

# Worksession

<b>Agenda Item #</b>	7
<b>Meeting Date</b>	October 27, 2008
<b>Prepared By</b>	Barbara B. Matthews City Manager
<b>Approved By</b>	

<b>Discussion Item</b>	City Manager's Quarterly Update
<b>Background</b>	The City Manager has historically provided the City Council with periodic financial reports during the fiscal year. In conjunction with the quarterly financial report, she provides a review of City programs and activities.
<b>Policy</b>	<p>The City Council is the policymaking making body for the City of Takoma Park and establishes work priorities for the staff.</p> <p>The City Manager provides the City Council with updates on the City's financial condition and staff activities to assist the City Council in the performance of its duties.</p>
<b>Fiscal Impact</b>	None
<b>Attachments</b>	<p>General Fund Financial Report for the First Quarter of FY 2009</p> <p>Quarterly Report of Activities and Programs</p>
<b>Recommendation</b>	For Discussion Only
<b>Special Consideration</b>	



**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK  
GENERAL FUND  
FINANCIAL REPORT  
FOR THE THREE MONTHS  
ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2008**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The General Fund supports the day-to-day activities of the City, such as police protection, street and park maintenance, and general administrative functions. The General Fund's activities are supported primarily from two sources: taxes and utility fees and intergovernmental revenues.

Certain General Fund revenues are cyclical in nature. For example, property tax receipts and tax duplication payments are received during a certain period of time during the year. Other revenue sources are received on a monthly basis and, as a result, are more evenly distributed throughout the fiscal year.

The largest single source of revenue for the City's general operations is real property taxes. Total collections as of September 30, 2008 totaled \$601,069, a decrease of \$78,835 from the prior year. The variance is likely attributable to the decrease in the real property tax rate. Revenues from personal property taxes are down by \$39,363 for the first quarter. This difference is due to a payment of \$35,674 for corporate property taxes in FY 2008. The County collects personal property taxes on the City's behalf; payments made to the City are not disbursed consistently.

Revenues from licenses and permits increased from \$24,977 in the prior year to \$32,953 in the current fiscal year. One factor contributing to the increase is trader's licenses exceeding budget expectations during the first quarter. Trader's licenses have increased by \$6,650 compared to the prior year.

Receipts from the use of money and property have decreased from \$107,669 in the prior year to \$48,008 in the current year. The reason for this variance is due to lower interest rates, and the overall impact of the current economic conditions on our investments.

Revenues from recreation programs and services in the first quarter were \$6,888 less than for the same period in the prior year. The variance is attributable to several factors. Rather than having the City collect the funds for a particular children's program, the contractor now collects the registration fees and remits to the City its share. Another factor attributable to the decrease in revenues from recreation programs and services are refunds for cancellations, and a larger amount of the fees being collected prior to July 1, 2008 for summer programs.

Like General Fund revenues, not all fund expenditures occur evenly throughout the fiscal year. For example, contributions to the City's two pension plans are made in December while liability and other types of insurance are paid in July. These once-a-year payments create "peaks" in expenditures at certain times during the fiscal year.

General Fund expenditures as of the close of the first quarter totaled \$3,785,027 compared to \$3,584,837 in fiscal year 2008--an increase of 5.6 percent. The variance is primarily attributable to the overall increase in personnel costs, as well as higher fuel costs.

In the third quarter of FY 2008, the City Manager implemented a new organizational structure in the wake of the retirement of the longtime Deputy City Manager. The position of Community and Government Liaison, which was funded out of the General Management Division, was eliminated. Savings from the elimination of this position and others were used to create full-time positions in three General Government divisions: Finance, Information Systems, and Human Resources. The reorganization resulted in lower expenditures in General Management and higher expenditures in Information Systems and Human Resources. In addition to costs related to the new position, Information Systems' expenditures are higher in the current fiscal year as a result of the centralization of computer software and maintenance costs and the upgrade of the accounting system software in FY 2009.

Overall police expenditures were \$13,156 higher for the first quarter of FY 2009 compared to the prior year. Within the department, significant variances from year-to-year were noted in both the Operations Division and the Criminal Investigations Division. Expenditures of the Operations Division were \$65,042 less compared to the prior year while costs for the Criminal Investigations Division were \$91,948 higher than in FY 2008. The variances primarily relate to personnel costs, including the cost centers to which employee costs were allocated and staffing.

Capital Outlay increased from \$54,869 to \$267,077 from FY 2008 to FY 2009. The variance is attributable to the purchase of street lights and street work in the current fiscal year.

Non-departmental expenditures as September 30, 2008, totaled \$351,427 compared to \$424,287 in the prior year--a decrease of 17.2 percent. The variance of \$72,860 is primarily attributable to the closing of the day laborer site in September 2008. Additionally, non-departmental liability insurance expenses decreased by \$7,300 compared to the last fiscal year.

The initial budgeted amount of the unappropriated reserve was \$390,499. No amounts had been transferred from the account as of September 30, 2008. However, the Council previously committed \$50,000 for the Piney Branch pool. Additionally, monies will be allocated from the unappropriated reserve to fund any increases resulting from the compensation and position classification studies that are in process.

**GENERAL FUND REVENUES  
FOR THE THREE MONTHS ENDED  
SEPTEMBER 30, 2008**

<b>REVENUES BY SOURCE:</b>	<b>Budgeted FY 2009</b>	<b>Actual To Date</b>	<b>Uncollected Revenue</b>	<b>% Collected</b>	<b>Prior Year Actual To Date</b>	<b>Change from Prior Year</b>
<b>Taxes and Utility Fees</b>						
Real Property	9,981,478	601,069	9,380,409	6.02%	679,904	(78,835)
Personal Property	343,520	3,314	340,206	0.96%	42,677	(39,363)
RR and Public Utilities	153,520	-	153,520	0.00%	-	-
Penalties and Interest	25,000	11,388	13,612	45.55%	7,873	3,515
Admission and Amusement	300	-	300	0.00%	11	(11)
Additions and Abatements	-	(1,139)	1,139	0.00%	(2,221)	1,082
Highway	601,472	14,079	587,393	2.34%	18,805	(4,726)
Income Tax	2,075,000	107,992	1,967,008	5.20%	107,482	510
<b>Total--Taxes and Utility Fees</b>	<b>13,180,290</b>	<b>736,703</b>	<b>12,443,587</b>	<b>5.59%</b>	<b>854,531</b>	<b>(117,828)</b>
<b>Licenses and Permits</b>	<b>58,954</b>	<b>32,953</b>	<b>26,001</b>	<b>55.90%</b>	<b>24,977</b>	<b>7,976</b>
<b>Fines and Forfeitures</b>	<b>231,500</b>	<b>49,408</b>	<b>182,092</b>	<b>21.34%</b>	<b>36,670</b>	<b>12,738</b>
<b>Use of Money and Property</b>	<b>330,000</b>	<b>48,008</b>	<b>281,992</b>	<b>14.55%</b>	<b>107,669</b>	<b>(59,661)</b>
<b>Charges for Services</b>						
Inspection Fees	297,500	1,691	295,809	0.57%	688	1,003
Public Parking Facilities	26,000	4,434	21,566	17.05%	5,769	(1,335)
Waste Collection & Disposal Charges	61,000	-	61,000	0.00%	(345)	345
Recreation Programs and Services	262,000	55,692	206,308	21.26%	62,580	(6,888)
Library Fines and Fees	15,000	6,461	8,539	43.07%	4,745	1,716
Passport Services	21,000	5,775	15,225	27.50%	7,950	(2,175)
WSSC	140,000	-	140,000	0.00%	-	-
Copying	4,000	20	3,980	0.49%	107	(87)
Advertising--Bus Shelters	10,000	-	10,000	0.00%	-	-
Farmer's Market	4,680	-	4,680	0.00%	-	-
Telephone Commissions	-	-	-	n/a	-	-
Recyclable Sales	6,000	6,142	(142)	102.36%	1,925	4,217
Mulch Sales	20,000	3,716	16,284	18.58%	4,715	(999)
Special Trash Pickup	8,000	2,530	5,470	31.63%	2,415	115
Parking Lot Lease County - County	12,000	4,000	8,000	33.33%	-	4,000
<b>Total--Charges for Services</b>	<b>887,180</b>	<b>90,461</b>	<b>796,719</b>	<b>10.20%</b>	<b>90,549</b>	<b>(88)</b>
<b>Intergovernmental Revenues</b>						
Police Protection (State)	410,000	103,045	306,955	25.13%	100,263	2,782
Bank Share Tax	5,643	-	5,643	0.00%	-	-
Library Aid	112,630	-	112,630	0.00%	-	-
Police Rebate	705,570	-	705,570	0.00%	-	-
In Lieu of Police	2,322,023	2,322,023	-	100.00%	2,322,023	-
In Lieu of Roads Maintenance	442,624	442,624	-	100.00%	442,624	-
In Lieu of Parks Maintenance	72,229	72,229	-	100.00%	72,229	-
In Lieu of Crossing Guard	163,193	163,193	-	100.00%	163,193	-
Takoma/Langley Rec. Agreement	125,000	-	125,000	0.00%	-	-
Hotel Motel Tax	85,000	9,014	75,986	10.60%	7,259	1,755
Cable Franchise Fees	170,031	-	170,031	0.00%	-	-
Cable--Operating	66,461	-	66,461	0.00%	-	-
<b>Total--Intergovernmental Revenues</b>	<b>4,680,404</b>	<b>3,112,128</b>	<b>1,568,276</b>	<b>66.49%</b>	<b>3,107,591</b>	<b>4,537</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>						
Tree Fund	10,000	-	10,000	0.00%	-	-
Sales of Impounded Equipment	-	804	(804)	0.00%	-	804
GASB Accrual Reserve	-	-	-	0.00%	-	-
Other	34,000	4,631	29,369	0.00%	8,612	(3,981)
Insurance Claims	3,000	1	2,999	0.03%	5,498	(5,497)
Takoma Langley Crossroads	-	-	-	n/a	-	-
Day Laborer Site	15,000	-	15,000	0.00%	-	-
Takoma Foundation Grant	-	-	-	n/a	-	-
Administrative Fees--Parking	6,000	600	5,400	10.00%	870	(270)
Donations	500	-	500	0.00%	-	-
<b>Total--Miscellaneous</b>	<b>68,500</b>	<b>6,036</b>	<b>62,464</b>	<b>8.81%</b>	<b>14,980</b>	<b>(8,944)</b>
<b>Total Operating Revenues</b>	<b>19,436,828</b>	<b>4,075,697</b>	<b>15,361,131</b>	<b>20.97%</b>	<b>4,236,967</b>	<b>(161,270)</b>
Sale of City Property	4,000	2,943	1,057	73.58%	700	2,243
Bond Proceeds	2,000,000	-	2,000,000	0.00%	-	-
Lease Purchase	255,000	-	255,000	0.00%	-	-
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>21,695,828</b>	<b>4,078,640</b>	<b>17,617,188</b>	<b>18.80%</b>	<b>4,237,667</b>	<b>(159,027)</b>

**GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES  
FOR THE THREE MONTHS ENDED  
SEPTEMBER 30, 2008**

<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	<b>Budgeted FY 2009</b>	<b>Expenditures To Date</b>	<b>Available Balance</b>	<b>% Unexpended</b>	<b>Prior Year Actual To Date</b>	<b>Change from Prior Year</b>
<u>General Government</u>						
Legislative	143,084	21,177	121,907	85.20%	15,388	5,789
General Management	831,688	176,013	655,675	78.84%	200,857	(24,844)
Finance	478,970	93,655	385,315	80.45%	98,207	(4,552)
Legal	202,150	17,650	184,500	91.27%	18,214	(564)
Information Systems	368,769	117,583	251,186	68.11%	90,764	26,819
Human Resources	217,596	30,792	186,804	85.85%	23,915	6,877
City Clerk	220,656	35,586	185,070	83.87%	33,955	1,631
<b>Total--General Government</b>	<b>2,462,913</b>	<b>492,456</b>	<b>1,970,457</b>	<b>80.01%</b>	<b>481,300</b>	<b>11,156</b>
<u>Police</u>						
Office of the Chief	685,923	91,232	594,691	86.70%	83,118	8,114
Communications	416,410	70,670	345,740	83.03%	78,007	(7,337)
Operations	3,058,103	515,041	2,543,062	83.16%	580,083	(65,042)
Criminal Investigations	944,752	208,293	736,459	77.95%	116,345	91,948
Administrative Services	645,732	99,601	546,131	84.58%	114,128	(14,527)
<b>Total--Public Safety</b>	<b>5,750,920</b>	<b>984,837</b>	<b>4,766,083</b>	<b>82.88%</b>	<b>971,681</b>	<b>13,156</b>
<u>Public Works</u>						
Administration	279,577	53,997	225,580	80.69%	60,138	(6,141)
Building Maintenance	752,159	145,647	606,512	80.64%	171,876	(26,229)
Equipment Maintenance	639,635	163,100	476,535	74.50%	148,370	14,730
Right-of-Way	936,305	141,823	794,482	84.85%	133,928	7,895
Solid Waste Management	782,524	162,319	620,205	79.26%	130,161	32,158
Gardens	180,707	31,250	149,457	82.71%	36,209	(4,959)
Urban Forest	238,212	35,415	202,797	85.13%	27,146	8,269
City Engineer	165,145	36,929	128,216	77.64%	29,604	7,325
<b>Total--Public Works</b>	<b>3,974,264</b>	<b>770,480</b>	<b>3,203,784</b>	<b>80.61%</b>	<b>737,432</b>	<b>33,048</b>
<u>Recreation</u>						
Administration	256,488	43,449	213,039	83.06%	38,802	4,647
NH Avenue Recreation Center	219,647	42,848	176,799	80.49%	28,804	14,044
Community Programs	112,559	15,789	96,770	85.97%	23,936	(8,147)
Athletic Fields/Facilities	78,230	1,853	76,377	97.63%	8,825	(6,972)
Camps	114,346	44,928	69,418	60.71%	40,494	4,434
Before/After School Programs	116,297	5,906	110,391	94.92%	10,555	(4,649)
Community Center	444,501	54,677	389,824	87.70%	60,305	(5,628)
<b>Total--Recreation</b>	<b>1,342,068</b>	<b>209,450</b>	<b>1,132,618</b>	<b>84.39%</b>	<b>211,721</b>	<b>(2,271)</b>
<u>Housing &amp; Comm. Dev.</u>						
Administration	123,897	17,525	106,372	85.86%	21,044	(3,519)
Code Enforcement	448,497	79,201	369,296	82.34%	77,399	1,802
Landlord-Tenant	138,874	24,539	114,335	82.33%	24,196	343
COLTA	133,718	14,562	119,156	89.11%	18,824	(4,262)
Community Development	467,870	79,758	388,112	82.95%	63,693	16,065
Affordable Housing	244,829	17,604	227,225	92.81%	20,049	(2,445)
<b>Total--Housing &amp; Comm. Dev.</b>	<b>1,557,685</b>	<b>233,189</b>	<b>1,324,496</b>	<b>85.03%</b>	<b>225,205</b>	<b>7,984</b>
Communications	429,047	76,093	352,954	82.26%	73,081	3,012
<u>Library</u>						
Library	889,978	155,300	734,678	82.55%	144,855	10,445
Computer Learning Center	78,490	14,541	63,949	81.47%	12,509	2,032
<b>Total--Library</b>	<b>968,468</b>	<b>169,841</b>	<b>798,627</b>	<b>82.46%</b>	<b>157,364</b>	<b>12,477</b>
Debt Service	1,055,416	230,177	825,239	78.19%	247,897	(17,720)
Non-Departmental	1,879,412	351,427	1,527,985	81.30%	424,287	(72,860)
Capital Outlay	3,886,965	267,077	3,619,888	93.13%	54,869	212,208
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,307,158</b>	<b>3,785,027</b>	<b>19,522,131</b>	<b>83.76%</b>	<b>3,584,837</b>	<b>200,190</b>

**CITY MANAGER'S  
QUARTERLY UPDATE  
JULY 1, 2008 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2008**

**Outreach/Networking by City Manager**

- Participated in the Independence Day Celebration Parade.
- Met with Erwin Mack, Executive Director of the Takoma/Langley Crossroads Development Authority, on July 8<sup>th</sup> to discuss issues of mutual concern.
- Met with Weymouth Spence, President of Columbia Union College, to become better acquainted and to discuss issues of mutual concern.
- Attended the August meeting of the Prince George's County City Manager/Administration group.
- Met with Jere Stocks, President of Washington Adventist Hospital, on August 25<sup>th</sup> to discuss the hospital's relocation plans, re-use of the hospital site, and other issues of mutual interest.
- Continued service on the Communications Committee of the Maryland Municipal League.
- Continued service on the Sustainability Advisory Committee of the International City/County Management Association.

**Administration**

- City Manager Barb Matthews continued her service on the Joint County-Municipal Revenue Sharing Task Force, which is reviewing the current methodology used to calculate tax duplication payments.
- Departmental staff issued a Request for Proposal for lobbying services and reviewed proposals once received.
- Agreement was reached with UCFW Local 400, the bargaining unit which represents many of the City's sworn police staff, on a new contract.
- City Manager Barb Matthews and Deputy City Manager Suzanne Ludlow attended the national conference of the International City/County Management Association, which was held in Richmond, Virginia. The City Manager was a speaker at the conference, serving on a panel presentation on "Vision, Leadership, and Management in the Sustainability Era."
- The annual audit of the City's general purpose financial statements got underway. Audit-related work was the major focus of the Finance Department's work during the quarter.
- Deputy City Manager Suzanne Ludlow compiled information regarding Council proposals for State legislation in the upcoming legislative session and received direction from Council.
- Departmental staff, working in conjunction with the Public Works Department and the Police Department, made arrangements for the closure of the temporary day laborer site on Sligo Mill Road. The Deputy City Manager worked with CASA of Maryland on a transition plan for the period between August 1 and October 17, with the goal of encouraging the workers to use more

formal day laborer facilities; transition efforts included bus trips to day laborer centers with services so that the day laborers could see the options open to them.

- During the month of July, staff discussed issues related to the proposed development at the Takoma Metro station with the City Council. Staff also worked with the City Attorney's Office on the City's response to WMATA's application for FTA approval of the development in August.
- Deputy City Manager Suzanne Ludlow attended a Purple Line briefing for Montgomery and Prince George's County delegation representatives. She also participated in the Maryland Transit Administration's (MTA) project team meeting with staff from municipal, county, state, and federal entities, as well as discussions with MTA relative to Takoma Park segment details.
- In September, City Manager Barb Matthews and Deputy City Manager Suzanne Ludlow participated in a meeting with Washington Adventist Hospital (WAH) President Jere Stocks, WAH Vice-President Robert Jepson, and Mayor Bruce Williams regarding plans for re-use of the hospital site.
- The Information Systems staff was busy during the quarter. Activities included the following:
  - E-mail archiving software and hardware was brought on line. The Retain Server, a GWAVA product, stores e-mail nightly on a backup server.
  - Updates to phone system were completed in early August. The Public Works phone system is now connected to our more reliable T1 circuit. All of their phone calls now use Voice Over IP technology. The New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center was also placed on the same type of equipment.
  - A new server brought on line at Public Works. "TPMulcher" is a new generation dual processor server that will contain the fleet maintenance and gasoline dispensing software databases. It also has enough storage capacity for GIS mapping activities, including storm drain videos.
  - Several in-house training sessions were conducted during this period. The Information Systems staff providing training on Cognos report writing software and had its first best practices class.
  - The Document Libraries feature of GroupWise was initiated this quarter, with the Finance Department serving as the initial user. This GroupWise feature assists in tracking all document changes.
  - An additional internet circuit was added in early July to help with connectivity. Division staff negotiated favorable pricing with the City's long distance telephone carrier for an additional T1 circuit for just the internet. An additional firewall appliance was configured and placed on line to secure the City's internet access.
  - With the help of Montgomery County information systems staff, a wireless hub and two antennae were installed in the Police parking garage and patrol office areas. This hub will allow our officers to use their cruiser laptops in the building and in the parking lot.
  - With the help of Comcast and Montgomery County information systems staff, a redundant network for Police communications was also brought on line this quarter. This additional Comcast fiber circuit will automatically connect our Police Department communication equipment to Montgomery County if and when the County's fiber connection has problems.

- Information Systems Manager Abel Castillo negotiated a new contract for copiers. Division staff set up the demo copiers, installed new drivers on staff computers, and trained staff on copier features.
- Members of the Health Services Impact Committee continued to engage the staff of Washington Adventist Hospital (WAH) in discussions about the needs of City residents. To ensure that the concerns of foreign born residents were included, the Committee solicited responses from people representing Eritrea, Ethiopia, and other African countries, as well as those from Latin-America. The Committee also recognized the importance of obtaining information from senior citizens who depend on the emergency services and other services offered by WAH. To supplement the focus group study, the Committee implemented an electronic survey, which targeted residents who are affiliated with neighborhood and community organizations in the City. The data from both studies will be compiled into one report, which is scheduled to be presented to the Council in November.
- Management Assistant Venita George assumed the role of staff liaison to the Safe Roadways Committee in September. She is making arrangements for Chief Ronald Ricucci to talk with Committee members about applicable laws and the perceptions of motorists and cyclists using City streets. The Committee members are also preparing for another campaign to better inform other cyclists of shorter and safer routes to major commercial and recreational nodes of the City.

## **Communications**

- Events covered by City TV during the quarter included the Independence Day Parade, several Function at the Junction concerts and the annual Takoma Park Folk Festival.
- Snapshots segments during the quarter included the following: The Mural Project Part 1: Special Art from Very Special Artists; The Mural Project Part 2; The Chief Speaks Out: Crime Prevention; Takoma Park Police Department Awards 2007; July 4th 2008: Takoma Park's Independence Day Celebration; Takoma Jazz Fest 2008 Highlights; Community Oriented Policing: National Night Out; Takoma Park Folk Festival: Construction of the Grove Stage; and Art in the Community Center: iWmOaRgDe
- New programming released during the quarter included musical performances from the JazzFest and Function in the Junction concert series, as well as highlights of the 2008 Independence Day Parade and the Takoma Park Poetry Series.
- About 25 hours of City Council meetings were recorded and aired in this quarter.
- In late September, City TV implemented the installation of a new digital playback server and companion bulletin board system. The impact of the new Cablecast and Carousel system will be significant. On a technical level, most new programs will originate in a digital format (digital cameras), be edited digitally, and be moved over to the server for playback. City TV's program schedule will no longer be dependent on the mechanics of changing video tape, as the scheduling is done on a web-based software application; this means that many things can be controlled from a remote location, including an emergency crawl. The bulletin board application offers an enhanced graphic presence, and it pulls from the programming database to generate lists of upcoming programs for the bulletin board and for the website. Another benefit of the changeover will be that more City TV programming will be aired, with fewer replays in a given week.
- In July, City TV Staff attended the annual Alliance for Community Media conference, which was held in Washington, D.C. Staff also attended the annual National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors, which was held during the month of September in Atlanta.

- Verizon continued to install its FIOS service in Takoma Park. Company officials provided the City Council with a status briefing in September.
- After six months of no complaints, a number of residents reported non-delivery of the newsletter in September. Staff followed up accordingly with the United States Postal Service.
- The City's website continued to be a valuable source of information about City activities. The average number of unique visitors per month to the website during the quarter was 7,791. The highest month of utilization was recorded in July, with a total of 8,714 unique visitors.
- Granicus continues to be well utilized, with 485 viewings reported during the quarter of various programs. The most popular were Snapshots and Council meetings.

### **Housing and Community Development**

- The planning staff worked in conjunction with the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission in the evaluation of the Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan urban design.
- As part of the City's efforts to improve the various neighborhood commercial areas, the following projects were completed during the quarter:
  - Decorative trash and recycling cans were installed at Erie and Flower Avenues, at Flower and Piney Branch, on Maple Avenue, and in Takoma Junction and Old Town.
  - Native plant landscaping was installed in the median on New Hampshire Avenue at Sligo Creek Parkway.
  - Additional gateway landscaping, including trees, was installed at the corner of Flower Avenue and Piney Branch Road and at the corner of Erie and Flower Avenues.
  - A decorative street lamp was installed on Flower Avenue near Piney Branch Road.
- The planning staff assisted the Pinecrest neighborhood in the development of a proposal to revise traffic calming measures in the neighborhood.
- The department provided 80 permit letters on behalf of Takoma Park property owners applying for County permits for a variety of construction projects, such as fencing, building additions, porches, and other alterations and renovations.
- The planning staff facilitated the execution of a contract with a D&F Construction Company (D&F) for the construction of the second phase of the Carroll Avenue streetscape project and secured required access permissions from affected property owners. The responsibility for oversight of the project construction and management of the D&F contract was transferred to the Public Works Department.
- A grant was secured from the Prince George's County Gorgeous Prince George's program for a planned landscaping project along New Hampshire Avenue.
- The City awarded two New Hampshire Avenue Community Greening Program grants. Funding was provided to the Hillwood Manor Neighborhood Association's Garden Committee and Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church.

- As previously authorized by the City Council, a full-time intern was hired to assist with projects related to the redevelopment of the New Hampshire Avenue corridor.
- The planning staff coordinated a clean-up on New Hampshire Avenue. On September 27<sup>th</sup>, area residents picked up trash, debris, and otherwise made the commercial areas shine.
- Departmental staff facilitated the promotion, review, and development of recommendations for the PY35 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.
- A Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the Takoma Foundation was executed for the Community Center Mosaic Project.
- Housing and Community Development Director Sara Daines assisted the Arts and Humanities Commission with the coordination of four exhibits at the Takoma Park Community Center.
- The department, in partnership with Homefree USA (a non-profit housing counseling agency), offered a Foreclosure Prevention Workshop. The workshop was held at the Takoma Park Community Center on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Marketing of the program was extensive, with a full page flyer appearing in the *Gazette* a week prior to the event. Twenty-five (25) people attended the workshop, with many receiving individualized counseling assistance. .
- On August 5<sup>th</sup>, the affordable housing staff participated in Takoma Park's National Night Out activities. Landlord-Tenant staff and community organizer Mario Cristaldo were present at the Takoma/Langley Crossroads location and distributed landlord-tenant handbooks and answered questions from participants. Over 200 people attended this event.
- On September 16<sup>th</sup>, departmental staff presented a "Knowing Your Rights as a Tenant" workshop at the Takoma Park Community Center. Fifteen (15) tenants attended. Landlord-Tenant handbooks and other relevant information were distributed to attendees.
- The City assumed a lead role in the planning of the 8th Annual Montgomery County Housing Fair. Over 1,000 attended the September 27<sup>th</sup> event, which was held in Gaithersburg. Individual housing and foreclosure counseling was available free of charge to fair attendees.
- The Office of Landlord-Tenant Affairs had 732 customer contacts (telephone calls and walk-ins) during the quarter, with a monthly average of 245. This represents a 14 percent increase over the last quarter.
- On July 1<sup>st</sup>, departmental staff participated in a tenant meeting for the residents of Lockney and Kennewick Avenues sponsored by the CSAFE program. They answered questions raised by participants about a variety of landlord-tenant issues and subsequently addressed code enforcement matters brought to the City's attention at the meeting.
- The affordable housing staff re-established contact with the tenants of 717 Sligo Creek Parkway and worked with the residents and the Capacity Building organizers to re-register the tenant association. Staff advised the Montgomery County Housing Opportunities Commission of the owner's interest in selling the property due to the lack of condo sales.
- Fifty-eight (58) existing rental housing licenses were renewed; of these, 39 represented annual licenses, and 19 were biennial licenses.
- Thirty-two (32) violation notices were issued to landlords for failure to renew an existing rental license. One citation was issued for failure to obtain a rental housing license prior operating a rental housing facility.

- Nine new rental license applications were submitted during the quarter.
- Three landlord certification seminars were held with a total of 22 participants, each receiving the required three year certification (18 landlords / 4 property agents). Four additional landlords were certified upon successful completion of the written exam.
- Forty-nine (49) new ACTion complaint cases were opened during the quarter.
- Thirty-six (36) new ACTion cases were opened as a result of the ongoing implementation of the Target Area Inspection Program. All six wards were canvassed on a weekly basis with a total of 125 courtesy notices left at properties, many with overgrown vegetation, abandoned or unlicensed vehicles, or accumulated trash and debris on the premises.
- Seventeen (17) of the new ACTion cases referenced above were closed as the violations were acceptably abated.
- One citation for a falling retaining wall has been forwarded to the City Attorney for prosecution. No court date has been set.
- The vacant, abandoned and neglected property survey was completed. The temporary inspector completed a total of 1,315 property surveys over the summer, 835 of which were accomplished during the quarter. The results of the survey are being tabulated, and a final report will be drafted and presented to the Council in late 2008. A total of 3,957 properties were surveyed during the entire process.
- The department sponsored and implemented the "Sick of Signs" campaign during the week of September 20<sup>th</sup>. A total of 306 illegal signs were collected by the community. The results of the effort will be forwarded to the American Association of Code Enforcement for inclusion in the national total count.
- Two District Court appearances for status hearings were held. One case was closed with all code violations (accumulation of bulk trash and peeling paint) abated by the property owner of 114 Elm Avenue. The second case (6506 Kansas) was extended by the Judge with the property owner given until October 7 to demolish the condemned house.
- Staff continued to meet on a monthly basis with Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs' (DHAC) Code Enforcement Manager and Acting Supervisor to review procedures, data, inspection issues, and results with regard to the City's agreement with DHCA for rental housing licensing and complaint inspections.
- The Program Assistant position in Code Enforcement was filled in September. Recruitment efforts for the Code Enforcement Inspector position, vacated on August 4<sup>th</sup>, were undertaken.

## **Library**

- A new series of monthly Saturday morning programs was launched during the quarter. On July 19<sup>th</sup>, guest performer Eliza Newlin Carney sang family songs to an enthusiastic crowd. On August 9<sup>th</sup> and September 6<sup>th</sup>, Library Assistant Lucia Acin joined Children's Librarian Karen MacPherson for Bilingual Circle Time in Spanish and English. Thirty people attended the September 6 program despite the threat of violent weather.

- The departure of Lupe Marks temporarily ended our popular Thursday morning Spanish Circle Time. Towards the end of the quarter, arrangements were made to begin a new series featuring Maria Garcia-Godos during the month of October.
- The City's series of job search and job skills workshops, offered in conjunction with MontgomeryWorks, continued during the summer months. Focusing on interviewing skills, the series concluded on August 7<sup>th</sup>.
- Banned Book Club participants discussed Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird" on August 4<sup>th</sup> and Salinger's "Catcher in the Rye" on September 15<sup>th</sup>. Books for the Banned Book Club and the Friends Reading Group are supplied by the Friends of the Library.
- The popular "Art Quest" computer workshops, geared to those ages nine to thirteen and taught by CMA Medieros, concluded on August 8<sup>th</sup>. Students' work remains on display in the Computer Learning Center.
- This year's Summer Quest summer reading program had a record enrollment of 207. A total of 1,051 books were read. One hundred and thirty-two (132) participants read at least one book, and at least ten children read 20 or more books. Three local schools, including East Silver Spring, adopted the program for the first time. Many children enrolled through the schools visited our Library and got library cards. A gala Summer Quest celebration was held on September 8<sup>th</sup>. More than 50 participants discussed their favorite reading with Children's Librarian Karen MacPherson and Library Assistant Dave Burbank, shared projects made during their "quest," received free books, and enjoyed refreshments provided by the Friends of the Library. Another "first" was the creation of "Serious Reader" t-shirts, for sale by the Friends at a cost of \$5.00; there are plenty of t-shirts left in all sizes. Proceeds go to the Library through the Friends.
- Library staff members Gene Miller, Dave Burbank, Nic Fontem, and Liz Ferry represented the Library in the seventh annual charity golf tournament in memory of Mike Morrissey; the tournament took place on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Library Director Ellen Arnold-Robbins and Library Assistant Dave Burbank attended the after party and silent auction at Rumors Restaurant. The tournament's organizers estimate that nearly \$6,000 was raised for the Friends of the Library. Library staff received the tournament's "Spirit Award."
- A new Tween Craft Club replaced the Tween Book Club. The club's first meeting was held on September 12<sup>th</sup>. Funded through the Friends of the Library, middle school aged children create crafts using the Library's many craft books.
- In September, Lapsit programs for babies under 12 months and their grownups resumed. The programs are held on Wednesdays.
- The Friends Reading Group met on September 18<sup>th</sup> for a discussion of 2008 Pulitzer Prize winner "The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao" by Junot Diaz. The discussion was enlivened by an impromptu visit by Dominican artist Maria del Riego, who contributed insight into the Dominican temperament and the violence of the Trujillo regime, both of which figure prominently in the novel.

## **Police**

- From 10:00 p.m. on July 18<sup>th</sup> until 2:00 a.m. on July 19<sup>th</sup>, the department conducted a Driving Under the Influence (DUI) detail in the Langley Park Corridor, targeting University Boulevard and New Hampshire Avenue. The detail made numerous traffic stops, resulting in the issuance of 11 State citations, two Equipment Repair Orders, two warnings, and one DUI arrest. The detail continued at various times throughout the quarter.

- Various activities were held on August 5<sup>th</sup> to commemorate National Night Out. Events were held at three locations, including the Takoma/Langley Crossroads, the Essex House, and the Metro Station.
- The Police Department and the Takoma Park Public Safety Citizens Advisory Committee (PSCAC) teamed up to assist citizens in taking preventative measures against crime by disseminating a flyer entitled “Be Safe in Takoma Park,” which made its way to every doorknob in the City. The flyer urged residents to sign up to receive e-mail crime reports and advisories from the Police Department. The PSCAC developed the flyer with input from the department and coordinated its distribution by a team of volunteers, many of whom are neighborhood safety contacts or citizen patrols.
- On September 22<sup>nd</sup>, the City Council authorized execution of a contract for the installation of speed cameras at two locations in the City. The contractor must have the cameras installed within 120 days of execution of the contract.
- In late September, the City Council approved the purchase of an additional canine, which will allow three of the four patrol teams to benefit from the regular use of a police K-9 team.
- CSAFE activities during the quarter included the following:
  - CSAFE staff and Community Organizer Rozanne Look held a meeting on July 1<sup>st</sup> for tenants living on Lockney and Kennewick Avenues. Chief Ronald Ricucci, Public Works Director Daryl Braithwaite, and Affordable Housing Manager Linda Walker were in attendance to answer questions that pertained to their respective departments. Issues discussed included security in the area, street lighting, housing code violations, and the speed bump application process. Scheduled meetings in this area will continue on a monthly basis.
  - On July 21<sup>st</sup>, CSAFE attended the Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board to discuss upcoming CSAFE plans in the Takoma/Langley Crossroads.
  - On July 7<sup>th</sup>, residents from Hillwood Manor attended a community meeting, which was organized by CSAFE and community members. Over 13 residents attended to discuss the upcoming community yard sale, crime-related concerns, and increasing community involvement.
- In late August, Captain Edward Coursey graduated from the International Association of Chiefs of Police Leadership Development class.
- Numerous departmental staff members received training during the quarter. Highlights include the following.
  - On July 10<sup>th</sup>, Detective/Sergeant Richard Poole attended the "Hate/Bias Crimes and Extremist Groups" training in Washington, D.C. This training was sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League and the United States Park Police.
  - On July 16<sup>th</sup>, Detective/Sergeant Poole and Detective/Corporal Andrew attended the "Concealment Techniques Course for Narcotics Supervisors" training in Sykesville, Maryland. This training was hosted by the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commission and the Drug Enforcement Administration. The course covered hidden compartments for currency, introduction to the Headquarters Trap Initiative Program, supervisor concerns regarding undercover counter surveillance, weapons concealment, and other officer safety issues. During the training, the latest methods of operation used by drug organizations, including the latest techniques to avoid police detection, counter surveillance devices, and hidden cameras were also discussed.

- Detective/Sergeant Poole attended Strategic Counter Terrorism Training in late August. The two-day training session was held in Landover, Maryland.
- During the week of September 2<sup>nd</sup>, various staff members attended an in-house training course, "Domestic Violence Lethality Assessment." Victim Witness Coordinator Diana Dean conducted the training.
- On August 26<sup>th</sup>, Accreditation Manager Jack Van Wagenen attended the Chesapeake Region Law Enforcement Accreditation Alliance (CRLEAA) Mock Assessment in Hyattsville. He also attended a meeting of the Alliance in mid-September.
- Detective/Corporal Andrew John was promoted to Detective/Sergeant in July.

### **Public Works**

- Departmental staff provided logistical assistance and support for a number of community events, including the Independence Day parade and fireworks, National Night Out events, the Folk Festival, and the Touch A Truck event.
- Construction activities related to the renovation of the Jackson Boyd playground got underway during the quarter.
- Bike route signs were installed throughout the City.
- As part of the City's efforts to enhance neighborhood commercial areas, new garden beds were created and a bike rack was installed at Erie and Maple Avenues.
- Phase Two of the Carroll Avenue streetscape improvement project got underway
- A Request for Proposal was issued for an evaluation of the cooling system for the original section of the third floor of the municipal building. For unknown reasons, the system does not provide adequate cooling for the occupants of the space. City offices in this area include Human Resources, Finance, Housing and Community Development, Information Systems, and Communications.
- The following permits were issued during the quarter:
  - Dumpster in Right-of-Way = 10
  - Tree Removal Permit = 9
  - Tree Removal Waiver = 55
  - Tree Protection Permit = 6
  - Utility Work in the Right-of-Way = 12
  - Driveway Apron = 1
  - Stormwater Permit =2
- Street-related improvements undertaken during the quarter included the resurfacing of Cleveland Avenue, Darwin Avenue, Baltimore Avenue (New York to Albany), Albany Avenue (Baltimore to Buffalo), and Buffalo Avenue (Takoma to Albany). Sections of sidewalk, curb, and gutter were replaced in various locations.
- Stormwater-related work included system repairs at Albany and Buffalo Avenues. Inlet repairs were completed on Hudson Avenue and Willow Avenue.

- The first steering committee related to the flood mitigation grant was held on August 14<sup>th</sup>. The City was awarded the grant from the Maryland Emergency Management Agency through the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program.

## **Recreation**

- The department partnered with Safe Takoma to offer seven-week Conflict Resolution training for teens enrolled in summer camp programs. Twenty-one (21) youth ranging in age from 11-18 received the training. Trainers led the youth through various scenarios and games to generate discussion on how to use the conflict resolution techniques they were being taught. The youth earned community service learning hours by taking part in this training.
- Departmental staff participated in various school-related events as classes got underway. Staff greeted parents and students and disseminated promotional materials for recreation programs that were available for kids in particular age groups. Recreation Coordinator Melanie Tepsick attended the sixth grade orientation at the Takoma Park Middle School (TPMS). Recreation Manager Carey Antoszewski attended Takoma Park Elementary School's "Back to School Night" on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Interim Teen Manager Alexandria Wilson attended the TPMS sixth grade picnic on August 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Four members of the Recreation Department staff attended the Youth Forum held at the Takoma Park Middle School. Representatives from many organizations were on hand to discuss the issues facing youth in the Takoma Park area and how we might work together to better serve the community. The forum was sponsored by the Takoma Park Community Action Group.
- Representatives from the Recreation Department met with the staff of the Don Bosco Cristo Rey High School in Takoma Park. Recreation Director Debra Haiduven, Assistant Recreation Director Gregory Clark, and Recreation Coordinator Neal Ables were treated to a tour of the facility, learned about the mission of the school, and discussed potential partnership opportunities. Frank Simpson, Athletic Director of the school and volunteer Steve Pacheco of the Prince George's County Police Department discussed ideas with the staff on how we could work together to serve the community at large. More discussions are planned.
- Recreation Director Debra Haiduven and Deputy City Manager Suzanne Ludlow met with Park and Planning staff to discuss possible management options for the skate park, which will be installed in the renovated Takoma Piney Branch Local Park. City representatives did a site visit in August to the Gaithersburg Skate Park in an effort to get more information on operations and maintenance.
- Senior Program Coordinator Paula Lisowski joined residents for the 2008 Annual Independence Holiday Barbecue, which was held on July 2<sup>nd</sup> on the front lawn of Franklin Apartments. Approximately 90 seniors enjoyed the food and festivities. Seniors had the opportunity to obtain copies of the July 2008 Silver Foxes Newsletter and to talk to Ms. Lisowski.
- On August 12<sup>th</sup>, 18 seniors enjoyed the 60th Annual Montgomery County Agricultural Fair in Gaithersburg, Maryland. Delightful weather in the middle of summer enhanced the seniors' enjoyment of the food, special entertainment, and fair activities offered on the fair's Senior Day.
- The 13th Annual Needle Art Show filled the rooms at Montpelier Mansion in Laurel, Maryland with a dazzling variety of stitched art, from needlepoint to ribbon work. Seniors traveled by bus to see the historic mansion, enjoy the beautiful and intricate needle work displays, and vote for the "People's Choice" award.

- Edward P. Wroth, Executive Director for Maryland Senior Olympics, came to the Takoma Park Community Center on July 24<sup>th</sup> at the invitation of the Silver Foxes Senior Club. Mr. Wroth spoke about the 2008 Maryland Senior Olympics and encouraged seniors to participate in the events offered this year.
- The Recreation Department provided transportation to Montgomery County Pool Parties this summer. Low cost, safe, and supervised parties with volleyball, prizes, music, and refreshments were offered at different pools throughout the county each week. Teens had an opportunity to meet and socialize in an environment where they are able to gain knowledge of and develop a level of comfort with people from different cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds.
- Extreme Horizons completed another successful summer. Enrichment and recreational activities were offered for this seven-week program for those in grades 6-8. Activities included the following: rock climbing, whitewater rafting, ropes course, kayaking, water parks, Mystics basketball game, step/tap performance at the Smithsonian Theater, Hagerstown Suns baseball game, bowling, Folk Life Festival, IMAX movie at the planetarium, National Zoo, Kings Dominion, Six Flags, Hershey Park, skating, laser tag, Cascade Lake, Skyline Caverns, and Fun Land Spy Museum. Participants also received a lesson in fencing and learned about SCUBA diving. The camp spearheaded a volunteer project to help the Washington Humane Society.
- The Recreation Department hosted its first Movie Under the Stars on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. Held on Ed Wilhelm Field, the feature presentation was Madagascar. The evening started with a special performance by the Takoma Park Community Band, with the movie beginning just after sundown.
- On August 19th, 17 grandparents and grandkids boarded the Takoma Park bus and headed for the Udvar Hazy Air and Space Museum in Dulles, Virginia. This first ever Recreation Department inter-generational trip was a great success, and the participants are looking forward to more adventures they can share with their grandchildren.
- The fourth annual Touch A Truck event, a collaborative effort of the Recreation and Public Works Departments, took place on September 28<sup>th</sup> at the Public Works facility. Troy Fingal and Jasper Vaughn thrilled approximately 100 truck lovers with demonstrations of several of the Public Works' vehicles. The bobcat and the aerial lift were the most popular demonstrations. Each child who visited the event received a bright yellow construction hat.
- The first Sports Squirts Camp was held this summer at Ed Wilhelm Field. The camp, which had nine participants ranging in ages from three to five, provided an introduction to soccer, floor hockey, lacrosse, T-Ball, and kickball. Departmental staff members Matt Poorman and Melanie Tepsick served as the camp's instructors.
- The New Hampshire Avenue Recreation Center received a facelift, courtesy of Park and Planning which owns the facility. Park and Planning re-paved the parking lot and sidewalk, re-stripped the lines, installed new parking curbs, and spruced up the landscaping.