



Embracing Change,
Championing Inclusive Growth

www.takomaforall.org

2026 Candidate Questionnaire Responses

On September 27, [Takoma for All](http://www.takomaforall.org) sent a five-question questionnaire covering key topics of interest to our group to all 11 candidates for City office. All 11 candidates submitted responses, which are printed below, verbatim. We have not altered the candidates' responses, though we have synchronized the formatting to make them easier to read.

We are making all responses public for all Takoma Park voters, and you can download each candidate's individual response form at www.takomaforall.org. Below is a compilation of all responses so residents can learn about the candidates running for office and make an informed decision about their vote.

Please use the Table of Contents below to jump to specific questions or candidate responses. The question being answered is repeated in the header of each page as an additional aid. The background information provided to candidates with the questionnaire is included as an appendix.

We express our deep appreciation for the time and thought that went into responding to these questions.

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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?

Mayor

Tom Gagliardo

There is no question that many Takoma Park neighborhoods lack racial, ethnic and economic diversity. That is a reality that exists throughout America. The good news is we have diverse Takoma Park schools. Both of my daughters were better prepared for the real world because their friends and classmates came from a wide range of backgrounds. They, as I do, know how one understands and navigates the world is a product of how one has been treated by the dominant culture.

I encourage and embrace public participation in decisions that affect people's lives. Information empowers people; and for people to meaningfully participate they need information and the space to be heard. The City has failed to utilize its newsletter as intended. The failure to provide all residents with timely, relevant information has greatly diminished the ability of people who care to be heard and to influence decisions about residential, commercial, and public facility development. I intend to implement the unanimously adopted City Council resolution that directs the Newsletter to "[p]rovide factual, accurate information about the city's policies and programs and other issues of concern to residents [and to serve as] an open forum for the discussion of City affairs."

I will hold interactive public hearings at convenient times and conduct them similar to the way the Maryland General Assembly and Congress conduct hearings.

I have served as mediator in a variety of forums both as the mediator and as an advocate for one of the parties. This year I was selected to mediate in federal court. Mediation requires time and effort, flexibility, creativity and optimism. It doesn't always work but it is worth the effort. I recoil at the notion that successful agreements, whether negotiated by the parties directly or through mediation, means everybody goes home unhappy. Success is when everybody is willing to live with the outcome and move forward.

The availability of land on Hospital Hill and the commitment of Washington Adventist University to build market rate, missing middle and affordable housing along with local retail is a gift and an opportunity. Since 2022, when a concept plan was first publicized, I have supported building multifamily housing there. (I did publicly state that zoning the property like downtown Silver Spring was unnecessary.)

We need to stop labeling each other (NIMBY/YIMBY), put aside past disagreements (I know it may be difficult to do) and work with Takoma Development Partnership to make the University's Vision 2030 real.

One experience I have had with consensus-building was as the chair of the Maryland State Bar Association Labor and Employment Law Council. I brought plaintiff- and defendant-side attorneys together and worked to enact the Civil Rights Tax Fairness Act, which exempts monetary recoveries for emotional distress, most often in sexual harassment cases, from state income tax.

Talisha Searcy

Response: My vision is a sustainable, economically vibrant, and inclusive Takoma Park where everyone can live, work, play, and thrive—regardless of race, income, neighborhood, age, ability, or immigration status. Achieving that vision begins by acknowledging the disparities that exist within our city. Takoma Park remains residentially and economically divided, with many residents of color and low- to moderate-income families living in apartments and facing different barriers to opportunity, stability, and participation. These disparities are being intensified by the national affordability crisis and by federal job losses that are affecting many families in our region. Rising housing, food, transportation, childcare, and utility costs are stretching household budgets, while job uncertainty is making it harder for residents to remain in the community. We must respond to the needs of our entire city, from a single mother on Maple Avenue who hopes to own a home to a retiree who wants to downsize, by strengthening climate resilience, building a more diverse local economy, expanding housing choices, and ensuring that City policies and investments reach the residents facing the greatest pressures.

- a. **Sustainability:** Climate change is impacting everyone. We must mitigate its impacts. Under my leadership, the City completed a Stormwater Resiliency Study and supported projects on public and private property, including grants for multifamily electrification and stormwater improvements. The [Green Homes and Businesses](#) grant program helps residents and businesses lower utility costs, improve indoor air quality and comfort, and advance the City's climate goals.

- b. **Economic Vibrancy:** Takoma Park's business community is growing, and the region is taking notice. Local businesses are central to Takoma Park's identity, neighborhood vitality, and long-term fiscal health. A stronger local economy means more places to shop, eat, work, and gather; more support for entrepreneurs; a broader tax base; and stronger commercial corridors. We must build on our lively business districts while replacing some of the economic activity lost when Washington Adventist Hospital moved by attracting employers and supporting small businesses. I have supported local businesses through grants, engagement, celebrating Legacy Businesses, and connecting entrepreneurs with staff support, technical assistance, and revitalization opportunities.
- c. **Housing:** We need more housing choices between a rent stabilized apartment and a detached home that costs more than \$700,000. That includes larger apartments, townhouses, senior and missing-middle housing options, as well as assistance that helps residents improve their homes and living conditions. Under my leadership, the City created new [housing tax credits](#) to encourage the development and rehabilitation of affordable and workforce housing. We also passed the [Minor Master Plan Amendment](#), which expanded zoning capacity for housing, affordable homes, and economic development in key areas of the city. Because of these efforts, the city is now on the verge of adding nearly 100 new affordable housing rental units at Edinburgh House.

Economic development works best when residents are informed and engaged from the beginning—not after major decisions have already been made. I would communicate early and often about proposed projects, including the goals, potential benefits, tradeoffs, timelines, and opportunities for public input. That means using multilingual outreach, neighborhood meetings, accessible public forums, and trusted community partners to reach residents. I would also provide regular updates as proposals evolve and clearly explain how community feedback influenced the outcome. When conflicts arise, I bring residents together, set expectations for respectful and constructive dialogue, make sure different perspectives are heard, identify shared priorities, and help the community move toward a practical path forward.

Ward 1

Shana Fulcher

My vision for Takoma Park is an equitable, climate resilient community where residents of all backgrounds can afford to put down roots. With strong safeguards like rent stabilization, stormwater management mandates, and tree canopy preservation already established, we must pivot toward creating solutions rather than stalling them.

I support transit oriented density across all wards. We must build denser housing near Metro, Purple Line, and Ride On/Metrobus hubs. Addressing our "Tale of Two Cities" means expanding gentle density citywide, not only concentrating on multifamily growth along Maple Avenue. In Ward 1, I support missing middle housing like duplexes and fourplexes, supported by updated zoning and electrification infrastructure.

Growth must not displace neighbors; I actively support Good Cause eviction protections so renters can stay rooted. I also backed street level retail in the Minor Master Plan to foster walkable, neighborhood serving businesses. Along with more sidewalks and bikelanes, robust tree canopy is

essential for shade infrastructure, protecting walkers and cyclists from extreme heat so outdoor mobility remains viable.

Formal Wednesday council meetings cannot be the only path to civic participation.

- I hold informal emails and one on one discussions in the same regard as dais testimony.
- My work with Takoma Park Lunch and Learn proved that engaging residents directly in apartment lobbies is essential for reaching voices often left out.
- On the 2024 Budget Working Group, I helped create a plan centered on broad, accessible public input across the entire city.

Conflict and Consensus

When opinions divide, our long term housing and climate commitments must guide decisions. Residents respect compromise when their concerns are genuinely heard. For Edinburgh House, while a transit adjacent site ideally calls for minimal parking, I support moving the project forward with more parking both because residents requested it and endless debate delays needed housing.

Similarly, navigating the Minor Master Plan Amendment showed that real consensus requires respecting the councilmembers and communities most directly impacted, while governing responsibly for all six wards, not just Wards 1, 2, and 3. We cannot let perpetual debate stall urgent action on housing and climate resilience.

To build an inclusive Takoma Park, we must address the root cause of our affordability challenges: a severe shortage of housing supply.

Doug Glynn

The 2021 report describing Takoma Park as a “Tale of Two Cities” identified a problem we should take seriously: residents do not have equal access to civic life, public resources, or the decision-making process. The City has taken meaningful steps to address that divide, including expanded multilingual outreach, greater engagement with renters and immigrant communities. I think that work is a good foundation, but now we need to scale what works.

Community engagement has to reach beyond City Council meetings. Public hearings are one tool, not the whole engagement process. The people who have the time, childcare, transportation, language skills, and familiarity with city government to attend a meeting are not necessarily representative of the city as a whole. We should meet residents where they are, including apartment communities, schools, businesses, houses of worship, neighborhood organizations, and community events.

I would also support providing childcare at major community meetings. If parents cannot attend because they cannot find or afford childcare, then we are not really hearing the whole community.

Language access is civic access. I am a university professor with a PhD, I am fluent in Spanish, and much of my professional life has involved language and education. I would like to see the Library and Recreation Department expand opportunities for English-language learners as well as residents interested in learning a second language. That could include more bilingual classes, conversation groups, and programs that bring residents from different linguistic communities together.

My vision for housing is straightforward: build more housing and protect the people who already live here. We should preserve existing affordable housing and tenant protections while creating opportunities for additional housing at different price points and of different types. RSG's analysis also gives us some perspective about the scale of this debate. It identified only about 13 vacant or underutilized parcels in Takoma Park and concluded that much of any future housing growth will have to come through redevelopment. RSG also found that housing production is affected by land availability, redevelopment costs, financing conditions, regulations, and regional market pressures, and that the available evidence does not isolate rent stabilization as the cause of our housing-production challenges.

I think we sometimes turn housing into a symbolic fight between YIMBY and NIMBY positions when the choices before us are more complicated and more practical than those labels suggest. We can protect rent stabilization, improve the quality and maintenance of existing rental housing, and still look seriously at where additional housing can responsibly be built.

Those goals do not have to be enemies.

My experience in academia has taught me something about disagreement. Academics disagree, sometimes fervently. The first step in reaching consensus, or even mutual understanding, is to establish a dialogue. I am accustomed to listening to people who strongly disagree with me, examining their arguments, expressing my own position with evidence, and continuing to foment the established dialogue. Consensus does not mean everyone abandons what they believe. It means finding areas where seemingly opposing interests actually overlap and being willing to work from there.

I know there are sharp divisions in Takoma Park, particularly around housing and rent stabilization. I do not think those divisions have to be permanent. My responsibility on the Council would be to listen broadly, make a coherent argument for what I believe is right, weigh the evidence and the tradeoffs, and explain my decision clearly. People may still disagree with the result, but they should know they were heard and understand how the decision was reached.

Ward 2

Jim Della-Giacoma

I am an advocate for more affordable housing in Takoma Park. I am a member of Takoma for All.

I am a homeowner in Takoma Park but came to this on a journey through more than 20 rental properties. While our house was being renovated, for three months I was a renter in Takoma Park, living with my family of four in a neighbor's one-bedroom basement apartment. This gives me a dual perspective on the challenges of housing.

On affordable housing, I follow up my words with deeds. In 2020, my first time speaking at city council was to support the Habitat for Humanity project on Garland Ave. I volunteered with that project to help strip and rebuild the property. Later, I supported the city's efforts to apply for state funding that kept it affordable missing middle housing. I have welcomed the neighbors who now live there, one of who seconded my nomination for this council seat.

In 2023, I spoke at city and county council in support of the Minor Master Plan Amendment. Most recently, in September 2026, I spoke on my experiences touring a Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP) project. My website and newsletter have addressed affordable housing issues on multiple occasions and at length.

In Takoma Park, we need an inclusive view of residents and whose voice is heard. While single family homeowners traditionally have the loudest voice in municipal politics, we must acknowledge our city is a majority renter and a majority minority community. When talking about development, business owners and landlords should also be heard.

The city's Housing and Community Development (HDC) is showing with recent proposals and developments that they have the networks, trust, and convening power to make processes inclusive. Council should recognize the role staff play, work with them closely, and encourage, empower and resource HDC to do more to allow all voices to be heard. As for my role, if elected, I would draw on my experience in conflict resolution and community development to facilitate discussions with all stakeholders, recognizing that all sides need to be consulted, involved, and heard in any significant community decision.

Suzy Stimler

Vision: My vision for Takoma Park is a community that is vibrant, inclusive, racially and socio-economically diverse, environmentally sustainable, fiscally responsible, and transit-friendly with a City government that protects the most vulnerable among us.

Inclusion: To ensure that a wide range of residents is heard in decisions about development, the City should adopt a community engagement strategy that includes community meetings held in multiple locations in the City, permits online participation, offers multi-lingual support, and allows participants to break into small groups so that they can really listen to each other. Community surveys should also be conducted so that those who cannot participate in community meetings also have the opportunity to communicate their needs and ideas.

Consensus: I have years of experience in non-profits and mutual aid groups with non-hierarchical structures and consensus decision making processes. Working towards consensus requires trust and community members feeling like they have the opportunity to express their needs in a setting where multiple viewpoints are allowed and are safe to be expressed. It also requires listening to each other and time to reflect on both one's own needs and the needs of others. Decisions that come after such a process are smarter, better, and easier for everyone to accept.

Ward 3

Tom Wallack

Takoma Park is an incredibly special place, and I feel a great responsibility to help steward our city into the future. My wife and I chose to live in Takoma Park because we felt it was the best community for us to build our family. We are so thankful to be able to raise our daughter here, and I want to do what I can to help keep and make this a place where many other people are able to do that too. I see the responsibilities of the Council to help achieve that by:

1.) doing what it can to keep the city affordable - trying to reduce property tax burdens on homeowners, preserving a robust rent stabilization policy for renters, and supporting additional affordable housing and other housing options for future residents. This requires a willingness to make harder choices on the city's budget to reduce spending and working with the county and state to explore ways to diversify our sources of revenue beyond property taxes, as well as continuing to pursue grants for additional funds.

2.) conducting vigorous oversight to ensure city services are meeting the needs of residents and providing value for the additional property taxes we pay.

To the second part of the question about how to overcome this condition as a tale of two cities, this is a macro problem that exists beyond just our city and a one that doesn't have a simple solution. I aim to regularly engage with residents across the Ward. Continuing door knocking beyond the campaign and seeking ways to make myself available to residents where they are, rather than just asking them to come to Council meetings or take the time to seek me out. The job of a council member is to vote - on the budget, on policies, on hiring the city manager - but I see that the responsibility is to listen. I will seek out residents in order to hear their concerns and ideas, and then try to make the best decision I can to help keep Takoma Park the great place that we all know, love, and want to be able to continue to be proud to live and raise our families.

Ward 4

Kurt Gilbert

Historically, and as I expect will continue to be the practice, councilmembers share information they have gathered with their constituents to help inform community conversations, prepare for proclamations, and support informed decision-making and voting.

I am hopeful and will be watching closely to see how city staff utilizes the funding allocated to the Community Connectors project. I believe this initiative has the potential to support councilmembers in reaching residents who are often difficult to engage, ensuring they have access to essential information and are encouraged to participate in the city's decision-making processes.

My approach has been to work with other community leaders to share information that I believe is important and relevant to the residents I serve. Over the years, I have helped navigate conflicts on a variety of issues by educating myself on the topics, carefully considering different perspectives, and weighing the information available. In some cases, this has meant making difficult decisions after thoughtfully reviewing residents' concerns, staff recommendations, ideas, and supporting data.

Having participated in discussions and served as a decision-maker on numerous city initiatives over the past 29 years, I believe I have developed a strong foundation in community engagement, conflict resolution, planning, and informed decision-making. I remain committed to using that experience to serve my constituents, encourage meaningful participation, and help guide decisions that best serve our community. My process for community engagement is the same for my apartment communities as it is for my residential neighborhoods within Ward 4. There is a divide in where they live, economic status and culture, but how they engage does not differ in my estimation. Each of my buildings have a small group of active advocates for the building community, just as my three

separate residential community groups. They both have many members who I rarely hear from and could use assistance gaining their attention on matters.

Ward 5

Cara Honzak

My vision is a Takoma Park of belonging, not merely inclusion. In my first term, Councilmember Fulcher and I successfully advocated for adding this language to the Council's adopted priorities. I want every resident to be connected, safe, and able to be their authentic self here. I support sustainability in everything the City does, a growing local economy viewed through an equity lens that prioritizes small, minority, LGBTQ+, and women-owned businesses, and strategic growth in housing supply, especially missing middle housing, alongside renewal of our aging affordable housing.

Hearing residents: Our elections, with mail-in ballots, ranked choice voting, and ample debates, are a strong foundation, and the Council's vote is often the most powerful voice busy residents have. Between elections, Councilmembers and staff must meet people where they are, using qualitative and quantitative data and representative sampling to reach those less likely to show up. We must keep coming back to ask whether decisions are moving in the direction that those who are most impacted feel is right.

Weighing conflicts: I look first for win-win solutions. If none exists, I rely on core values: belonging, elevating marginalized voices, protecting the most vulnerable, a healthy environment, and collaboration. I explain my decisions and stay open to revisiting them, including admitting when I have made a mistake.

Experience: My two-decade career in international development was built on forging consensus among multi-sector stakeholders, particularly across health and environment sectors with widely divergent values. On Council, I have worked to find common principles across our own community. It is slow work, but we cannot let fear or exhaustion stop us.

Ward 6

Ambroise Agosse

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”

Amy Wesolek

My vision of Takoma Park is a community committed to being welcoming, equitable, and good environmental stewards. Sustainability, economic vibrancy, and housing access are all key parts of making that vision a reality. I aim to seek balance amongst many priorities, being mindful of centering those most vulnerable and fiscal considerations.

I believe in connecting with the folks that are most impacted by any particular policy and meeting where they are whenever possible. Listening and gathering as much information before making any decisions is key. When there are disagreements, I prioritize the opinions of those directly impacted (if it would affect everyone, I prioritize the opinions of Ward 6 residents) and try to balance that with what I believe will move the most towards the greater public good.

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?

Mayor

Tom Gagliardo

I met a few days ago with a group of landlords. They are concerned about high property taxes and the City's Fair Rent Return Process. Those concerns have not been given sufficient attention. Of course, they don't welcome rent stabilization when it decreases profitability. I believe I am correct to say that they understand the political reality of Takoma Park and can live with rent stabilization in some form. And some said they often don't raise rents as much as the law allows.

The premise for aligning Takoma Park's rent stabilization law with Montgomery County's is the assertion that rent stabilization is the cause for the lack of multifamily construction. That is a false premise.

First, until Hospital Hill became available there was little land available for large-scale development. The McLaughlin Christian School and John Nevins Andrews SDA School sites are smaller than Hospital Hill and may be suitable for townhouse or other development. Months ago, I suggested to the Mayor and Council to look into New Hampshire Avenue from 410 to Eastern Avenue as developable land. I support zoning changes to make that stretch available for multifamily housing and I favor public transit along New Hampshire Avenue linking the Langley Park Transit Center with the Metro at Fort Totten.

Developers build when money, land, materials and labor are available at affordable levels and there is a market for what they build. That's 3Ms and 2Ls. Rent stabilization begins with "R".

Talisha Searcy

Response: Takoma Park must preserve its affordable housing stock, protect tenants, and produce more housing. I support rent stabilization because it preserves affordability and helps tenants remain in their homes, and I oppose rent increases above the Consumer Price Index. At the same time, affordability and housing quality must go hand in hand. Every tenant deserves a safe, well-maintained home, and our aging rental buildings require sustained investment. Because Takoma Park has not comprehensively reviewed its Rent Stabilization Policy in 20 years, I support the current review to determine what is working and what should be improved while maintaining strong tenant protections. Early findings show that rent stabilization supports long-term tenant stability, but the City continues to face limited housing production and an aging housing stock. New construction has slowed significantly since the 1980s, most homes were built before 1960, and only about 4% of units have been built since 2000. I support practical updates that promote affordability, housing quality,

and choice. These include simpler ways for small landlords to recover appropriate renovation and maintenance costs; rent floors and ceilings that protect tenants and landlords from extreme swings in inflation; more consistent rules between deed-restricted and rent-stabilized properties; and a careful review of exemption periods for new construction. For comparison, Montgomery County exempts newly constructed rental units from rent stabilization for 23 years, while Takoma Park's exemption is five years.

It is important to note that the City's Rent Stabilization Policy isn't the only policy levers that we have to address housing challenges. I would also strengthen tenant protections, Tenant Opportunity to Purchase support, eviction and emergency assistance, inspections, and displacement protections. Because Montgomery County controls zoning, I would build on the Minor Master Plan Amendment by advocating for more housing and mixed-use development near transit and commercial corridors, including accessible and affordable homes, accessory dwelling units, and appropriately scaled missing-middle housing. I would bring renters, housing providers, and homeowners together around shared facts and measurable goals: stable rents, safe and well-maintained homes, predictable rules, responsible ownership, reinvestment, and more housing choices. We are using these community engagement techniques as part of the Rent Stabilization Policy review, and they are a useful way to engage different stakeholders.

Ward 1

Shana Fulcher

I favor incorporating a predictable floor/ceiling model, informed by the City's pending housing study. The current capital improvement process leaves housing providers with no certainty on cost recovery, causing critical building maintenance and decarbonization to stagnate. We must streamline these approvals with clear guardrails, applying capital recovery increases between tenancies and advocating on the state level for Good Cause Eviction so owners cannot displace residents. We should also reconsider our five year new construction exemption, as lenders consider it too risky to finance new builds in Takoma Park, and consider providing exemptions for small landlords.

County Zoning Advocacy

I strongly support legalizing "Missing Middle" housing, duplexes, triplexes, and small apartment buildings, across all of Takoma Park, including Ward 1. Socioeconomic diversity requires integrating different income levels throughout our neighborhoods, alongside transit oriented density on primary corridors. The County must also reform restrictive ADU rules, such as arbitrary size caps tied to small primary homes and prohibitions that block families from building flexible spaces for eldercare. Leveraging my regional experience on the MWCOC Transportation Planning Board, I will advocate directly with County leaders for these changes.

Building Consensus

A sustainable outcome benefits everyone: renters gain stronger protections and better maintained homes; housing providers gain the predictability needed to invest; and homeowners gain a broader tax base to support essential services and green infrastructure. To move beyond divisive hearings, I support segmented stakeholder focus groups alongside on site tenant pop ups with community

connectors so every resident can participate candidly and comfortably. Elected officials can only address residents' true concerns when they receive honest input.

Doug Glynn

I support rent stabilization and would not support dismantling it. I do think the current review gives us an opportunity to make the system work better, particularly when it comes to maintaining and reinvesting in our aging multifamily housing.

I would like to see us separate predictable maintenance from extraordinary expenses.

For new development, major redevelopment, and potentially on a phased basis for existing larger multifamily properties, I would support requiring a long-term maintenance and capital reserve plan. The idea is similar to the reserve planning used by condominium associations. A building owner would identify major systems and predictable expenses, such as roofs, HVAC equipment, exterior painting, windows, stairs, and other components with reasonably foreseeable useful lives. The plan would establish an expected replacement schedule and a method of funding those expenses over time.

That would accomplish two things. Tenants would have greater assurance that the building is being maintained for the long term, and housing providers would have a predictable way to incorporate ordinary capital needs into the economics of the property rather than waiting for a crisis.

But genuinely extraordinary expenses are different. A major repair, emergency replacement, new legal requirement, or other legitimate expense that could not reasonably have been anticipated in the maintenance plan should have access to a much simpler Fair-Return process.

Takoma Park already allows housing providers to seek rent increases above the annual allowance through a Fair Return Petition when operating or capital expenses rise enough to affect the property's financial return. The problem is that the process can require substantial financial documentation and can become cumbersome.

I would like that process to become much more straightforward for legitimate expenses. If an owner can show the expense, demonstrate that it was not already contemplated and funded through the building's approved maintenance plan, and document the reasonable cost, the application should be able to move through an expedited review. Tenant protections and the ability to challenge unsupported expenses should remain, but we should not create unnecessary barriers to replacing a failed boiler or making an essential structural repair.

I would also connect this system to public incentives. Takoma Park already has a Multifamily Building Improvement Grant program that can cover up to 80 percent of eligible electrification projects, with awards of approximately \$100,000, although the current program is limited to buildings with five to thirty units. I would look at expanding that concept to larger buildings and a broader range of major building improvements, particularly when the investment improves energy efficiency, housing quality, or long-term affordability.

I would also work with our District 20 delegation and Montgomery County to pursue additional state and county funding for major multifamily rehabilitation.

My goal is to create a clear bargain. Renters receive stable rents and a meaningful guarantee that their buildings will be maintained. Responsible housing providers receive predictable rules, a practical way to plan for capital expenses, and a simpler path for recovering legitimate extraordinary costs.

Protect affordability, protect tenants, and protect the housing itself. Those goals do not have to be antagonistic.

Ward 2

Jim Della-Giacoma

In 2023, I spoke in favor of the Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA) at city and county council meetings. With the Edinburgh House redevelopment, we now see the benefit of this zoning change. As this development moves forward, we should work with Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP) to set precedents in Takoma Park in both the process and result to show we can develop affordable housing that adds quality housing to our community, provides better choices for renters, and does not permanently displace any current residents.

There are still significant parcels of unused or commercial land in Takoma Park, some of which are zoned for single family occupancy. There is significant potential for multi-use redevelopment along New Hampshire Avenue and University that could be sites for multi-use and multi-family homes. While law changes may not be needed, some would require zoning variations and if a developer brings a quality development forward the council should consider supporting zoning variations to increase density, especially if they add affordable housing and offer to diversify our city's economy.

Under the current consultant's review, the basics of the rent stabilization law are not being changed, but its implementation can be improved through better education for landlords and tenants. For all renters, and not just those protected by rent stabilization, the city needs to ensure our aging housing stock does not degrade any further than it already has and we do not condemn those covered by the rent stabilization law or other renters to sub-standard living conditions.

Building consensus needs inclusive consultation processes that help stakeholders understand each other's perspective, and work towards a viable and acceptable compromise. Part of this is through established public processes at the county level that the owners, developers, and city's Housing and Community Development (HCD) are involved with. But these public processes are just the "tip of the iceberg." What we do not see is the extensive behind the scenes roles played by city council members and the mayor, working with HCD, to communicate concerns of residents directly impacted, and those in adjacent neighbor, and to build trust between owners and developers and these community stakeholders. We are seeing this happen in public and privately with the MHP Edinburgh House project. This project is setting important precedents on the how concerns are accommodated and decisions made that will be an example for future redevelopment on the Washington Adventist site, along the Purple Line corridor, and on other vacant or underutilized plots within the city boundaries.

Suzy Stimler

I am committed to retaining and strengthening Takoma Park's existing rent stabilization policy. Our policy has served us well for 45 years, and the vibrant, racially and socio-economically diverse

community we love is its result. Rent stabilization provides housing and community stability, which in turn improves the physical and mental health and educational outcomes of community members. I would consider changing the exemptions for deed-restricted buildings, as many have units that are not deed-restricted or subject to rent stabilization. I would also like to look at making our fair return process easier or providing capital improvement pathways, to help landlords keep buildings safe, energy efficient, and profitable.

Ward 3

Tom Wallack

The hospital site redevelopment is a major moment to shape the future of our city. The site provides an opportunity to build more housing - affordable housing, senior housing, larger units in multi-family buildings, etc. - to provide opportunities for more people to be able to live and stay in Takoma Park. Similarly, the initiation of service on the Purple Line marks a major moment for the Crossroads district and University Boulevard that will transform the housing capacity in that area.

I believe Takoma Park should continue to be a leader on rent stabilization. We are in the midst of a global affordability crisis, and I want to do anything I can to help ensure Takoma Park's residents who rent their homes are not facing an even greater housing cost burden than they already are.

Additionally, I believe the city should work to make it easier to preserve and rehabilitate existing small multi-family buildings that already exist throughout the city. I heard from a resident an example where a building like this with affordable units was simply torn down and replaced with a (market-rate) single family house because the policies around renovating the building were onerous. This is a bad outcome. We have great neighborhoods throughout our city where residents at various income levels and varied stages of life are able to live together. Preserving or supporting duplexes and other small multi-unit buildings and garden apartments help further what makes us unique.

Ward 4

Kurt Gilbert

Over the past two years, I have gained a crash course in the Minor Master Plan Amendment (MMPA) and its impact, though I am still learning the nuances of the amendment and its implementation.

We are in the early stages of a redevelopment project in Ward 4, and I have been in ongoing correspondence with the ownership group, MHP, which has led community and Council outreach and education efforts. Through this process, MHP has addressed numerous questions, many of which I raised regarding resident displacement and the eligibility requirements for returning residents. Another significant challenge has been identifying funding to support residents who may not meet the existing state recertification standards.

The community engagement meetings and presentations have helped answer important questions, while also identifying issues that required further discussion and adjustments to the project approach. As the project moves closer to the permit application stage, the next step will be to

engage a relocation team to help current residents identify suitable nearby housing options at rents comparable to what they currently pay.

Ward 5

Cara Honzak

As the City finalizes its rent stabilization analysis, I want to assess with Council and our housing experts which specific changes to pursue. One I want to brainstorm further, and which is among my top priorities, is easing administrative burdens and possible rent stabilization challenges for small residential building owners, especially those who live in their properties. I am also open to small tweaks that might attract housing investment which is now going into surrounding counties, D.C., or other states, but I am not interested in radical changes. Our policies are highly effective at keeping rents affordable. Whatever we choose, we must find better solutions to our reinvestment problem, our limited financial resources, and the lack of new development that restricts growth.

At the County, I would:

- keep advocating to remove and modify zoning and financial barriers to townhouse construction on single-family lots, especially in a ward like mine near the Purple Line;
- push the County to make the new ADU rules easier to use in Takoma Park;
- follow and suggest some modifications in the finalization of the East Silver Spring Communities Plan, which abuts Ward 5; and
- begin discussing with City staff and County updates to the area of the 2012 Takoma/Langley Crossroads plan inside of the TP boundaries to align with recent zoning changes around us.

Building agreement: I will seek to drive new dominant local narratives that align the equity goals of the Purple Line and environmentalists with the needs of renters, homeowners, and housing providers, using real data and maps and encouraging engagement in facts. The goals I have are continued renter stability, less red tape for small owners, more reinvestment, more ADUs on single-family lots, and a broader tax base.

Ward 6

Ambroise Agosse

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.

Amy Wesolek

I support changes that could make a strong impact on improving and expanding our housing supply. Many of our multifamily buildings are in poor condition and I want better for our residents at all income levels. I am open to expanding zoning, particularly to allow more ADUs, duplexes, and other similar options. My top priority with any outcome is to take action; I'd rather try to do something than wait for a perfect solution.

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?

Mayor

Tom Gagliardo

New development, once it's taxed, will spread the cost of providing city services. But the incumbent Mayor passed an ordinance in her first term entirely exempting property taxes on the increased value on new multifamily housing for ten years, gradually decreasing the amount of tax that is waived over the next five years. Full taxes would not be paid until the 16th year. That means in order to reduce the rapid rise in property taxes (it is not realistic to think that a significant reduction is feasible) we need to spend more carefully. Many in Takoma Park work paycheck to paycheck, are on fixed incomes or are federal employees or employees of federal contractors who have lost their jobs. All of these neighbors are severely impacted by fast-rising property taxes. Many are housing burdened and some have are starting to move out of Takoma Park. That's not right.

Talisha Searcy

Response: These sites are opportunities to meet several needs at once: build more affordable, accessible, and mixed-income housing; strengthen local businesses and commercial corridors; create modern public facilities; improve transportation connections; advance environmental sustainability; and broaden the tax base so homeowners are not carrying a disproportionate share. Except for the New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center, these properties are privately owned, which limits the City's ability to direct what happens on them; our role is to shape outcomes through zoning advocacy, incentives, partnerships, and community engagement. Each site needs a community-informed plan rather than a one-size-fits-all answer. At the former hospital campus, I want a coordinated redevelopment vision that includes housing, retail, and community-serving uses. At the Recreation Center, I will continue advocating for a modern, accessible facility where children, teens, seniors, and families can gather and participate in programs. Housing could also be added to this site. At the New Hampshire Avenue sites, I support mixed-use development that creates housing, welcoming public spaces, and opportunities for locally rooted businesses. The McLaughlin property should be evaluated for housing consistent with the size of the property. Lastly, given the continued issues with the road infrastructure at Takoma Junction, I do not believe that it should be developed at this time. To attract capable partners, the City must set clear expectations, establish realistic economics, make timely decisions, use public land and grants strategically, coordinate with County and State partners, and offer tools such as housing tax credits where they produce meaningful public benefits. New development can add taxable value, support a stronger local economy, and

diversify revenue beyond property taxes while including affordability, accessibility, anti-displacement protections, and high-quality design.

Ward 1

Shana Fulcher

When Takoma Park's municipal budget grows, the tax bill falls squarely on the shoulders of residential homeowners. Because our commercial and multifamily tax base has remained largely static, homeowners face property tax bill increases year after year to maintain services we as a city find essential. My concern isn't about an abstract percentage, it is about real families feeling the squeeze. We must expand and diversify our tax base so we can spread municipal costs fairly and prevent long term residents from being taxed out of their homes.

At the same time, intentional land use is about meeting the regional housing shortage and confronting climate change. Building walkable, transit oriented density reduces vehicle miles traveled and fosters vibrant neighborhood hubs. To achieve this, the City Council must stop overloading individual sites with demands and instead bring disciplined, financially viable focus to each parcel.

Washington Adventist University (WAU) Campus & Hospital Site

Having helped shape the Minor Master Plan on Council, I see this parcel as our most immediate opportunity for transformative, transit accessible growth. WAU is an invested community anchor. We should partner with them to exceed baseline affordable housing minimums alongside mixed use retail, green space, and civic amenities. City staff should negotiate Public Benefit that can extend beyond the property lines, directing developer investments toward the Flower Avenue corridor and recreation facilities.

New Hampshire Avenue Corridor & Recreation Center

The initial RFP, crafted before my term in office, offered an expensive lesson in municipal development economics. Mandating 100% affordable housing, structured parking, and a new rec center on a small footprint that requires land acquisition simply did not pencil out, even for non-profits. Not every project must include housing, but if we are to move forward with housing, here we would need a mixed income framework where market rate units subsidize affordable homes. I know that the City is currently exploring a capital lease back option. This seems wise since we do not want to increase our current debt level.

Takoma Junction: Focus & Equity

The Junction stalled because too many priorities were crammed onto a tight parcel. We must commit to one to three achievable goals. It would be important to partner with a developer willing to invest directly in traffic calming and intersection safety for pedestrians and cyclists, coordinated with SHA. As that area is now thriving, building a shared parking structure to support local merchants, reduce circling traffic, and stop commercial overflow into residential streets would be a priority of my own. It is important for us to protect council bandwidth. Endless gridlock over this one site drained staff energy from needs in Wards 4, 5, and 6.

McLaughlin Property

This site has sat dormant for years under private ownership, constrained by outdated zoning. City staff have worked closely with the owner; if momentum is truly building, the Council should aggressively petition the Montgomery County Planning Board and County Council for a Sectional Map Amendment or master plan update. Proper zoning will unlock Missing Middle and street level businesses when the property transitions. Given its proximity to Dorothy's Woods, nature based childcare would make an exceptional community addition.

Delivering Results

Developers avoid jurisdictions where rules continuously shift. Takoma Park must provide predictable, economically grounded RFPs rather than unattainable wish lists, while actively championing density on teardown ready parcels. Pairing economic realism with climate conscious growth will allow us to build needed housing, bolster local businesses, and spread municipal costs so homeowners no longer carry the burden alone.

Doug Glynn

For me, the starting point is fairness. Takoma Park should be a good partner in development. Residents should receive meaningful public benefits, the City should strengthen its tax base, and developers should have a realistic opportunity to build financially viable projects.

Former Washington Adventist Hospital campus: Residents have already spent years defining what they want here: substantial housing, including affordable housing, together with green space and a park-like environment. The Minor Master Plan has established the framework. Now I want Takoma Park to be a constructive partner and advocate for those priorities while recognizing that the final project will depend on the property owner, developer, financing, and Montgomery County approval process.

New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center: We need a substantially better recreation center, but we should make fuller use of this valuable property. I would support housing or mixed-use development around a modern recreation facility if it helps pay for the public improvements, adds housing, and expands our tax base.

Takoma Junction: The long argument over Takoma Junction was never simply about a parking lot. It represented competing visions for this part of the city. For now, the parking and loading functions are useful to the Co-op and nearby businesses. I would focus on making the space more flexible so it could also accommodate festivals, outdoor movies, music, performances, and community gatherings, perhaps with a small stage or other infrastructure that allows the lot to serve multiple purposes.

McLaughlin property on Poplar Avenue: I would identify the environmentally important areas that should be protected and then determine what responsible development can occur elsewhere on the property. Preservation and development do not have to be all-or-nothing choices.

6530 and 6600 New Hampshire Avenue: We have been trying to find a productive long-term use for 6530 since the building was constructed in 1959. It has served as an office building, housed Adventist Home Health Services, and been considered over the years for a business incubator, commercial uses, housing, and other projects. I think the strongest redevelopment opportunity may come from assembling a larger site. If the owners of 6530, 6600, the Jiffy Lube, Mid Atlantic

Seafood, or other adjoining properties were willing to consider combining parcels, I would be enthusiastic about helping pursue a substantial mixed-use project. The challenge would be accommodating development while protecting as much of the significant tree canopy as reasonably possible.

Maryland Gateway at New Hampshire and Eastern: I strongly support revisiting the City's earlier Maryland Gateway concept involving 6300 and 6350 New Hampshire Avenue. The 2008 corridor plan already identified those properties as a potential combined redevelopment site. (takomaparkmd.gov) If the landowners were willing to entertain a joint development, I think this could be an exceptional opportunity to add a significant number of both market-rate and affordable homes, together with neighborhood-serving commercial space.

The site is already well positioned for transit. It sits on major bus routes and has reasonable access to both the Purple Line corridor and the Red Line at Takoma. With attention to bus frequency and connections, I think it could support substantially more housing with less dependence on cars. Parking could also be handled in part through structured or subterranean parking rather than consuming valuable surface land.

I see the same basic opportunity farther north along New Hampshire Avenue around the old union building and the former motorcycle- and auto-oriented properties. These small parcels are much harder to redevelop individually. If willing owners can assemble them into a larger site, the economics and design possibilities become far more attractive.

Across all of these sites, the fiscal goal matters. If homeowners are paying roughly three-quarters of our property taxes, the answer is not simply to tax what we already have more. We need to broaden what we have to tax. Responsible new housing, commercial development, and mixed-use projects can add assessed value and economic activity while spreading the cost of City services across a larger tax base.

The City should not force private landowners into these combinations. But when willing owners and credible developers see an opportunity, I want Takoma Park to be the kind of partner that helps a good project happen.

Ward 2

Jim Della-Giacoma

Takoma Park needs to diversify its tax base. In the short term, there are some small ways to start doing that, including efforts by Maryland municipalities to receive more from state sales tax collected in their areas. However, in the long-term, diversification of income will require the redevelopment of the many underused sites in our city, including the old hospital, university, Purple Line corridor, and all along our section of New Hampshire Avenue. Multi-use development with a mix of commercial, retail, and residential uses is necessary to broaden our economic and tax base and ensure the long-term viability of Takoma Park.

Suzy Stimler

Development plans should be tailored to each of these sites. For example:

Former Adventist Hospital Campus: I support mixed-used development on this 15 acre site that will provide both new residential choices and new retail businesses that are walkable and bikeable. Such development would create employment for local residents and diversify the local economy. I want to see development that is environmentally sustainable and protects the Sligo Creek Watershed. I also support the use of local and state resources to expand affordable housing, catalyze “missing middle” opportunities, and ensure safe, affordable housing for seniors.

New Hampshire Ave Recreation Center: I have hope that we have a viable way forward to get both a new recreation center and additional housing on this site: a focused RFP with a lease-back option. In July of this year, the City was accepted into an Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel; this Panel will help us develop a new RFP for a new recreation center as part of a mixed-use development. City staff have also spoken with Maryland DHCD about assistance in releasing the RFP as well as marketing the RFP.

Washington McLaughlin Property: I would love to see affordable senior housing similar in scale to Victory Towers (721 Beacon Rd, Silver Spring, MD 20903). The Washington-McLaughlin property is zoned R60 and nestled in a residential neighborhood between Wards 2 & 3. In past years, senior housing projects in Montgomery County’s R60 zone have proceeded via special exceptions or conditional uses combined with preliminary plan and MPDU (Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit) provisions, and I think the community would be supportive of such a use.

New Hampshire Corridor: The New Hampshire Corridor between Ethan Allen/410 and Eastern Ave has been sorely neglected. I support the vision outlined in the 2008 New Hampshire Ave Corridor Concept Plan, which was developed after considerable community input. Development in the corridor will require collaboration with both Prince Georges County and the State Highway Administration as the current configuration of New Hampshire Ave is not friendly to bicyclists or pedestrians. With the coming of New Hampshire Ave Flash Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project and the New Avenue Bikeway Project, we should work toward the possibility of mixed use development that provides additional retail and housing choices.

Increasing our commercial base will diversify our tax base and help relieve the burden on single-family home owners.

Ward 3

Tom Wallack

See my response above for additional thoughts about the hospital campus. New Hampshire Avenue is a potentially even bigger opportunity and harder challenge. I don’t have an answer on how to do this. I look forward to working with the city’s economic development team, my counterparts in Prince George’s County, and others to see how we can transform this main corridor into one that can provide more benefits to residents.

Ward 4

Kurt Gilbert

While I think it worthwhile for any developer or land owner to come before council to present plans for development, council does not have the final say as to how property/land owners develop on their properties. Zoning codes dictate the development stipulations. I am aware that city staff has communicated with land/property owners at the locations mentioned and will keep council informed of whatever developments they learn of. With that said, I would love to see development that will ultimately strengthen the tax base of our city.

Ward 5

Cara Honzak

Our City must make itself uniquely appealing to developers who share our values, so we can grow development and revenue. Right-sized, right-scaled development takes careful management, but the economic levers that make us attractive to investors are not something we can set aside. A sophisticated staff, which I believe we now have, and the policies Council has begun to put in place can help. Thoughtfully nurtured development can diversify our revenue base and fund public benefits we cannot afford alone. The City does not own most of these sites, and zoning is set by the County, but our City's voice still matters on each.

Washington Adventist campus: This is privately held. I voted for the Minor Master Plan Amendment zoning, which reflects extensive County-led, City-partnered engagement: housing, likely some retail, and possibly recreation space. I would start by giving strong voice to Washington Adventist University, that sits adjacent to the old hospital site, and is a minority-serving institution that must be able to thrive however the site evolves, along with students, faculty, and the Ward 5 neighbors who live beside it. Sligo Creek must remain a healthy recreational and ecological asset.

Recreation Center: I want to combine external funding, including County recreation support we have not yet tapped, with City financing and keep issuing RFPs as needed for a state-of-the-art facility. That said, we cannot allow external financing difficulty (including from the County) should not be an excuse for delay. At the same time, the County's historic underfunding of downcounty services is a structural issue we must keep pressing to rectify, with urgency.

Takoma Junction: I support keeping the current paid parking as a key piece of a functional solution, with more dialogue toward a comprehensive design for the junction over time.

Other sites: I want mixed-use development with affordable and middle-income housing, recreation, childcare, education, retail, and sustainability-forward design. These may take years, but we are making headway.

Ward 6

Ambroise Agosse

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.

Amy Wesolek

I welcome new development in Takoma Park when opportunities arise. I hope that we can add affordable housing, mixed retail, and improved public services across properties like these. I would want the City to be a partner to developers, assisting where we can to move things along while still discussing and upholding our values. New development will not only lessen the tax burden on homeowners but also increase our housing supply and improve quality of life for all residents.

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?

Mayor

Tom Gagliardo

Pedestrian safety must be a top priority at the Crossroads which has already suffered through a long construction phase. Of course it should be a priority throughout the City. We are fortunate to have representatives in the Maryland General Assembly who have and will continue to effectively address pedestrian and other safety issues. We need to support them in ensuring full funding for safety measures whether more sidewalks or bike lanes safely marked and separated from vehicular traffic.

Langley Park is an intersection of two counties and our city. The next Mayor needs to establish stronger working relationships with Montgomery and Prince George's County leaders-- and I already have those relationships.

I want to keep in mind that it can be reasonably predicted that the proximity of the Purple Line station will increase rents on current small business owners and renters. We need to address that and find ways to prevent them from being displaced.

Talisha Searcy

Response: The Purple Line can connect residents to jobs, education, shopping, and services while strengthening Takoma Langley Crossroads as a regional destination and supporting small-business growth. To maximize that opportunity, I support the City's New Hampshire Avenue Bikeways Program and the Crossroads Bikeway project, which would create safer, more direct bicycle connections to the Takoma Langley Purple Line station and improve access between surrounding neighborhoods, businesses, and transit. I also support bus rapid transit on New Hampshire Avenue to provide faster, more reliable service and stronger connections to the Purple Line and the regional transit network. The City should coordinate with Montgomery and Prince George's counties, the State of Maryland, transit agencies, businesses, and nearby communities on station access and wayfinding. I will also continue working with the Takoma Langley Crossroads Development Authority and other district partners on outreach, placemaking, safety, and ridership promotion. Pedestrian safety must remain a priority, with continuous monitoring of how the reconfiguration of major intersections and the location of the Purple Line station affect walking routes, crossing conditions, traffic patterns, and pedestrian access throughout the area. Because these are state and county roads, progress requires persistent intergovernmental advocacy and transparent reporting so residents can see what is moving, what is delayed, and who is responsible.

Ward 1

Shana Fulcher

The Takoma Langley Crossroads is a vibrant, diverse commercial hub, yet it is often overlooked by residents living outside Ward 6. The small, largely immigrant- and minority-owned businesses there serve an essential daily role for the surrounding community and our neighbors across the Prince George's County border. Connecting the rest of Takoma Park to this corridor is not just good transit policy, it is a matter of citywide solidarity and economic prosperity.

The Purple Line will make the Crossroads a destination for customers across our region, supporting local merchants while opening new housing opportunities. I want to see mixed use redevelopment that adds multifamily housing above existing street level retail.

Transit is also a lifeline for regional economic mobility. While one family member may work locally in Takoma Park, others may need a seamless commute to College Park or Bethesda. As construction nears completion, the Council must solve the last mile challenge by prioritizing dedicated feeder bus routes and protected bike connections for neighbors living just outside walking distance.

University Boulevard and New Hampshire Avenue remain notoriously dangerous because the State Highway Administration (SHA) treats them as high speed vehicle thoroughfares through a densely populated, walking community. Takoma Park has already shown that coordinated advocacy from our Council, staff, and police can secure intersection jurisdiction and automated speed enforcement. We must demand much more:

- SHA invested heavily in redesigning Route 1 to protect students in College Park. They must demonstrate that same concern and capital commitment for the working class Latino community walking the Crossroads.
- We need shorter crossing distances, pedestrian refuge islands, and mid-block crossings with pedestrian signals. Current road design prioritizes cars over human life; these changes would send a clear message that pedestrian safety matters.

While we cannot unilaterally reshape state highways overnight, the streets the City owns are fully within our control. We must champion bike corridors connecting Takoma Park directly to Silver Spring, Prince George's County, and D.C. I favor physically protected bike lanes over painted lines so children and new cyclists can ride safely, alongside continuous sidewalks and neighborhood traffic calming.

Finally, we must acknowledge an important truth: many sidewalks built in Ward 1 were funded by tax dollars generated by businesses in Ward 6. As Purple Line construction finishes and traffic patterns settle, the entire Council owes it to Ward 6 residents to deliver the street safety, traffic calming, and pedestrian protections their neighborhood deserves.

Doug Glynn

I have real questions about the Purple Line, particularly about safety and whether the people who live around Takoma-Langley will receive the benefits we have been promised.

Some of the crossings around New Hampshire Avenue are terrifying. I have watched parents run across these wide roads with very young children just to get to a supermarket, a dentist, a

restaurant, or a bus. I do not think we have fully resolved how people are going to move safely through this area once the trains are operating.

If I am elected to the Council, that will be one of the issues I want to focus on. We need to look carefully at crossings, signals, turning lanes, fencing, lighting, and the actual paths people use to reach businesses and transit, not simply the paths we expect them to use.

I am also concerned that the Spanish-speaking community around the Crossroads has not been sufficiently included in this conversation. These residents support businesses that speak their language, understand their community, and provide services they rely on. If getting to those businesses becomes more difficult or feels unsafe, everybody loses. I want engagement in this area to include Spanish-language outreach, translation, and childcare so that the people most affected can actually participate.

I also have questions about affordability. Ride On buses are now free. If a resident can make a trip for free on the bus, but the Purple Line costs roughly \$2 each way, that is potentially \$4 a day, \$20 a week, and around \$80 a month for someone commuting five days a week. The Purple Line may be faster and may provide valuable regional connections, but we should not assume that automatically makes it the best transportation option for every household.

I hope the Purple Line succeeds. But I want us to judge it from the perspective of the people who live around it. Can they cross the street safely? Can they afford to use it? Does it help them reach the places they actually need to go? And are they meaningfully included when we make decisions that affect their neighborhood?

Those are the questions I would bring to the Council.

Ward 2

Jim Della-Giacoma

The Purple Line will be a game changer for Takoma Park. The light rail has the potential to create a vibrant corridor across Montgomery and Prince George's counties. As my family is an active user of public transport, I can see the potential good the Purple Line will bring and how lucky Takoma Park is to border this soon to be regional public transit asset.

As a pedestrian living a seven-minute walk from the Langley Park stop, and as an avid cyclist, I support the plans are being developed for better foot and bicycle access to our nearest stations at Langley Crossroads and Long Branch. Takoma Park needs to continue its active planning and grant seeking efforts to develop the New Hampshire Ave cycleway and associated paths. We should be able to do a better job of connecting Takoma Metro to our communities by improving street infrastructure and find support and funding to build the planned Maple Avenue corridor.

We need to partner with parallel efforts at the county and state levels and do our part to make the Purple Line a safe, viable and accessible transport option for Takoma Park residents. There will be challenges, but we should work together with county and state agencies to implement a public safety and prevention approach to use the science and data we have to control these risks. Plans for cycleways, street plazas, and sidewalks to access the Purple Line should be prioritized, with the safety of public transit riders an overriding concern. In the long run, lessening our dependence on

using cars for local transportation needs serves community safety, the environment, and our climate goals.

Suzy Stimler

The coming of the Purple Line will bring both opportunities and challenges. I support mixed-use development near the station and want to maintain our local, independent businesses that currently occupy Langley Crossroads. Smart development and support to local entrepreneurs, executed in cooperation with the Takoma/Langley Crossroads Development Authority, will allow the City to capitalize on the increased foot traffic.

Additional pedestrian traffic without infrastructure changes to make University Blvd and New Hampshire Ave more friendly to pedestrians and other non-vehicular traffic will bring added danger. The City must work with the State Highway Administration, Montgomery County, and Prince Georges County to tame car traffic and to improve walkability.

Ward 3

Tom Wallack

As the father of a very confident and active toddler, I now see the world every day in terms of fast cars, bikes/scooters, and short distances between all of us. This may be a very unpopular opinion but I support the stop sign cameras. Every day, I see cars at various intersections stop (or maybe just “slowly roll”) mid-way through crosswalks. Maybe the cameras are too sensitive and need to be calibrated differently, but overall, I say err on the side of pedestrian and cyclist safety. The Purple Line will create new patterns for people at already dangerous intersections, and now that the construction is complete the city and other jurisdictions need to focus on ensuring safe passage to and from the stations and better use of those intersections. Anything that can make utilizing the Purple Line safer and easier to use, and thereby reducing some number of vehicle trips in that corridor, is a huge win for safety and environmental impact.

Ward 4

Kurt Gilbert

I recognize that the Purple Line was developed in part to provide additional transportation options for residents who previously did not consider Metro a viable transit option. As a Council representative, I encourage residents to use Metro and other non-driving transportation options whenever possible.

Public safety initiatives, such as stop-sign and red-light cameras, can help encourage safer driving behaviors in and around the Takoma-Langley Crossroads and other areas within the city. Data has shown that speed cameras can improve driver behavior, and we have already observed improvements at locations where automated stop-sign cameras have been implemented. These initiatives can play an important role in promoting safer streets for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists alike.

Ward 5

Cara Honzak

The Purple Line promises greater regional equity, especially for Wards 5 and 6, where we have maintained many affordable units. We should preserve and grow that housing, add housing types, and make sure residents can ride to higher-wage jobs and return to affordable, high-quality homes and lifestyle. To do that we must:

- keep investing in small business corridors, including financing help, and resist displacement of long-standing, often minority-owned businesses;
- advocate for transit fares that promote accessible ridership for all; and
- build safer cycling and microtransit routes and more frequent transit connections.

Safety: We should watch how well the new traffic cameras on University and New Hampshire perform and whether they reduce accidents. I also look forward to the completed bike path segments on these routes.

Track record: I have pushed City staff to track Purple Line-related opportunities for externally funded sidewalks, bike paths, and signage, and to align our routes with newly funded ones. I worked with staff to send formal requests for more frequent bus service on heavily used streets, pressed for a review of our bus stop contracts, and secured new benches on high-transit routes in Ward 5. A top priority of mine for the next two years is reviving the Maple Avenue Connectivity project and making it viable, equitable, and safe. It has been delayed too long, and I have concrete proposals for how we might move forward and build even more consensus.

Ward 6

Ambroise Agosse

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.

Amy Wesolek

I would leverage the opening of the Purple Line station to benefit Takoma Park by maximizing efforts that better support the small businesses in the Crossroads area as well as lobby for public safety improvements like better street lighting at and near transit. Making our streets safer for pedestrians and cyclists - particularly in the area surrounding the upcoming Takoma - Langley Purple Line station - has been a top priority for me and will continue to be. Red light and stop sign cameras have made a difference in changing driver behaviors for the better. Transit planning projects like the Crossroads Bikeway Project continue to move forward. I intend to continue to support initiatives like this to ensure Ward 6 is safer for all.

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?

Mayor

Tom Gagliardo

We need to redouble support for the City Green Team, continue to electrify the City's fleet, install solar and other passive energy systems on City buildings and encourage and assist doing the same on privately owned buildings. And we must acknowledge that we have a hostile President who denies the severity of the climate crisis, opposes new and repeals existing environmental regulation and prioritizes short term profit over long term prosperity and survival.

I have said that in these difficult times, as important as it is to be involved in national politics, we cannot ignore the government that is closest to us.

In addition to discussing the pluses and minus of hiring additional city staff we need to support the many organizations of dedicated and skilled Takoma Park residents in the forefront of preserving the environment and working to make our community climate resilient.

New development has its own value and cannot be halted because there is an environmental impact. Developers, by the same token, cannot ignore the environmental impact of what they build. The City needs to encourage those who, for example, adhere to LEED standards and recognize the need for and are willing to invest in environmental safeguards.

Talisha Searcy

Response: Closing the climate gap requires practical, equitable action across transportation, buildings, municipal operations, and land use. And, Takoma Park has already begun this work. The new library incorporates green features that improve building efficiency and reduce environmental impact. The City has also purchased new electric vehicles for its municipal fleet and received grants to expand electric vehicle charging at municipal facilities. I support treating net-zero municipal operations by 2035 as an ambitious goal, with interim benchmarks, transparent reporting, and implementation based on technical feasibility, available funding, and responsible consideration of costs. Budget decisions should continue to align with the Climate Action Plan and Climate Emergency Response Framework while allowing the City to pursue the most effective and affordable measures first.

Buildings and transportation are our largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions. Because most homes and many smaller properties in Takoma Park fall below Montgomery County's Building Energy Performance Standards threshold, city programs such as the Green Homes and Businesses grants are essential for helping property owners obtain energy audits and complete needed

efficiency, electrification, and resilience improvements. Climate action must also be built into zoning and land-use plans. For example, the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment includes language that encourages the use of green roofs, stormwater management and supporting the City's initiatives to promote green infrastructure on private property. The plan also requires that new development and improvement of existing meetings should meet LEED standards.

Ward 1

Shana Fulcher

I do not support purchasing carbon offsets. Funneling municipal funds into third party credits does not clean our local air or reduce community emissions, and our Sustainability Committee has expressed concerns about the actual impact of the purchased offsets. Following guidance from City staff and the Sustainability Committee, our dollars belong in tangible, on the ground environmental improvements here in Takoma Park.

I do not support lowering or abandoning our 2035 Net Zero goal. Keeping that target drives vital urgency. As Councilmember Dyballa noted, the 2020 Climate Emergency Response Framework committed us to 2035 "as resources would allow." It is too early to retreat, especially federal funding opportunities could change under different administrations. If we fall short because the County and State fail to enact the building codes or utility policies we need, I would rather be honest about that shortfall than dilute our ambition. Setting appropriate challenging goals means that you don't always accomplish them.

I do not support making the 2035 target legally binding for municipal operations. A rigid mandate ignores practical realities:

- During my Council tenure, we urgently needed to replace police cruisers, but the hybrid models we sought were unavailable due to supply chain backlogs.
- Peer jurisdictions warned us that heavy electric trash trucks proved unreliable in regular service. Buying unproven or unavailable vehicles is not a sound investment when public safety and sanitation are on the line.
- Meanwhile, we have made great progress retrofitting City owned buildings. We should continue that success.

We should direct capital toward net-zero projects when they deliver major, dependable gains, rather than binding future councils to inflexible mandates.

Because transportation generates 54% of our emissions, smart land use is our most powerful climate tool. Adding dense, walkable housing along transit corridors helps the entire region reduce vehicle miles traveled, extending our impact beyond our borders. Within municipal control, we must invest heavily in protected bike corridors and public curbside EV chargers so renters and residents without driveways can transition away from fossil fuels.

With Montgomery County controlling building energy codes, our Sustainability Office should actively help homeowners and multifamily landlords access federal and county grants for heat pumps, solar arrays, and weatherization. Crucially, these subsidized upgrades can help protect affordable

housing. Finally, the Council must partner with state legislators to push Pepco for the electrical grid upgrades and heavy-ups required for widespread electrification.

Doug Glynn

I support the 2035 net-zero goal, but I think we have to be honest about what Takoma Park controls and then be much more aggressive about the things we can actually influence.

Transportation is our largest source of emissions, so EV charging has to be part of the answer. Right now, I do not think we have made EV ownership practical enough for renters and people living in multifamily buildings. EV ownership should not become something that is practical only for homeowners with private driveways and garages.

I would substantially expand the Multifamily Building Improvement Grant program and make EV charging, electric stoves, heat-pump water heaters, electrical upgrades, and other building-electrification projects much easier to fund. If we are serious about moving away from fossil fuels, then we have to put real money behind that transition.

I would also like to see at least one City employee specifically assigned to work with multifamily property owners, both large and small, to connect them with available funding. That person should function as a kind of grant navigator: identifying which buildings are good candidates for which programs, helping owners apply, coordinating City, County, State, utility, and federal funding, and staying involved through implementation.

The money exists in different places, but that does not mean it is easy to access. We need someone whose exclusive job is to match the building to the money.

That is especially important for older multifamily properties, where owners may not have the staff or financial capacity to navigate complicated grant programs on their own. If we want them to install EV chargers, replace gas stoves and water heaters, upgrade electrical systems, and move toward cleaner energy, we have to make those investments financially realistic.

I would also work closely with our District 20 delegation to pursue substantially more State funding for multifamily electrification and charging infrastructure. Takoma Park has a large multifamily housing stock, and that means we should be making the case in Annapolis that climate funding has to reach renters and apartment buildings, not just homeowners.

If we say we are moving away from fossil fuels, then we have to build the infrastructure and provide the funding that allows people to do it. We can and will do better if I am on the Council.

Ward 2

Jim Della-Giacoma

We should be building in efforts to achieve our climate goals in many city programs. As noted above, making the most of the Purple Line and getting residents out of cars and on bikes on foot or onto buses to the Metro and light rail is one contribution the city can make. Other measures worth studying for the contribution to climate goals might include lowering speed limits and promoting the use of or making the charging of electric vehicles easier, either for the city, residents, or visitors. Promoting energy efficiency in our city, commercial, rental, and single-family homes, especially for

low-income earners, is another contribution we have been and should continue to make. On whether these efforts should be binding, and whether that is an achievable goal, if elected I would seek the advice of city staff and the Sustainable Maryland Committee made up of knowledgeable residents.

Suzy Stimler

Meeting ambitious goals for things not under the City's control is not realistic. We should continue the City's efforts towards reducing greenhouse gases through our electrification program. And I think it is reasonable to aim for zero emissions in city-owned resources and buildings by 2035. At the same time, we should look for other ways to address the climate crisis. The City has clear programs and metrics for reducing greenhouse gases emissions and preserving our tree canopy. We need to do more to address heat and biodiversity. As global temperatures rise due to the climate crisis, the urban heat island (UHI) effect compounds extreme heat risks. The City should support programs for green roofs and cool roofs to mitigate the UHI effect. Climate change also accelerates biodiversity loss. A healthy local ecosystem needs native plants, insects, and wildlife. I want the City to build programs that maintain and grow biodiversity and to track progress with the City Biodiversity Index, so residents can see whether our efforts are working.

Ward 3

Tom Wallack

I have not spent sufficient time on these topics to give definitive answers on these specific questions, but I am supportive of taking additional actions to reduce the city's climate impact.

Ward 4

Kurt Gilbert

2035 should remain the goal. Our city management and staff are making good conscious attempts to transition our city owned vehicles so that we are doing our part to reach the goal. Other projects are in the works to make our community more walkable and bikeable.

We can use our voice to advocate for stronger county and state policies, pursue available grants and partnerships, and help residents and businesses access resources for energy efficiency and electrification. We have done some of that and as long as we are transparent and consistent in our attempts, I would be ok if we come up short for 2035, but gave it our all.

Ward 5

Cara Honzak

As much as it pains me to say so, and I consider myself a climate champion, I cannot fully support making the 2035 target absolutely binding. I view it as aspirational rather than fully pragmatic. Binding mandates can force decisions that are too costly for the City to bear alone, and we must put our most vulnerable residents first and then ask whether we can reach our carbon goals as a win-

win for people and the planet. Where those goals conflict, I will choose public safety and economic resilience, especially for our least advantaged residents, but thoughtfully.

The City is doing well with win-win programs such as energy efficiency investments in aging affordable housing, which lower resident costs and move us toward our goals. Land use and non-car transit are the most important remaining levers, though we do not control zoning or mass transit. Car ownership here is still very high. I would pursue a multi-tiered approach:

- advocate at the County for greater housing density and diversity, including middle-income housing on single-family lots, with priority near mass transit;
- invest as much as we can in electrification of our fleet and our City infrastructure including promoting electrification on/for individual residents, so that residents can also electrify their transit;
- bring services and recreation closer to homes; and
- strengthen micro and public transit, including family-friendly options, so households need fewer vehicles.

Ward 6

Ambroise Agosse

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.

Amy Wesolek

I support increasing and improving travel options beyond cars, such as more bike paths. I also support transit oriented development and hope that Takoma Park can foster and support these projects. I hesitate to make burdens upon future Councils, such as making any restrictions for what can happen or be funded in 2035.

Appendix: Background

Provided to candidates with the questionnaire 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.