

Worksession

Agenda Item #	3
Meeting Date	May 15, 2006
Prepared By	Suzanne Ludlow, Community & Government Liaison
Approved By	Barbara B. Matthews, City Manager

Discussion Item	Discussion of Status of Follow-up on the Report of the Residents' Committee on Tax and Service Duplication Issues ("TASDI")
Background	<p>The Takoma Park City Council established the TASDI Committee on October 11, 2004. The primary focus of the Committee was to examine the accuracy and fairness of Montgomery County's payments to Takoma Park for duplicative services. The committee studied the issue in depth and issued a final report in April, 2005. The report included a series of recommendations regarding Takoma Park's police, public works, recreation and parks, housing and community development, and library services. The information was presented at City Council meetings, in a series of articles in the Takoma Park Newsletter, and is on the City's web site.</p> <p>The Committee's recommendations fall into several categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommendations that the Council clearly supports and which require Councilmember advocacy. - Recommendations that the Council clearly supports and has directed staff to pursue. - Recommendations that require further research, or for which the City Council is interested in staff's and/or the public's comments or recommendations before determining next steps. <p>The attached report identifies the status of the Committee's recommendations and provides staff comments or recommendations when appropriate.</p>
Policy	The City Council is responsible for the City's budget and the array of services provided by the City government. The Council is also responsible for directing advocacy efforts for laws, policies and procedures in the City's interests.
Fiscal Impact	According to the findings of the TASDI Committee, a fair municipal tax duplication payment in FY05 would have resulted in a rebate payment of between \$4.1 million and \$7.8 million, rather than the \$3.1 million that was received.
Attachments	"Status Report and Staff Recommendations" document
Recommendation	Identify topics to be discussed at future Council meetings; identify any additional information desired from staff.
Special Consideration	Little change in the tax duplication payments will occur unless new negotiations between the County Executive and Montgomery County municipalities are agreed to and take place. A new County Executive will be elected this fall.

STATUS REPORT AND STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

REPORT OF THE RESIDENTS' COMMITTEE ON TAX AND SERVICE DUPLICATION ISSUES

May 12, 2006

Montgomery County property owners pay taxes for the delivery of services. Residents of Montgomery County municipalities pay additional taxes for the delivery of services provided by the municipality rather than the County. Maryland law allows for a rebate of County property taxes for those services that are instead provided for by a municipality. The underlying principle is that the County should rebate *the amount the County would have paid* to provide the services, not the amount that the municipality would have spent for the services. In Montgomery County, the rebate amounts are determined by a 1996 agreement between the County and Montgomery County municipalities for all service areas except Takoma Park police services. Except for the Takoma Park police rebate, the County and the municipalities must jointly agree to any change of the tax duplication formulas.

The Takoma Park City Council established the Residents' Committee on Tax and Service Duplication Issues ("TASDI Committee") on October 11, 2004. The primary focus of the Committee was to examine the accuracy and fairness of Montgomery County's payments to Takoma Park for duplicative services. The Committee studied the issue in depth and issued a final report in April, 2005.

The "TASDI Report" included a series of recommendations regarding Takoma Park's police, public works, recreation and parks, housing and community development, and library services. The overall finding by the Committee regarding municipal tax duplication was "the County's rebate to the City was significantly less than the City's actual costs for delivering duplicative services, and far less than the amount the County would likely spend if the City elected not to provide those services. According to the Committee's calculations, a more accurate rebate would be at least \$4.1 million and possibly as high as \$7.8 million." A number of recommendations were also made about the City's delivery of the services.

The information was presented at City Council meetings, in a series of articles in the Takoma Park Newsletter, and is on the City's web site, www.TakomaParkMd.gov.

The Committee's recommendations fall into several categories:

- Recommendations that the Council clearly supports and which require Councilmember advocacy.
- Recommendations that the Council clearly supports and has directed staff to pursue.
- Recommendations that require further research, or for which the City Council is

interested in staff's and/or the public's comments or recommendations before determining next steps.

This report identifies the status of the Committee's recommendations and provides staff comments or recommendations when appropriate.

A common recommendation is to renegotiate the tax duplication formulas to attain a fairer rebate payment. Generally it is the County Executive's staff that would be actively involved in the County's side of the negotiations, as the County Executive proposes a budget each year and the Executive's staff has access to the data that is used in negotiating and in budget preparation. County Council members may also be interested in participating, as the County Council has final authority in adoption of the budget.

County Executive Doug Duncan is not running for re-election and the election season for County Executive and several County Council positions are underway. Primary elections are scheduled for September 12, 2006 and general elections are scheduled for November 7, 2006. The bulk of negotiation work with the County on revised tax duplication formulas will need to wait until the new County Executive is in office. County Councilmember Marilyn Praisner, chair of the Management and Fiscal Policy Committee, if re-elected herself, is interested in participating on a committee to review the tax duplication system.

Actually getting to the point of having negotiations, however, requires a significant lobbying effort by City Council members and the community. Three candidates have declared their interest in being County Executive—Robin Ficker, Isiah Leggett, and Steven Silverman. It would be good to have a firm commitment from each that:

- Negotiations regarding municipal tax duplication formulas will take place soon after the new Executive is sworn into office;
- Tax duplication payments will include payment for administration, facilities and other aspects of overhead costs; and
- Tax duplication payments will not be restricted to the amounts the County spends on services that are paid from property taxes.

It should be noted that these are political commitments, and, therefore, City staff is not permitted to pursue them. Instead, members of the City Council and the community will need to press for these commitments. While staff understands that some discussions about tax duplication have occurred with at least two of the County Executive candidates, staff is unaware of firm commitments to undertake negotiations on tax duplication after a new Executive is elected. Discussion with the elected officials of other Montgomery County municipalities are also needed to ensure their interest in participating in tax duplication negotiations.

Police Services

Note: The City of Takoma Park and Montgomery County operate under a stand-alone Memorandum of Understanding regarding tax duplication payments for police services. Since Takoma Park is the only Montgomery County municipality that operates a full-service police department (without concurrent jurisdiction by Montgomery County Police), Takoma Park negotiates directly with Montgomery County regarding the rebate formula for police services; no other municipalities are involved in the discussions.

Committee Recommendation #1: The City should seek a higher rebate from the County for costs currently not fully recognized by the County, including those associated with police patrol and follow-up; administration; facilities; supervisory and command personnel; communications; and other areas.

Status: The current County Executive has recommended holding police service rebates payments flat, pending new negotiations with an incoming Executive. The Montgomery County Council is likely to support that recommendation as it approves the County's FY07 Operating Budget.

Staff Recommendation: City staff agrees that it is appropriate to renegotiate the MOU for police services. New information and a change in County processes make the current MOU outdated. A much higher rebate payment is likely given the new data. Staff is ready to negotiate with County staff once the new County Executive takes office.

Committee Recommendation #2: The City should seek a larger portion of the State Police Grant.

Status: The current County Executive has recommended holding police service rebates payments flat, pending new negotiations with an incoming Executive.

Staff Recommendation: This would be an element of the negotiations with the new County Executive.

Committee Recommendation #3: The City should investigate the option of a "shared patrol" police force, modeled on the arrangements currently existing in Rockville, Gaithersburg and Chevy Chase Village, in which city officers handle community policing while the County handles major crimes and

fatal accidents.

Status: City and County police and budget officials have met to discuss how this might take place and what the impact on both the City and County might be. After examining City crime statistics, Montgomery County Police staff stated that they would need to hire more investigators to handle the workload. (This is above the number of officers for which we are rebated.) The County Police Chief also cautioned that the level of service would not be at the level to which Takoma Park residents are accustomed, especially regarding the accessibility of senior staff to the general public. Nevertheless, the County Police are comfortable working in conjunction with police officers in Rockville, Gaithersburg and Chevy Chase Village.

Staff Recommendation: There does not appear to be an advantage of moving to a “shared patrol” form of policing. None of the municipalities with this form of policing receive any tax duplication payment for police services. There is a good chance we could lose the large tax duplication payment that we currently receive. The statements from the Montgomery County Police Department that additional staff would be needed if MCPD were to provide these services to Takoma Park will be useful information during police rebate negotiations.

Committee Recommendation #4: The City should investigate the option of transferring all or some of the duties for “911” communications and dispatch to the County.

Status: City and County staff have discussed this possibility. The way the County’s Emergency Communications Center (ECC) works is that call takers receive 911 calls and transfer the calls to the appropriate dispatch staff. There are six dispatchers in the ECC, one for each of the MCPD districts. The call taker switches Takoma Park calls to the Takoma Park Police Department, Silver Spring calls to the ECC dispatcher assigned to the Silver Spring District, etc. Concern was expressed by County officials that the number of Takoma Park calls would be overly burdensome on the Silver Spring dispatcher, but may not be of sufficient number to justify a separate Takoma Park dispatcher in the ECC. However, little actual data is available for the

County to use to assess the impact on its operations. The lack of data is due to the City's outdated communications technology.

The City currently receives no tax duplication payment for police communications services because the County has stated it would not increase the number of staff if the responsibility were switched to the County

In order for the County to dispatch Takoma Park patrol officers, Takoma Park would first need to complete the purchase and installation of mobile data units (computers) for the patrol cars, and train the officers on the units. This is in process and should be completed by August 1, 2006. Then, if directed by Council to pursue a transfer, the process of how to transition to the County's dispatch system would need to be discussed, approved and implemented. The County was to have incorporated Takoma Park's nine reporting areas, grouped into three response areas, into its software. This information is needed for ECC dispatchers. The City and County will want to ensure that everything is in place for a smooth transition so that no emergency calls are mishandled.

Funds for a new communications console is in the FY07 City Capital Improvement Program. If the City continues to perform the dispatch function, the new communications console will be needed because the current console is only partially functional and no tech support is available to maintain it. Even if the City were to give up the dispatch function, the new console will be useful as a backup and to record calls to the 301-270-1100 number.

If the dispatch function were to be switched to the County, a decision would need to be made about keeping the 301-270-1100 number. If any change is made, City and County staff and the Takoma Park public would need to be informed of the new process.

Besides functioning as police dispatch, communications staff also provides 24-hour reception services for the Police Department, functions as back-up building security during times when the rest of the building is open, and functions as primary building security overnight and during much of

the weekend. These functions will need to continue in some form. It is estimated that dispatch functions comprise only about one-third of the work communications staff performs on the job.

During regular work hours, civilian police staff could perform reception and back-up building security functions, but it would impact their current workload and may require some increase in the number of staff. Overnight and on weekends, there are several options available: employ a civilian staffperson for reception and building security work; use sworn officers for this function (keeping them from leaving the building in times of emergency); or close the building at night and on the weekends during the hours that the Community Center is not open. (Civilian police staff will still need to be scheduled for those hours after 5 p.m. and on the weekend when the Community Center is open.) In Gaithersburg, there is an emergency 911 phone for citizens to use if they come to the police station and it is closed. Takoma Park could adopt a similar system.

Unless the Council decides to lock the building at night and for most of the weekend, transferring dispatch responsibilities to the County may have only a minimal cost savings to the City. At best, only two clerical positions could be eliminated. Because of the high vacancy rate, this would save budgeted funds but not really save any money over current year expenses, since staff with higher pay or on overtime have had to fill in on dispatch.

The Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee had planned to do a workload analysis of police staff, which would be helpful information as we make future staffing decisions, but that analysis has not occurred. Last year, a work analysis of County police staff showed that there is significant down time for officers and police staff through the night hours. However, the County must “overstaff” at night time in order to be prepared to handle an emergency. During the daytime, investigators or other sworn or civilian staff that work a day shift are able to help out when an emergency occurs. That flexibility is not available at night, and thus requires staff that is sometimes not busy.

One advantage to having the County provide the dispatch

services is that keeping staff in dispatch positions is very difficult. Frequent hiring, training and locating substitutes is time-consuming and draining on staff resources.

Staff Recommendation:

Given the upcoming election for County Executive and the purchase of the communications equipment, it is advisable to continue providing communications services for at least the next two years. This will allow time to gather data, discuss the implications of a transfer of communications with the new County officials, and provide for a smooth and safe transition if the decision is made to proceed with the transfer.

Staff feels strongly that it is wise to continue a 24-hour per day, seven days a week staff presence in the Police Department lobby and to continue to receive calls on the 301-270-1100 number. Transfer of dispatch operations is worthy of study and may be the better way to handle this service, but should not be expected to be a source of financial savings.

Committee Recommendation #5: The City should investigate the option of transferring a portion of its criminal investigation responsibility to the County.

Status:

Same as the information in Committee Recommendation #3 above. However, because the Montgomery County Police Department is larger and has more resources, there are specialty units (traffic fatality reconstruction team, homicide, major sex offenses, commercial robberies, child abuse, major drug offenses, vice and intelligence) with strengths that a smaller department cannot support. A partnership in any or all of these areas may prove beneficial for the Takoma Park community. Already, the County's reconstruction team investigates the few traffic fatalities that occur in Takoma Park. Having the County do most or all of these other specialty investigations, however, may reduce the attractiveness of the Department when working to hire or retain police officers.

Staff Recommendation:

Same as the information in Committee Recommendation #3 above. However, if, in the future, the Takoma Park Police Department identified one or more limited MCPD specialty services that would be beneficial for the Takoma

Park community and that would not jeopardize receipt of tax duplication funds for police services, Takoma Park staff should bring the information to the City Council for action.

Public Works

Note: The City receives no rebate for trash pickup or recycling because the County does not pay for these services by property taxes, but by a solid waste fee. Takoma Park solid waste costs are paid via City property taxes.

Committee Recommendation #1: The City should seek a higher rebate from the County for road and park maintenance by adding in the City's costs of overhead, administrative expenses and capital expenditures.

Status: Due to the agreement between Montgomery County and Montgomery County municipalities, any change in the tax duplication formulas for these services would need to occur via a joint negotiation process with the staff of a new County Executive.

Staff Recommendation: The County's costs for road maintenance are clearly presented each year in the background materials for the municipal tax duplication component of the County budget. They do not include administrative overhead, and they are reduced by the proportion not paid by property taxes. Both of these points should be raised, if and when negotiations get underway.

The County's costs for park maintenance are not documented, and the basis for the formula has been unclear for over a decade. Staff recommends developing (either unilaterally or in conjunction with other municipalities) a good formula for determining County park maintenance costs this summer and fall as a way to be prepared for negotiations, if and when they take place. A graduate student intern is scheduled to work on this project over the summer of 2006.

Committee Recommendation #2: The City should ask the County for a cost estimate of contracting out road maintenance to county staff. If the estimate affords the City an opportunity for substantial savings, the City should consider contract out road

maintenance to the County.

Status: Due to the agreement between Montgomery County and Montgomery County municipalities, any change in the tax duplication formulas for these services would need to occur via a joint negotiation process with the staff of a new County Executive. The County's costs for road maintenance are well-documented, except for administrative overhead. Informal discussions with County staff have indicated a reluctance to take the time to prepare a cost estimate.

Staff Recommendation: Because City road crews do more than just road maintenance, contracting out the work would only save the City money if the estimate were substantially below the City's costs of providing the services. The cost information that we have does not seem to indicate that that would be the case. Staff recommends not pursuing this option, but focusing on negotiating a higher tax duplication payment, if and when those negotiations take place.

Committee Recommendation #3: The City should also request an audit of the County's expenditures supported by property taxes, which may result in a more accurate rebate both for road and park maintenance.

Status: This is a request that can be made of the staff of the new County Executive.

Staff Recommendation: Make this request as part of negotiations on tax duplication, if and when those negotiations take place.

Committee Recommendation #4: The City should renegotiate the 1988 rebate formula for park maintenance since the accounting system on which the formula is based no longer is being used.

Status: Due to the agreement between Montgomery County and Montgomery County municipalities, any change in the tax duplication formulas for these services would need to occur via a joint negotiation process with the staff of a new County Executive.

Staff Recommendation: While most work on renegotiating the tax duplication formulas will need to wait until negotiations are underway,

staff feels it would be useful to assemble good data on park maintenance costs. A graduate student intern is scheduled to work on this project over the summer of 2006.

Recreation and Parks

Note: No municipality receives a tax duplication payment for recreation services, although Rockville, Gaithersburg and Friendship Heights receive payment for elderly services. A portion of the County taxes that Takoma Park property owners pay goes to the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission for County park maintenance and for planning services. Property owners in certain municipalities, including Rockville and Gaithersburg, do not pay these taxes to M-NCPPC. There has been interest in imposing some of these taxes on those communities as their residents also benefit from the County having parkland.

Committee Recommendation #1: Given the withdrawal of Montgomery County recreation services from inside city limits and the opening of Takoma Park's Community Center, the City should request opting out of paying the county recreation tax. If successful, this would mean a direct savings to city taxpayers of an estimated \$250,000 each year.

Status: No direction from Council on this subject has been provided. It is unlikely that Montgomery County would be willing to forego this tax revenue from Takoma Park residents. Heavy political pressure would need to be applied to gain this result. Such a request could result in additional taxes being placed on Rockville and Gaithersburg. (These new taxes have been considered favorably by the County Council in recent years, but not applied.)

Staff Recommendation: Staff does not support this recommendation, as success is unlikely and could jeopardize other avenues for a more favorable tax duplication system.

Committee Recommendation #2: The City should request a set annual payment from the County to reflect the City's provision of recreation programs to underserved populations, including those who live outside the city limits in nearby neighborhoods.

Status: No such request has been made. There is a greater acknowledgment now by the County Council and County

Recreation Department of the need to increase services to previously underserved populations. A number of County programs to assist young people are proposed to be expanded during FY07. There is an opportunity to qualify for a rebate for the provision of services to the elderly, once the City carefully documents the nature of those services.

Due to the agreement between Montgomery County and Montgomery County municipalities, adding recreation services to the municipal tax duplication system would need to occur via a joint negotiation process with the staff of a new County Executive. Negotiating for the addition of a rebate for services to the elderly in Takoma Park need not require the participation of other municipalities, however, since that element is already included in the tax duplication agreement.

Staff Recommendation:

Document the provision of services to the elderly and submit the information to the County Executive's office. Since tax duplication payments are made on a two year delay, the first possible year of a payment for these services would be in the FY09 budget.

Make the request for a tax duplication payment for recreation services as part of negotiations, if and when those negotiations take place.

Housing and Community Development

Note: The City receives no rebate for housing and community development services.

Committee Recommendation #1: The City should request a rebate equivalent to the amount the county saves by not providing code enforcement, landlord-tenant services and other housing services in Takoma Park.

Status:

Due to the agreement between Montgomery County and Montgomery County municipalities, adding housing and community development services to the municipal tax duplication system would need to occur via a joint negotiation process with the staff of a new County Executive.

Staff Recommendation:

Make this request as part of negotiations on tax duplication,

if and when those negotiations take place.

Committee Recommendation #2: **The City should identify housing services or functions that can be successfully contracted for third-party administration as in the recent contracting with the County for code enforcement.**

Status: Third-party contracts are in place for the following housing services or functions: rents analyst, rental inspections, homebuyers' club, construction consulting (capital improvement petition applications), capacity building, Access database support and maintenance.

Staff Recommendation: Continue to consider this option during the preparation of the budget each year or as new programs are contemplated.

Library

Note: The City receives an annual library payment from Montgomery County pursuant to Section 2-53 of the Montgomery County Code, but it is not a rebate.

Committee Recommendation #1: **The City should try to determine if significant savings can be achieved by transforming the library from one that offers general services to one that focuses on specialized services.**

Status: The City Council held a special worksession on library services October 17, 2005. There did not seem to be support for changing the types of services it provides, at least at this time. Since the time of the TASDI Report, the Library has begun providing computer services in the new Computer Learning Center. Full connection to the Community Center will occur by June 1, 2006. How these services and connections affect the operation and use of the Library is yet to be seen.

Staff Recommendation: No change at this time. By the time the FY08 budget is prepared, there may be some indication of new use patterns at the Library, which may be helpful in determining if specialization would be a good option for the Library.

Committee Recommendation #2: **The City should launch a fundraising initiative on behalf of the library in cooperation with the Friends of**

the Library and other local supporters.

Status: The Friends of the Library and other local library supporters have been very generous over the years. General City fundraising initiatives have focused on the needs of the Community Center.

Staff Recommendation: Continue to show support of the efforts of Friends of the Library and other supporters. Once the Community Center, and perhaps the gymnasium, is completed, the Council may direct City fundraising efforts to focus on the Library.

Additional Revenue Opportunities

Committee Recommendation #1: The City should negotiate more accurate rebates for services duplicated by the County and the City.

Status: Due to the agreement between Montgomery County and Montgomery County municipalities, any change in the tax duplication formulas for services would need to occur via a joint negotiation process with the staff of a new County Executive.

Staff Recommendation: Agree. Staff is prepared to participate in the negotiations. The information prepared by the TASDI Committee will be very useful in those negotiations.

Committee Recommendation #2: The City should advocate reform of the County's income tax pass-back by calculating the pass-back based on the City's property tax rate relative to the County's property tax rate, or by increasing the 17 percent floor.

Status: The arbitrary 17 percent pass-back rate is set in State municipal tax duplication law. Annual efforts to change this language have not been successful, although City staff has actively lobbied for such legislation. Nevertheless, it seems possible to negotiate a compensating arrangement with Montgomery County. Due to the agreement between Montgomery County and Montgomery County municipalities, any change in the tax duplication formulas for services would need to occur via a joint negotiation process with the staff of a new County Executive.

Staff Recommendation: If and when negotiations take place, bring this idea to the negotiating table.

Committee Recommendation #3: The City should initiate discussions of regional revenue sharing with county and state officials, as well as with regional government entities, such as the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

Status: Little discussion on this topic has taken place, although there have been general discussions on how to share the expenses of affordable housing, transportation, air quality efforts, etc. across jurisdictional lines.

Staff Recommendation: This is an area where advocacy by elected officials is important. Such officials could request study of options by Council of Government staff, State agencies, etc.

Committee Recommendation #4: The City should extend revenue sharing agreements to the County's "other taxes" derived from Takoma Park, such as extending the 50/50 share of the hotel/motel tax to bed and breakfasts, and retaining some portion of real property transfer taxes, and recordation taxes.

Status: In Maryland, municipalities are allowed very few taxation options. There have not been many legislative proposals to allow municipalities to receive taxes from the sources listed here. However, it seems possible to negotiate a compensating arrangement with Montgomery County. Due to the agreement between Montgomery County and Montgomery County municipalities, any change in the tax duplication formulas for services would need to occur via a joint negotiation process with the staff of a new County Executive.

Staff Recommendation: Consider proposing State legislation allowing municipalities to have more taxing options. If and when negotiations with the County take place, bring this idea to the negotiating table.

Committee Recommendation #5: The City should seek to institute a system of payments in lieu of taxes from major Takoma Park nonprofits, such as Washington Adventist Hospital.

Status: Staff has determined that payments in lieu of taxes

(“PILOTs”) from nonprofits such as hospitals are not done in Maryland, although they are found in other locations around the country. Generally PILOTs are agreements that come as part of negotiations in instances where the government has leverage over the nonprofit on something that the nonprofit wants.

Staff Recommendation: Consider a PILOT when appropriate situations occur concerning major Takoma Park nonprofits.

Committee Recommendation #6: The City should negotiate payments from the County for services provided to county institutions inside city limits, such as Montgomery College and the public schools.

Status: No such discussions have taken place. However, it seems possible to negotiate a compensating arrangement with Montgomery County. Due to the agreement between Montgomery County and Montgomery County municipalities, any change in the tax duplication formulas for services would need to occur via a joint negotiation process with the staff of a new County Executive.

Staff Recommendation: If and when negotiations with the County take place, bring this idea to the negotiating table.

Committee Recommendation #7: The City should regularly assess city services to determine where service charges, fines, and fees for permits and licenses might be increased.

Status: This assessment is done by staff on an annual basis during preparation of the annual budget.

Staff Recommendation: Continue regular assessments.

Committee Recommendation #8: The City should monitor intergovernmental grants to ensure that Takoma Park gets a fair share of the grants based on city needs.

Status: This is done periodically as grants are announced.

Staff Recommendation: Continue to be attentive to the fairness of grant awards. If a situation of unfairness seems to exist, staff should bring

such information to the City Council for political response.

Resident Survey

Note: the City of Takoma Park had contracted to have a resident survey done. However, Council postponed the survey so that staff would be able to pursue Council priorities concerning the Takoma Metro development.

Committee Recommendation: **The Committee believes that [its work] will be useful to the City in developing questions for the upcoming City resident survey about the quality of life in Takoma Park....The Committee also points out the multiple tradeoffs associated with increasing or decreasing service levels make it difficult to assess public opinion about service delivery in the confines of a survey. The committee urges the City Council to consider the use of forums, focus groups and other opportunities to provide for a more informed and thorough discussion with residents about cit services to supplement results from the survey.**

Status: The survey is included in the proposed FY07 budget and workplan.

Staff Recommendation: Staff believes the survey would be a useful and important tool for improving service delivery and resident/government communication. Staff agrees with the TASDI Committee that augmenting a survey with focus groups and other communication techniques would be helpful given the complexity of weighing service costs and benefits.