, and we appreciate your willingness to serve, spend personal time, and represent our community.

[Takoma for All \(TFA\)](#) is a group of Maryland and Washington, D.C., neighbors working to strengthen a vibrant, inclusive, prosperous, resilient, and transit-friendly community. We advocate for [smart growth principles](#) and for creating and preserving affordable and market-rate housing, commercial spaces, and community amenities, including schools, parks, recreation facilities, and public spaces.

We would be honored if you would respond to the following questions, which will help us better understand your position on key topics of interest to our group and the Takoma Park public. Please note that an appendix at the end includes additional context. We will publish the questions and your responses on our website, and TFA members will vote to endorse candidates who best align with our priorities and vision, based on your feedback.

1. Vision, Inclusion and Consensus Building

Please share your vision for Takoma Park, including how you would approach sustainability, economic vibrancy, and housing access. A 2021 consultant report commissioned by the City found that Takoma Park is a "Tale of Two Cities," with stark divides across lines of race and class. How would you ensure a wide range of residents is heard in decisions about residential, commercial, and public facility development? When those views conflict, how would you weigh them and explain your decision, and what experience do you have building consensus across a real division?

Agosse Response: My vision is a welcoming, inclusive, economically vibrant, and environmentally sustainable Takoma Park where every resident has a meaningful voice, regardless of race, income, or background.

As a Ward 6 business owner providing healthcare and transportation services, I regularly engage with residents, families, entrepreneurs, and community organizations. I believe economic development, affordable housing, environmental protection, and responsible budgeting must advance together.

The City's description as a "Tale of Two Cities" highlights inequalities we must address. I support accessible community meetings, multilingual outreach, and direct engagement with underserved neighborhoods, particularly immigrant and low-income communities.

When opinions conflict, I will listen respectfully, examine evidence, consider financial limitations, and prioritize solutions that protect vulnerable residents while serving the broader public interest. My Christian values guide my commitment to fairness, compassion, and service.

Through community leadership, business partnerships, and participation in civic and political processes in many organizations here in US and in Africa especially in Benin, I have gained experience navigating competing interests and encouraging collaboration among diverse groups.

My guiding principle is simple: Every voice deserves to be heard, every neighborhood deserves equitable opportunities, and every decision must serve the long-term interests of Takoma Park. That is why my slogan is: “No Neighbor Left Behind”

2. Housing, Zoning and Rent Stabilization

Takoma Park has not seen a new multifamily building since the late 1970s. Much of the city is zoned R-60, which permits only detached single-family homes, and Montgomery County, not the City, sets the zoning. Meanwhile, the City's rent stabilization law, the first of its kind in Maryland, is under review by the current Council. What changes to the law, if any, would you support, and what would you pursue at the County on zoning? How would you bring renters, housing providers, and homeowners to an outcome that each can accept?

Agosse Response: I believe every Takoma Park resident deserves safe, affordable, and quality housing. Our policies must protect renters while recognizing the legitimate concerns of homeowners and housing providers.

Rent Stabilization: I support preserving the City's longstanding rent stabilization protections, particularly keeping annual rent increases tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI). I favor limiting exemptions for newly constructed rental housing to five years, potentially seven if clear community benefits justify it. Any changes must protect vulnerable residents from excessive rent increases.

I also support targeted rehabilitation assistance and reasonable incentives for small landlords owning one to five rental units, encouraging property maintenance, energy efficiency, and compliance with housing standards.

Zoning and Development: Although Montgomery County controls zoning, I would advocate for responsible multifamily and moderately priced housing opportunities while considering neighborhood character, infrastructure capacity, environmental sustainability, and displacement risks.

Building Consensus: I would bring renters, homeowners, and housing providers together through transparent public discussions, multilingual outreach, and meaningful community engagement. When interests conflict, decisions should be based on reliable information, affordability, fairness, and long-term community benefits.

My goal is a Takoma Park where renters are protected, housing providers are treated fairly, homeowners are respected, and families of all income levels can thrive.

3. Development Sites and Tax Base

Single-family homes make up about half of Takoma Park's housing units but pay about 77 percent of its property taxes. Meanwhile, the next Council will inherit decisions on several of the city's most significant sites: the former Washington Adventist Hospital campus, the New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center, Takoma Junction, the McLaughlin property on Poplar Avenue, and 6530 and 6600 New Hampshire Avenue. What is your vision for these and similar sites, how would you attract developers who can deliver it, and what role should new development play in easing the burden on homeowners?

Agosse Response: Takoma Park must expand and diversify its tax base through responsible development that creates jobs, increases housing opportunities, strengthens local businesses, and reduces the financial burden on homeowners.

Development Priorities: I support residential development at the former Washington Adventist Hospital campus, senior housing and mixed-use projects along New Hampshire Avenue, and appropriate redevelopment of the McLaughlin property and properties at 6530 and 6600 New Hampshire Avenue. These projects should include affordable housing, neighborhood-serving retail, and employment opportunities.

At Takoma Junction, I favor practical, financially responsible development that supports local businesses and community needs.

Recreation Center: Ward 6 deserves a modern Recreation Center serving children, families, and seniors. Given our limited budget, I would prioritize partnerships with Montgomery County, nonprofit organizations, and private investors rather than substantial City-funded construction.

Attracting Investment: We must improve coordination with County agencies, establish clear development expectations, simplify administrative processes, and encourage responsible public-private partnerships.

Tax Relief: New development should generate sustainable revenue without creating excessive infrastructure or service costs. I also support examining fairer contributions from commercial properties and utility companies, subject to legal and economic considerations.

My priority is responsible economic growth that expands City revenues, improves community services, and reduces pressure for additional homeowner taxes.

4. The Purple Line and Safe Streets

The Purple Line is expected to open in late 2027, with a station at the Takoma Langley Crossroads. New Hampshire Avenue and University Boulevard remain dangerous corridors despite Vision Zero and other initiatives. How would you leverage the Purple Line for the city's benefit, and what would you do to make those corridors, and for that matter, the city, safer for pedestrians, bicyclists, scooters, and other non-car travelers?

Agosse Response: The Purple Line offers important opportunities for Takoma Park, particularly Ward 6, but its benefits must not come at the expense of neighborhood safety, affordable housing, or local businesses.

Years of construction have disrupted traffic, businesses, and daily life along New Hampshire Avenue and University Boulevard. Dangerous intersections and vehicles cutting through residential neighborhoods remain serious concerns.

Economic Opportunities: I support leveraging the Purple Line to improve access to jobs, education, healthcare, and commercial opportunities. We should encourage responsible investment around Takoma Langley Crossroads while protecting existing residents and small businesses from displacement and excessive rent increases.

Street Safety: I would strengthen collaboration with Montgomery County, Maryland transportation agencies, and Purple Line officials to improve pedestrian crossings, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, street lighting, traffic-calming measures, and transit connections. School zones, bus stops, and dangerous intersections deserve particular attention.

Ward 6 Representation: Our neighborhoods must receive equitable infrastructure investments and meaningful participation in transportation planning. I support traffic studies, measures to discourage dangerous cut-through traffic, and transparent reporting on safety improvements.

As a board member of the Takoma/Langley Crossroads Development Authority, I value collaboration among businesses, residents, and government agencies.

My priority is ensuring that the Purple Line delivers safer streets, stronger businesses, better transportation, and improved quality of life for all residents.

5. Growth and Climate

The City has committed to net zero emissions by 2035, but modeling presented to the City Council in January 2026 shows 55 percent of that goal is not achievable on the current path. Transportation is the largest single source at 54 percent of the City's emissions, and Montgomery County, not the City, sets building energy codes. How would you close that gap? Would you support making the 2035 target binding for municipal operations, where the City does control the levers, and what role does land use play for the rest?

Agosse Response: Takoma Park must pursue ambitious but realistic climate policies that reduce emissions, protect residents, and strengthen environmental resilience without imposing unsustainable financial burdens.

2035 Climate Goals: Although the City has made progress in cleaner transportation and energy efficiency, additional action is necessary. I support making the 2035 net-zero target binding for municipal operations, provided it includes achievable benchmarks, transparent reporting, and a financially responsible implementation plan.

Transportation and Land Use: With transportation responsible for approximately 54% of emissions, we must improve public transit, pedestrian safety, and bicycle infrastructure. I support responsible mixed-use development near transit corridors, particularly the Purple Line, while preserving affordability and neighborhood character. Cooperation with Montgomery County is essential.

Tree Canopy Protection: We must reverse declining tree coverage through expanded planting, preservation of mature trees, and stronger community partnerships. Trees reduce heat, improve air quality, and help manage stormwater.

Stormwater and Flood Prevention: Drawing on my background in environmental science and water resources management, I strongly support a comprehensive strategy addressing major storm events, including 50- and 100-year storms. We should partner with Montgomery County and establish assistance programs helping property owners reduce flooding risks.

My vision is a climate-resilient Takoma Park that combines measurable emissions reductions, responsible development, stronger environmental protection, and practical support for residents.

Ambroise Agosse, Ward 6 candidate

Thank you for your time and for working to make our city a great place for everyone.

Appendix: Background

Provided as reference.

Housing, Zoning and Rent Stabilization. The 2026 current allowance is 3 percent, tied to regional CPI. Montgomery County's cap is 5.2 percent. Newly constructed buildings are exempt for their first five years, after which increases are capped at CPI. Developers and housing advocates have raised the concern that five years is too short to recover construction costs, and that the math pushes projects toward for-sale condominiums, which fall outside the law entirely and shrink the rental stock rather than expand it. The law also governs reinvestment in the buildings already standing.

Owners of older apartments face County energy performance deadlines in the 2030s that require significant capital, while the City's law limits how much of that investment they can recover through rents. The same provision that shields tenants from sharp increases determines whether these buildings are reinvested in or continue to deteriorate. RSG, Inc. presented findings to Council on June 10, 2026, concluding that the program helps preserve diversity with respect to race, ethnicity, and income, but may worsen housing availability and the quality of rental housing.

The City's Fiscal Year 2027 priorities name missing middle housing and expanded accessory dwelling units as goals, but the zoning that would allow duplexes, triplexes, and small apartment buildings is not the City's to change. The McLaughlin property on Poplar Avenue illustrates the cost. It is roughly five acres, one of the largest parcels in the area, close to transit, and currently for sale at a substantially reduced price, yet R-60 zoning limits it to maybe two dozen detached houses. One option a future Council could weigh is City acquisition, on its own or with a housing partner, followed by a rezoning request and a sale with conditions attached.

Development Sites and Tax Base. Adventist HealthCare is demolishing the hospital campus and intends to sell it. The Minor Master Plan Amendment envisions residential and mixed-use development there.

The City's 2022 request for proposals for the Recreation Center drew two responses, both proposing affordable housing at the site's full by-right capacity, but staff recommended neither because a shovel-ready public-private partnership did not appear feasible.

At Takoma Junction, the development agreement ended in a 2024 settlement that returned the lot to the City, and the lot was resurfaced in May 2026. Congestion at the Junction drives cut-through traffic into adjacent neighborhoods. Separately, Montgomery Housing Partnership has proposed redeveloping Edinburgh House at 7513 Maple Avenue, a 45-unit affordable property, at greater density.

In July 2021, the City presented Council with a \$500,000 state revitalization grant for 6530 and 6600 New Hampshire Avenue, a derelict three-story commercial building, to create a conference center, commercial and arts space, and housing, with the stated aim of increasing the City's tax base. The milestone schedule called for acquisition by December 2022, permits by April 2023, construction complete by June 2024, and parking by August 2025.

From the adopted Fiscal Year 2027 budget: detached and attached single-family homes make up about half of housing units and pay about 77 percent of collected real property taxes. Multifamily properties pay about 12 percent, in part because older buildings depreciate and many are deed-restricted. Commercial property pays about 5 percent. FY27 real property rate is \$0.5422 per \$100, a one-cent reduction from FY26, offset by doubling the railroad and public utilities rate. The budget draws about \$1.9 million from reserves. The former hospital campus contributes little to the tax base today, and demolition will further reduce its assessed value, though redevelopment could eventually make it one of the City's largest revenue sources.

Purple Line and Safe Streets. The Purple Line is expected to open in late 2027, with a station at Takoma Langley Crossroads. Both New Hampshire Avenue and University Boulevard are state highways, so safety changes require State Highway Administration approval and County coordination. New Hampshire Avenue and University Boulevard are both on Montgomery County's High Injury Network, designated for serious injury and fatal crashes.

Growth and Climate. Resolution 2020-6 commits the City to net zero by 2035 "as our resources and authorities allow." City staff presented emissions modeling to the City Council on January 14, 2026, using the ClearPath platform. It shows 45 percent of the 2035 goal achievable under the current transition pathway and a 55 percent gap. Emissions fell roughly 31 percent between 2005 and 2023, driven substantially by a cleaner regional electricity grid rather than by local action. Transportation is the largest single sector at 54 percent of the City's 128,706 MTCO₂e in 2023, driven by vehicle travel on roads the City does not control. Montgomery County sets building energy codes and covers multifamily buildings of 25,000 square feet and larger under its performance standards. The City's direct levers are land use and voluntary programs, run by a sustainability office currently staffed by one person.