

TASK FORCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION REPORT
STAFF COMMENTS ON REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

STAFF COMMENTS

Staff comments follow each recommendation.

AREAS OF RECOMMENDATION

The Task Force developed priority recommendations in each of nine areas: City Operations and Programs, Air Quality, Buildings, Climate Change, Energy, Habitat, Stormwater, Transportation, and Waste. A table of recommendations is attached for each of the areas.

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS IN TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

(1) Environmental media area impacted by recommendation:

Air = Air

Bld = buildings

GHG = greenhouse gas mitigation

Hab = habitat

NRG = energy

PH = Public Health Benefit

Res = Resilience for the community

Soc = Social Benefit

Strm = stormwater

Trns = transportation

Wst = waste

All = effects on all environmental media areas.

(2) Graded relative to other recommendations

(3) Geographic impacts can include Ward; City; County; Regional; National; and Global.

(4) Degree of alignment or fit with other County, State or Regional goals/targets/activities.

(5) Short (0-2 years), Medium (2-5 years), or Long-term (5+ years).

CITY OPERATIONS AND PROGRAMS Recommendations	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/ Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
<p>Staffing: Commit sufficient staff, including hiring a Sustainability Coordinator by the end of 2010 to coordinate the City's efforts to reduce GHG emissions, implement the five-year plan, and achieve environmental objectives.</p> <p>HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION</p>	All	High	City	High	Medium	High	Short
<p>The TFEA recognized that funds are not available to create the new position by the end of 2010 and placed it in the 0-2 year time frame. Staff agrees. Given recent layoffs and the wage freeze, it would be difficult to create a new position at this time. Additionally, the Council would need to weigh availability of funds for this position against other priorities. If the position were to be created, the Council would need to clearly define its goals and objectives to ensure that the position description and desired skill set are structured to meet the goals and expectations of the Council and City residents.</p> <p>One option that the Council may wish to explore would be developing a position that would be shared by Takoma Park and one or more local municipalities. The feasibility of this concept would need to be more fully explored.</p> <p>In reviewing the various recommendations of the TFEA, some could not be implemented solely through the hiring of a Sustainability Coordinator. Some recommendations would require outside technical resources. The pursuit of the purchase of streetlights would be an example of this.</p>							
<p>Budget: Commit sufficient budget to implement the recommendations in this plan.</p> <p>HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION</p>	All	High	City	High	Medium	High	Short
<p>A sufficient budget will be determined by the Council's priorities in implementing the recommendations. When the Council defines its list of projects and priorities, staff can propose a budget. Grant funding can be pursued where appropriate.</p>							
<p>Implementation Plan: Develop a plan by end of 2010 to implement each plan recommendation. The plan should identify a timeline for implementation, the person responsible for implementing it, source of funding, and indicators for effectively monitoring and evaluating implementation of the recommendation.</p>	All	Medium	City	Low	High	High	Short
<p>The Council will need to reach consensus on the recommendations to be pursued in order for a sufficient budget to be defined. Development of the plan by the end of the 2010 calendar year is not feasible. Ideally, any plan should be developed in the first quarter of the calendar year to provide for funding in the FY 2012 budget. Staff notes that the first quarter of the calendar year is a time of peak staff workload in preparing the proposed budget for the next fiscal year.</p>							

CITY OPERATIONS AND PROGRAMS Recommendations	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
<p>Training and Education of City Staff. The City shall create a City employee sustainability education program to ensure all City employees have knowledge about relevant best practices in sustainability.</p>	All	Medium	City	Low	High	High	Short
<p>Staff proposes starting with something slightly different than what the TFEA recommended. As envisioned by staff, the Human Resources Office would set up a staff “green team” group that would research and recommend best practices for staff environmental sustainability and reducing the City’s carbon footprint. This would be intended to have non-management staff develop small-scale recommendations to create a “culture of sustainability,” instead of large-scale recommendations such as adding solar panels or boiler efficiency. Some actions the group could take independently, such as creating a monthly e-notice for staff about turning off lights, recycling more, not idling vehicles, etc. Other responsibilities would be to make recommendations to management for implementation on an organization-wide basis (for example, turning off computers at night, use of fair trade coffee and products, local purchasing, increasing recycled content of paper, reduction on reliance of plastic, encouraging use of public transit, etc.). Creation of a staff group that does research, takes some actions, and makes recommendations to management will help lead to staff buy-in.</p>							
<p>Explore new revenue streams for financing sustainability.</p>	All	High	City	Low	High	High	Short
<p>The City does not have legal authority to levy a real estate transfer tax. By law, Maryland municipalities have limited revenue generating options. Obtaining statutory authority would require lobbying for changes to State legislation. The Council and staff currently work with other municipalities through the Maryland Municipal League. A legislative priority for MML is increasing municipal revenues and legislation that would provide for more revenue generating options for municipalities.</p> <p>The Council could make a budget appropriation or devote a percentage of the tax rate for green building/energy efficiency improvements, or increase the stormwater fee for appropriate initiatives. Certain recommendations in the report may be difficult to implement. For example, the establishment of a composting facility that would sell product would require a sizable land parcel.</p>							
<p>Sustainability Website. Design and maintain an attractive, effective sustainability website for the City. The website should facilitate communication between the City and the community, and act as a central sustainability repository.</p>	All	Medium	City	Low	High	High	Short
<p>Use of the existing website (and ultimately the new City website when it is operational), will provide clear indication of the City’s commitment. The City will need to develop a clear and consistent message. The City site can likely include pages that will serve as a clearinghouse for local information, provide information on the City’s sustainability efforts and progress in meeting goals, and links to information on other sites.</p>							

AIR QUALITY Recommendations	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
<p>Prohibition on use of gasoline powered leaf blowers. The City should pass a ban on the use of fossil fuel powered leaf blowers and implement an outreach campaign to educate residents about the pollution caused by small two-stroke engines including edgers, trimmers and chainsaws and fund or coordinate trade-in programs for gas-powered lawnmowers and other equipment. Doing so would reduce ozone pollution. HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION</p>	Air, Habitat, PH	Medium/High	City	Low/Low	High	Exceeds	Short
<p>This has previously been discussed by the Council. As previously presented by staff, there are examples of communities that have successfully limited use of gasoline powered leaf blowers. A new City ordinance would be required if the Council wishes to enact a prohibition or limit on use of gasoline powered leaf blowers. If the Council adopted a ban or a limitation on their use, staff has concerns about enforcement of such a ban. Many residents do yard work on weekends and in the evenings. Enforcement would likely fall to the Police Department. As an alternative to a ban, the Council may wish to establish goals for reduction of use and use persuasion and education efforts to achieve them.</p> <p>Staff has previously provided information on the impact of prohibiting use of gasoline powered leaf blowers by the Public Works Department. The Public Works Department has five leaf blowers. Their primary uses are: clearing leaf debris from City gardens in the fall and spring; clearing grass clippings from the street and sidewalk by the mowing crew in the spring and summer; and clearing dust, wood chips, leaves, or other debris from paved surfaces during specific construction projects or tree removal (often performed by a contractor). The vacuum leaf collection operation does not use leaf blowers for the curbside collection around the City.</p> <p>The number of staff hours engaged in the use of leaf blowers over the course of a year is estimated to be 500 to 750. If the Public Works Department were not able to use leaf blowers for the aforementioned tasks, it would use rakes and tarps for garden leaf debris removal, brooms and grass catchers on the mowers for grass clipping collection, and brooms and street sweepers for surface clearing after construction projects. Use of these alternative means would likely require additional staffing hours to complete the tasks, which are performed by either City staff or temporary laborers. The increase in time required by City staff to complete a task would be absorbed in the work week and would result in a decrease in productivity.</p> <p>The largest impact of a blower ban would occur in garden leaf removal. The use of rakes and tarps would likely double the temporary laborer hours required for this task, resulted in an additional cost of \$3,000 to \$4,000. The extra time required to clean a street or sidewalk after construction would extend the hours of the work crew or contractor. For those projects that are performed by a contractor, the impact would likely be a modest increase in the cost of each project.</p>							
<p>Reduce use of two-cycle and other gasoline-powered engines through education and outreach, and trade-in programs The City should pass a ban on the use of fossil fuel powered</p>	Air, Habitat, PH	Medium/High	City	Low/Low	Medium/High	Exceeds	Implement: Medium Complete: Ongoing

AIR QUALITY Recommendations	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
leaf blowers and implement an outreach campaign to educate residents about the pollution caused by small two-stroke engines including edgers, trimmers and chainsaws and fund or coordinate trade-in programs for gas-powered lawnmowers and other equipment. Doing so would reduce ozone pollution. HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION							
Staff prefers this approach to a prohibition on use. Staffing resources would be needed to develop educational materials and an outreach program. A trade-in program, as was recently done by the State of Maryland, would require funding and staffing to administer. There may be partnership opportunities with COG or other regional entities.							
Enact and enforce strict anti-idling law	Air, PH	Low/Medium	City	Medium/High	High	Exceeds	Short
<p>The Public Works Department has implemented an anti-idling campaign for its staff.</p> <p>For the general public, enforcement of an anti-idling law would fall to the Police Department. Staff suggests that this would be extremely difficult to enforce and could result in a high level of staff resources to address a low level problem. An unattended vehicle left idling is currently a violation of State law, and it is enforced in the City.</p> <p>Staff can work to educate residents about the impact of idling as part of the City's clear and consistent message on sustainability and climate change issues.</p>							
Clearly ban open burning by adopting Montgomery County language	Air, Habitat, PH	Low	City, other jurisdictions	Low	High	Align w/ MoCo	Short
<p>Montgomery County Code Sec. 3-8, Control or prohibition of open fires, allows certain limited open fires (such as with an "outdoor cooking apparatus," campfires, etc.) without prior approval. Other types of open fires (such as agricultural open burning, ceremonial burning, etc.) require an "open burning permit" issued by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and conditions are imposed on such burning permits to prevent air pollution and to protect the health, safety, comfort and property of persons. Permits may not be granted for the burning of leaves, brush, other vegetation or household trash. This Montgomery County law applies in the City of Takoma Park. It is enforced by Montgomery County DEP. The City has not "opted out" of the County's Air Quality Control law. Staff recommends that the City Code be amended to clarify this or to delete the provision in the Code altogether.</p> <p>Education about open burning can be included as part of the City's overall sustainability/environmental message.</p>							

BUILDINGS Recommendations	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/ Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
0.1% excise/sales tax on sale of all real estate in City OR allocation of dedicated percentage from existing property tax devoted exclusively to green building/energy efficiency improvements	GHG, Strm, NRG, Hab	Med	Ward, City, Region	City – Low/ Others - Med	Med	Could establish something starting to be like county Dept of Env., state MEA, or fed EPA.	Implement:short Complete: ongoing

The City does not have legal authority to implement the proposed excise/sales tax. The Council could make a budget appropriation or devote a percentage of the tax rate for green building/energy efficiency improvements. The Council would need to weigh this against other priorities.

City to establish Energy Efficiency Rent Increase Petitions modeled on existing policy, but with shortened cost allocation periods and including energy retrofits Existing city policy already allowing rent increases based on amortized costs of capital improvements to rental units should be amended to allow additional increases in rent for improvements that reduce the carbon footprint of rental units. Additional energy retrofit capital improvements should be allowed in the program and rent increases should be tied to anticipated renter energy savings. HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION	GHG, NRG, Social	High	City	City – Low Property Owners – Med	Med	n/a	Implement:: short Complete: medium
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------	------	------	----------------------------------	-----	-----	---------------------------------------

The current Fair Return Rent Increase petition process considers the amortized cost of all capital improvements. It may be possible to provide incentives to a landlord that incorporates energy efficient features in a rental facility by reducing the amortization period. The City's rents analyst, when contacted, indicated that he was not aware of any other community that provides these types of incentives but noted communities in California, where rent control is in use, have provided incentives to encourage earthquake repairs.

If the proposed improvements were made to a building where the utilities were paid, and continued to be paid by the owner, the improvement costs would be absorbed by the renters through higher rents through the Fair Return Rent Increase petition. If the project included the transfer of utilities to the tenants (i.e., individual metered utilities), the landlord would be required to reduce the rents accordingly since the tenants would then be paying directly for utilities.

BUILDINGS Recommendations	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
<p>Spur homeowner action/investment to undertake home energy audits and retrofits</p>	<p>GHG, NRG, Hab, Social</p>	<p>Med/High</p>	<p>City, Global</p>	<p>Med</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Comple-ments county incentive (\$600 TP plus \$250 MoCo)</p>	<p>Implement: short Complete: short</p>
<p>City media can be used to promote opportunities already available from other sources. The pilot program to provide support to interested homeowners may not be necessary given the existence of other programs and availability of information on savings that can be achieved. The Council could decide to fund an additional incentive to supplement the Montgomery County program.</p>							
<p>Mandate green building program certification (or create our own) for all new buildings and new construction over 500 sq ft. within City limits, and/or promote/distribute city-endorsed green building guidelines.</p>	<p>GHG, Strm, NRG, H</p>	<p>Med</p>	<p>Ward, City, Region</p>	<p>City – Low to Med Home-owner s – Med</p>	<p>Med</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>Implement: short to medium Complete: short to medium</p>
<p>All building activity is regulated by the County. New non-residential or multifamily buildings (or new additions) of 10,000 sq. ft. or more are already required to incorporate LEED features by County law. The TFEA recommendation will affect small projects that might not easily qualify for certification. If endorsed by the Council, action would require a change in the City Code, training and assignment of City staff to enforce the requirements of the City ordinance, and coordination with the County to ensure that required permits were not issued prior to local review of project to determine if it complied with LEED standards. This may be a longer and more expensive process than anticipated by the TFEA.</p> <p>Alternatively, staff could promote/distribute City-endorsed green building guidelines by mailing the guidelines to all applicants for building permits. for properties in Takoma Park. The provided guidelines would be intended to educate and encourage applicants to incorporate green building features into their projects but would have no legal authority. This would add to staff workload and increase postage costs.</p>							
<p>Allow residential & commercial building owners in historic district to make energy efficiency improvements (e.g. window replacements)</p>	<p>GHG, NRG</p>	<p>Med</p>	<p>Ward, City</p>	<p>City – Low, Homeowner - Med</p>	<p>Med</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>Implement: short Complete: short</p>
<p>This proposal would require an amendment to the County Code which regulates the actions of both the Historic Preservation Commission and establishes standards for the renovation, repair and restoration of historic properties. Current legislation does not appear to support the replacement of existing materials (i.e., windows) with more recent models or building materials unless the property owner is able to demonstrate that the feature is beyond repair. There are currently no provisions within the ordinance that support the replacement of historic features for economic or energy efficient reasons. Historic Area Work Permits (HAWP), issued by the County's HPC, are required before a Building Permit can be issued (also regulated by the County).</p>							

BUILDINGS Recommendations	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
Home Energy Loan Program – city provides (or supplements) funding for the un-funded county Home Energy Loan Program (financing 1st for energy efficiency, then renewable energy improvements – available for property owners, puts a low-interest loan as lien on house and paid through property tax bill)	GHG, NRG. Money after 5-15 years	Med	City (and Region, National, Global)	City – Med Investors – Low	Med	Aligned (and currently exceeds) County program	Implement: short Complete: ongoing

The City currently promotes the use of the County’s single family and multi-family low interest loan program, which allows for energy efficient upgrades to properties that house either low or moderate income tenants or are owned by income eligible residents. Additionally, the City dedicated \$300,000 in CDBG funding for multi-family properties for this purpose. Two non-profit housing providers, MHP and Victory Housing, have submitted applications for these funds.

According to the County website, the “Montgomery County Home Energy Loan Program (HELP) is on hold until further notice. This is a result of recent statements made by Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) related to the relationship between loans like those that would be offered under HELP and existing mortgages held by HELP participants. A more detailed explanation of this issue is provided [at the link] below: [<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dectmpl.asp?url=/Content/dep/energy/EnergyLoans.asp>]. Efforts are underway at the federal level to address FHFA’s concerns. Until this situation is resolved, the County will not move forward with HELP.

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development will be rolling out a program of loans and other financing tools targeting single and multi-family residential and commercial buildings to create a positive energy impact. The program will utilize a monitoring component to collect information on energy consumption patterns that will be relayed back to consumers, owners, and occupants. Takoma Park is one of 15 targeted communities.

CLIMATE CHANGE Recommendations	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
<p>Emission Goals: The City should seek to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 10% every five years beginning in 2010 (the same reductions adopted by Montgomery County).</p>	GHG	High	C	Low	High	High	Short
<p>Staff concurs that the City's goals should mirror the County/State/COG goals.</p>							
<p>GHG Inventory and Monitoring Plan: The City should professionalize the preparation of a GHG inventory, and commit to regular updates to monitor City progress. A greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory is needed to test the degree to which the City is meeting its commitments under the 2000 Local Action Plan and the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and because a detailed inventory will allow the City to implement an informed mitigation strategy that reduces emissions from sectors and sources for which the inventory shows the greatest impact. Hundreds of other 'green' communities across America have already institutionalized this action. HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION</p>	GHG	Low (indirect impact)	C	Low	High	High	Short
<p>Staff agrees that this could be best performed by hiring consultants with expertise in this area. Evaluating the relative cost compared with the perceived value may be helpful in determining if and how often such an inventory should occur. Staff will continue to explore options by coordinating with COG on its efforts.</p>							
<p>Community Engagement: The City should launch a campaign to mobilize the community to make changes to reduce individual residents' carbon footprints.</p>	GHG	Medium-High	C	Low	High	N/A	Medium

CLIMATE CHANGE Recommendations	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
<p>The TFEA's idea of a Community Climate Action Committee may be a good way to develop materials, reach out to residents/businesses/institutions, review the GHG inventory, focus community action around climate change, and help the City to develop a clear and coordinated message. Every committee requires some level of staff support which may be difficult to provide given current staffing constraints. Alternatively, the retention of a consultant could be considered. The proposed campaign should include promotion of the use of other modes of transportation – biking, walking, transit, etc.</p>							
<p>Carbon-neutrality in Municipal Operations: The City should achieve carbon neutrality in operations by 2015. This requires cataloging all City non-renewable energy/fuel use and purchasing renewable energy certificates and offsets. By 2020, the City should aim to obtain all of its electricity from local renewable sources and move its vehicle fleet primarily to electricity and non-petroleum fuels.</p>	GHG	Medium	C	Medium	High	N/A	Medium-Long
<p>It is difficult to know without greater research the cost for the purchase of offsets. Rather than the purchase of offsets, the Council may wish to consider the allocation of funds for other purposes, such as direct grants/loans to residents. The City already purchases wind credits equivalent to 100% of our electricity use.</p> <p>Moving the City's fleet, which is largely gasoline fueled, to electric and non-petroleum fuels would require significant resources. This is particularly true for the Police fleet. At the present time, the City has 81 vehicles in its fleet. This number includes eight hybrid vehicles and ten diesel vehicles. All the diesel vehicles use 8/20 mix of biodiesel fuel. The use of alternatively fueled vehicles in police patrol is still largely untested.</p>							

ENERGY Recommendation	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/ Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
<p>NRG: Streetlights – city purchases streetlights (1/2 of city's electricity use) from PEPCO, takes over ownership, maintenance and efficiency upgrades to save on all of the above.</p> <p>The City should finance the acquisition of the City's approximately 1,700 street lights, perhaps through a public-private partnership. City ownership is estimated to save 30% to 50% per year in electricity costs which could be used to finance upgrades in street light energy efficiency, thus reducing energy use and creating additional cost savings.</p> <p>HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION</p>	GHG, NRG, Rev	Med	City, Regional	City – High + Low	Med	Other municipalities in area looking into or have done it (Kensington, Somerset, Mt Rainier)	Implement: short Complete: medium
<p>There are numerous cost and legal issues associated with this idea. This has yet to be tried in Maryland. PEPCO has established the cost criteria to be used in these cases and the expense to the City would be significant. This would require hiring outside legal and subject matter experts to implement or pursue this proposal. Staff recommends researching grant opportunities.</p>							
<p>NRG: Solar Coop – city facilitates installation of solar electric panels on community buildings, at least partially financed by residents. (more cost-effective than individual installation and gives options for those with un-ideal roofs or tree coverage – in support of current policy to not allow tree cutting for solar installation).</p>	GHG, NRG, Rev, (lesser Air, Strm)	Med	City (lesser Regional, National, Global)	City – Low Investors – High	Low	??	Implement: short Complete: short/ ongoing
<p>Staff suggests that it would be more useful to pursue opt-out municipal electrical aggregation. Staff also notes that the City has very minimal roof square footage on City buildings available to make such an effort feasible.</p>							
<p>NRG: Implement household energy use benchmarking to promote conservation and efficiency (via sharing neighborhood or similar housing stock data)</p>	GHG, NRG	Med	City, Global	Low	Med	Yes (?)	Implement: short Complete: short

ENERGY Recommendation	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
<p>This may be feasible if the City uses EnergyStar or other similar programs for benchmark data. However, the time and cost to implement benchmarking may take longer and be higher than anticipated. Staff resources are not presently available to begin this type of program. It may be possible to build on information already being provided to residents by the utility companies.</p>							
<p>Energy Efficiency and Green Power Purchasing: By 2012, the City should devise and coordinate a public/private partnership program to enable shared energy efficiency upgrades via an energy performance contractor. This would include a group-purchasing program to make energy-efficient technologies available to residents and businesses at a discount. It would also include an opt-in, negotiated power purchasing agreement or other arrangement for purchase of renewable energy through a third party supplier, piggy-backing onto the County Clean Rewards Program, or other similar arrangement. By 2012, the City should implement a financing mechanism (e.g. A public/private partnership) that enables cost sharing and discounts on the installation of energy efficiency upgrades via an energy performance contractor. The City should also negotiate a power purchasing agreement for purchase of renewable energy through a third party supplier and county subsidies. We believe this was one of the highest impact climate recommendations in the 2000 Takoma Park Local Action Plan, but we found no evidence that the City took action upon it. HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION</p>	GHG, NRG	High	City	High	High	n/a	Long
<p>Procurement issues would have to be addressed in order to ensure compliance with the City Code. Staff notes that many options are now available from the market for green power. In reading the TFEA report, it is not clear whether the City would provide a subsidy for the purchasing.</p>							
<p>Formation of Municipal (Publicly Owned) Electric Utility: By 2011 the City, with support from consultants and citizens, should determine the feasibility of establishing a publicly-owned electric utility to encourage use of renewable</p>	GHG, NRG	Med	City	Low	High	Medium	Long

ENERGY Recommendation	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/ Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
<p>energy. The City should review various models that exist in other jurisdictions (especially electric cooperatives) and address such issues as capital outlays, local private investment structures, possible sources of external funding and/or equipment donation, estimated returns on investment, implementation/ billing options, funding and production timeline for delivery of power.</p>							
<p>Costly technical assistance would be needed to evaluate the feasibility of this recommendation. In addition, there would be significant ongoing costs. The rate structure put in place would have to take these costs into account.</p>							

HABITAT Recommendation	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
<p>Strengthen tree protection program by completing accurate inventory of trees on both public and private lands; setting City goals for forest cover (>65% for suburban areas, >40% for urbanized areas); strengthening Council oversight using metrics of tree cover over multiple years or decades; shifting code enforcement for vegetation to Housing and Community Development; conducting public education of tree ordinance requirements and benefits of trees; and using “compliance assistance” for minor violations where owner willing to correct.</p>	Hab, GHG, NRG, Strm	High	City/Global	Low	High	Yes	Short
<p>The City has a fairly accurate tree inventory available. The cost to inventory tree canopy on private property would be high and may not be welcomed by property owners.</p> <p>Additional public outreach on the Tree Ordinance and the benefits of trees can be included on the website.</p> <p>The City Arborist is able to, and does, issue warnings for violations. Shifting code enforcement for vegetation to Housing and Community Development would have to be further evaluated. It would negatively affect the Code Enforcement Division’s ability to continue to perform its current duties.</p>							
<p>Increase tree planting by: increasing plantings of additional native trees on public property; improving the discounted tree planting program for private property; offering free or subsidized tree planting on private property; planting native trees in median strips of New Hampshire and University Avenues; and enhancing survivability of giveaway tree seedlings and city supported plantings.</p> <p>The City’s highly successful program of planting native trees on public rights of way and other public property should be continued, with expanded planting sufficient to make New Hampshire Avenue and University Avenue tree-lined boulevards. The City should continue to support and advertise a discounted tree planting program for private property owners, especially encouraging planting in areas that create habitat, reduce runoff or reduce home energy use.</p> <p>HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION</p>	GHG, Strm, Hab	High	City	Medium	High	Yes	Short, med. & long

HABITAT Recommendation	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
<p>The level of tree planting has been related to the availability of funds. Planting on the medians along State roads requires approval of the State Highway Administration. Use of native trees in heavily trafficked areas such as the median strips along New Hampshire Avenue and University Boulevard may need to be revisited as they may not be the most appropriate species due to conditions.</p> <p>The City Attorney has opined that the City may fund or subsidize tree planting on private property as long as the Council finds that maintaining the canopy and promoting the planting and maintenance of healthy trees of desirable species is a public benefit (as it has in the Tree Ordinance).</p>							
<p>Implement Open Space preservation improvements by adopting remaining recommendations of the Reconstituted Open space Committee for implementation; developing and implementing Management Plan for Sligo and Poplar Mills properties; removing non-native invasive plants from all municipal property; and reviving City conservation easement program to enforce existing easements and consider new conservation easements.</p>	<p>Hab, GHG, NRG, Strm</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>City</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Aligned with</p>	<p>Short, implement over long term</p>
<p>The Sligo/Poplar Mill Management Plan should be finalized. Progress has been made. The environmental assessment has been completed, and the first round of invasive removal has been scheduled. The City has increased its efforts to remove invasives from City land overall. The annual budget is \$10,000-\$15,000.</p> <p>From staff's perspective, the City conservation easement program is working.</p>							
<p>Conduct Public Outreach on, for example, the value of trees, tree care and protection, retaining native tree seedlings on site, tree planting activities and plans in Takoma Park, how to reduce lawn area, damage done from driving or parking on lawns, promoting habitat for birds, bees, bats, butterflies, fireflies and other native species, and avoiding pesticides and chemical fertilizer.</p>	<p>Hab, GHG, NRG, Strm</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>City/Global</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Implement: Short</p>
<p>Increased media outreach is possible and educational materials can be provided. The City's limited staffing may make implementation challenging.</p>							

HABITAT Recommendation	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
Promote Community Gardens	GHG, NRG, Strm	Medium	City	Medium	Medium	Aligned with	Medium
<p>In researching additional locations for community gardens, staff has noted that there are limited options. Staff has worked closely with Park and Planning on the Orchard Avenue gardens, setting up the Maple Avenue container garden, and researching additional locations.</p>							
Encourage County to increase deer population control efforts.	Hab	Medium	City/Region	Low/Medium	High	Yes	Implement: Short
<p>The Montgomery County Deer Management Work Group has developed County-wide plans for deer population control. With direction from Council and community support, additional controls or specific types of controls could be requested and lobbied for.</p>							

STORMWATER Recommendation	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/ Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
<p>Increase stormwater fee – to help fund stormwater and runoff projects in the city.</p>	Strm	Low	C	Low	High	n/a	Implement: Short
<p>The Council would need to determine if the proceeds from any increased fee would be allocated to rebate programs for property owners or additional projects. Additional staffing would likely be needed to implement and oversee additional projects.</p>							
<p>New stormwater ordinance – Adopt a new stormwater ordinance that meets or exceeds state requirements</p>	Strm	Medium	C	Medium	High	Exceeds	Medium
<p>The existing ordinance exceeds State requirements – all commercial, institutional and industrial projects are required to get permits. One aspect of this recommendation – to require any residential project that disturbs more than 2,500 square feet to get a permit (current law is set at 5,000 sq ft) – is feasible with existing staff resources.</p>							
<p>Stormwater Retrofits – continue the city’s program of installing stormwater control devices and the like to reduce runoff. The City is already undertaking and should continue innovative projects that reduce stormwater runoff funded with an annual fee charged to residents and other funding. The City should expand this program and focus on reducing runoff from large impervious areas within the City. The City should also establish a list of future retrofit projects, ranked in order of severity of their impact on Sligo Creek and other local waterways. HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION</p>	Strm	Medium	R	High	Medium	Exceeds	Long-term
<p>Staff agrees.</p>							

STORMWATER Recommendation	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
Trees – Promote planting and maintenance of trees for rain and stormwater absorption	GHG, Strm, Hab	Medium	C	Medium	High	Aligned with	Long-term
Staff agrees with this in concept. Staffing resources may be needed.							
Sidewalks – Reduce or ameliorate runoff from new sidewalk construction	Strm, Hab	Low	C	High	High	Aligned with	Long-term
Analysis has shown that run-off from sidewalks is extremely minimal. Current guidelines call for a green strip to be maintained along new sidewalks as right-of-way allows. To enhance permeability, the City plans to install bricks or rubber terrawalk near trees. Use of permeable concrete, which requires excavation of 12 inches below for water retainage, is not recommended as a wholesale measure due to cost and difficulty in finding acceptable areas where that amount of excavation could be done without harming nearby trees.							
Litter – install more recycling containers	Strm, Hab	Low	R	Medium	High	Aligned with	Short
Staff agrees. This is most effective if combined with a community-wide, comprehensive anti-littering campaign with a focus on bus stops and shelters. If endorsed by the Council, this program would require additional resources to implement.							
Litter – support state-wide deposit legislation	Strm, Hab	High	R	Low	Low	Exceeds	Long-term

STORMWATER Recommendation	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
Staff has no comment on this.							
Litter – Enact a Plastic bag tax within the city and/or promote one at the state level.	Strm, Hab	Medium	R	Medium	Medium	Exceeds	Long-term
The Council has endorsed a statewide tax or ban. While the City has the authority to ban retail stores from using disposable plastic bags, the City does not have the legal authority to enact a plastic bag tax.							
Lawns – restrict the use of herbicides within the city	Strm, Hab	Medium	R	Medium	Low	Exceeds	Long-term
<p>Legal research would be needed to determine whether the City can restrict such use.</p> <p>The City has found it very effective to use herbicides on certain invasive species. The proposed restriction would negatively impact staff's ability to control invasives on public property.</p>							
Lawns – Prohibit or reduce the use of chemical fertilizers in the city.	Strm, Hab	Medium	R	Medium	Low	Exceeds	Long-term
The legality of such a prohibition would need to be researched.							

STORMWATER Recommendation	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/ Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
Pet Waste – Install signage regarding removal of pet waste from public property	Strm, Hab	Low	C	Low	High	Aligned with	Short
Staff supports this proposal in concept but recommends a proper balance between installing these signs and limiting the overall number of signs in any one area (sign pollution).							
Pet Waste – Install Bag stations for pet waste around the city	Strm Hab	Low	C	Medium High Aligned with Short	High	Aligned with	Short
There is a bag station in Toatley Fraser Park because signage was not sufficient at that location and the problem of pet waste was severe. There is not a clear sense among staff that this is an issue elsewhere. The proposal could be implemented but there will be a cost for the stations and supplies of bags, as well as staff time to maintain the stations.							

TRANSPORTATION Recommendation	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
Transportation: Improve bicycling accessibility through traffic improvements	GHG, Air, NRG, Soc	Med	Ward, City, County	Med / Med (state)	High	Yes	Implement: short Complete: medium
The City has installed bike sharrows and bike route signs at various locations. Additional improvements would require staffing resources.							
Transportation: Improve pedestrian accessibility through sidewalks, signals, and other improvements	GHG, Air, NRG, Soc	Med	Ward, City	High / High	Med	Yes	Implement: short Complete: long
Significant ADA projects and sidewalk projects are underway.							
Transportation: Adopt Charette traffic flow design for Takoma Junction. Traffic on City and State roads significantly reduces the quality of life in our community and contributes greenhouse gas pollution, ozone, and particulate emissions that affect resident health. We recommend that the City and State begin implementation of the 2009 'charrette' traffic flow recommendations to construct a roundabout in Takoma Junction. HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION	GHG, Air, NRG, Soc	Med	Ward, City, County	Med / High (state)	High	Yes	Implement: medium Complete: medium
The Takoma Junction Task Force was just appointed to consider this and other Takoma Junction issues. The charette design would need additional community input since the recommendations were controversial and opposed by some segments of the community. Since this proposal would involve State roads, the State Highway Administration would be responsible for approving any proposals.							

TRANSPORTATION Recommendation	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
<p>Transportation: Work with SHA to recalibrate stop lights to keep traffic flowing. There should be a study of all of these lights.</p> <p>The State should adjust traffic light timing in ways that would reduce traffic delays on roads through the City.</p> <p>HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION</p>	AQ, PH	Medium	City, County, Regional	Medium/High (?)	Low/Medium	n/a	Imp: Medium/ Long Complete: Long

This has been done periodically with little improvement, in part due to the need to balance traffic flow with safe pedestrian crossing times. Additional consultation with SHA would be needed.

WASTE Recommendation	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
Create and distribute magnets identifying recyclables	Wst, Public Education (PE)	Med	City	Low (city)	High	?	Implement: short Complete: short
Funding would be needed to design, produce, and deliver the magnets.							
Staff proposes that the Council pursue adoption of County law for commercial properties, authorizing the County to enforce commercial recycling requirements.							
Pursue a public-private partnership for household organic waste collection The City should begin collection and composting all organic household waste and evaluate how the sale of compost could be used to create revenue for the City. HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION	Wst	High	City	High?	Med	?	Implement: short Complete: medium
This is a huge project. Localities where this has been implemented are still learning how to do it effectively. In addition to requiring a facility to take organic waste for processing, a collection program would have to be designed (collection vehicle, waste containers). There would be added transportation costs for collection and disposal. Without an available processing facility, this is not yet feasible. Staff recommends that this recommendation be deferred until processing options become available.							
Implement a fee for waste disposal called “rewards for recycling” based upon amount of waste disposed. Implementation simplified through distribution of various sizes of standardized waste cans. The City should establish a “rewards for recycling” program such as that in use in Tacoma, Washington, by implementing a charge for garbage disposal while providing an extensive free recycling program. Currently Takoma Park residents can throw away as much trash as they want at no charge. There is no incentive to minimize waste generation, and no incentive other than a moral one to recycle. Implementing a simple volume-based system is the easiest way to incentivize recycling, minimize waste, and raise money for the Takoma Park waste management program. HIGH PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION	Wst	Med	Ward, City, County	Med / Low	High	?	Implement: short Complete: short

WASTE Recommendation	Type of Benefit ¹	Degree of Impact ²	Geographic Impact ³	Costs (City/Others) ²	Feasibility ²	Fit with Other Applicable Plans ⁴	Time Frame ⁵
<p>This proposal has been considered by past City Councils. At the time, there was concern about the cost to set up the program, ongoing costs, and the resulting impact of requiring larger households to pay more for collection. Should the current Council wish to re-visit the issue, staff recommends exploration of establishing a solid waste fee to include collection of trash, recycling and yard waste, similar to the stormwater fee. Technical support would likely be required to develop the program.</p>							
<p>Polystyrene Ban – no City funds used to purchase polystyrene containers</p>	<p>Wst</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>City</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>Implement: short Complete: short</p>
<p>This was adopted by the Council and took effect on September 1, 2010.</p>							