Town of University Park, Maryland

Mayor and Council Strategic Planning Retreat Report

November 2016

Town of University Park
Strategic Planning Framework

Vision

University Park is inclusive and innovative, fostering a strong sense of community within a vibrant and growing urban area. The Town values community involvement, fiscal sustainability, and environmental stewardship. It is a safe, tree-lined, walkable residential community that provides excellent services to residents. University Park is well-connected to schools, local businesses, employment centers, cultural amenities, transportation facilities, the Nation's Capital, and the University of Maryland.

Critical Success Factors & Council Goals

- High Quality Leadership
  - Hire Town Manager
  - Inspire residents to get involved

- Physical Community Space
  - Future Town Hall

- Excellent Public Services
  - Maintain Tree Canopy
  - Town Parks Plan
    - Queens Chapel Tennis Courts
    - Discuss replacing Wells Parkway tennis court with a playground
    - Develop a plan for town fields
    - Determine how to manage parks/fields

- Strong Community Partnerships
  - Improve transparency and communications, maximizing interface of website

- Fiscally Responsible

- Intergovernmental Influence
  - Establish guiding principles for future development (surrounding areas)

- Safe Connections
  - Paths across major roadways/coordinate with State Highway Administration (SHA)
  - Bikeway grants

- Desirable Housing Stock
  - Strong Code Enforcement

The Town of University Park Mayor and Council met at the Friends Community School November 18 and 19, 2016 to participate in a strategic planning retreat. In addition to the Mayor and Councilmembers, the Town Clerk, Treasurer, Police Chief, and Public Works Director participated in the retreat. The retreat was facilitated by Catherine Tuck Parrish from The Novak Consulting Group.

Day One – Friday, November 18, 2016

Welcome and Introductions
The retreat began with several introductory comments by the Mayor and the facilitator. The participants agreed to adhere to the following norms throughout the retreat:
- Listen with respect
- Let others finish before you start talking
- Be attentive to the speaker
- Disagree agreeably
- Be bold
- Be positive and realistic
- Be candid and honest
- Be patient and respectful
- Be engaged and fully present
- Strive for consensus
- Look for opportunities to agree

Each participant introduced themselves and shared their expectations for the retreat.
- Collective vision for the community and neighbors – be proactive
- Help define the spirit behind what we do the why
- Look within parameters of town and take advantage of educational level in town
- Come away energized
- Break from macro – 2-year roadmap, 10-year vision
- Learn and come away with something new
- Clear direction for staff from the Mayor and Council
- Everyone think for the whole town – create a Council vision
- Focus on longer term/multi-year game changers

"This I Believe..."
To develop an understanding of the various perspectives of individual members of the Mayor and Council, each was invited to participate in the "This I Believe" exercise, loosely based on the essay format made popular on National Public Radio. The Mayor and each Councilmember were given five to seven minutes to share "what they believe" about the future of the Town.

Councilmember Linda Verrill –believes in helping others, being productive and positive, and having fun. She believes in the importance of inclusiveness, freedom, truth, honor, fiscal responsibility, and that it is important to have a shared vision and goals.

Councilmember Brad Hess –believes the quote, "when two people agree, one is unnecessary." He believes representative government is important and it is the Council's job to listen, make decisions, and build on previous Councils' cooperation.

Councilmember Jim Gekas –believes that projects should take no more than 10 years – that's the limit – too many dynamic changes can take place within that time frame. He also believes that the Town should take full advantage of its highly educated and talented residents.

Councilmember David Caskey –has lived in a lot of different places where you know your neighbors, don't know neighbors, fear your neighbor, and believes that University Park is the most pleasant place he's lived. The Town is safe and secure and has an active music program – it's like living in a place that is literally like a park, where kids can play safely outside, walk home from school, and residents can feel included. Wants the community to stay like this, but it can't happen by accident. Employees are vital; they must be appreciated, compensated and treated fairly.

Councilmember Joe Thompson –believes that University Park is an oasis of calm surrounded by accessible and walkable amenities near DC and a world class university. The Town almost has it all, but could do more to improve the quality of life for residents and neighbors in surrounding communities and to increase property values.

Councilmember Michael Cron –believes that University Park is a wonderful town and enjoys being on the Council. He believes that we all want to make the town better, but we don't always agree on the same way to do it. He also believes in the ability to agree to disagree; even when the Council disagrees, they can talk to one another after the meeting and approach a situation differently. He believes the Town Council are public servants not politicians.

Councilmember Roy Alvarez –believes that some people are thinkers with ideas while others are functional and can make things happen. He believes he is more of a functional person, rather than an idea person. He likes to listen to ideas and help in implementing.

Mayor Len Carey –believes that the Council is better together, rather than as individuals. The very best things are what the Council does together, when an idea is catalyzed and acted upon. He believes that it is not just what the Council does but how. He believes that the Council needs to continue to do things that build a sense of community and brings the community together, rather than divide it.

Staff was asked if they heard anything they didn't already know or that surprised them.
- More detail than I have heard before.
- I've heard a lot of the same comments, but what is unique about University Park is that the elected officials really care about the community.
- The Council and staff can discuss things and not always agree, but can walk away and still be friends. It's not always the case with other Councils/communities.
- The Mayor and Council truly have the public's interest in mind and the programs that are best for the community.
- The Council can put their personal interests aside.
- Unique and refreshing.

The group was asked what common themes came up during the exercise.

- Interest as a group in being trendsetters because the Town is primarily residential they have the ability and time to look at higher level issues.
- People who run for office are very dedicated.
- How we communicate with the outside community, as well as, internally is very important.
- One common thread is appreciation for the employees that work for the Town. It is important for our employees and managers to be good people. We need to treat people fairly. One divisive issue in the community in the past was employee compensation (pension).
- Being fiscally sound and fiscally smart is important. We need to continue to make sound and smart fiscal decisions since the Town does not have a commercial base and relies solely on property and income tax.
- The Council is very professional.
- Most everything shared was positive and forward looking, but informed by the past.
- No one mentioned the word Cafritz.
- Longevity – University Park has loyal and long-term employees. Building on what the Councils have done in the past shows the level of cooperation in the Town.
- Prince Georges County's history is inspiring.
- The only constant is change. We've changed a great deal in the past 5 years. We see it when we look at the increasing number of children/families in town. We are much more diverse, younger, LGBT community and we are increasingly changing.
- We are surrounded by density with increased commercial development around us. University Park is a suburban oasis built out as an automobile suburb, but working on bicycle and pedestrian access.
- Incredibly divisive issues have happened in the community, but ended up bringing the Town together. There are always three sides to every issue.

Sharing a Common History

The facilitator explained that it's important as the Council moves forward that they understand and recognize the past – to remember and learn. The group was asked to provide an overview of University Park's history. Specifically, they were asked what events, people, and actions have helped shaped the Town of University Park.

The Town of University Park Shared History

	Before 1976	1977-1986	1987-1996	1997-2006	2007-Present
People	• Queen Elizabeth came to town • Historian and UMD professor Dr. Gordon Prange lived in town	• Parris Glendening was County Executive • Ruth Lutwick became first female mayor • Len Bias (UM basketball player) died • Coach Morgan Wooten moved to town • Jim Henson moved out of town	• Town had a divisive Police Chief – officer suicide	• Mayor John Brunner • September 11 - Five residents died on one of the planes, including a family of four. Town held memorials, pulled together – lots of strong emotions	• Mayor John Rogard-Tabori
Actions	• 1936 – Town incorporated with a budget of $4,000 for waste removal and street maintenance • 1954 – Riverdale Presbyterian Church was built • 1960s – Public Works Hall Dynasty • 1964 – Police Department established • Deacon Cemetery • Bradford pears planted in town • Tree canopy developed – Elm trees	• 1982 – Town Hall building was acquired; was previously a commune • 1986 – Queens Chapel Road was purchased and closed	• Queens Chapel Road was still a big issue • Began developing Prince Georges Plaza • Established the Transit District Overlay Zone (TDOZ)	• Maintenance of town field –town started permitting for use of the field as well as seeding and maintaining it	• 2010 – Established Town Employee Pension Program. Town floated a bond to buy into the state retirement system issue was very divisive, but helped create consistency with staff • Continuity of town leadership/staff – good team of people who helped deal with change in a constructive way • Town focused on sustainability and green issues – composting, stream committee, tree committee • Increase in dual income families – changed town character during the day and after work – less people in town during work hours • Mayor's term limits changed from two

					three-year terms to two four-year terms
Events	• 1972 – Azalea Classic started	• 1983 – Redskins won their first Super Bowl		• Bridge on Tennyson collapsed. It took 2 or 3 years to rebuild • Issue in town of not wanting those outside the community to use the park; the Town was sued and lost	• Renaissance of civic organizations • Decade was marked by incredible dense development which changed the character of the community • Cafritz development • Last Mayfair was held in 2007 – no longer a core to plan the event

Update on Current Priorities

As a component of the Shared History discussion, the Mayor provided the group with an overview and update on their current priorities. Last year the Mayor and Council identified nine priorities and/or initiatives.

- Improving Transparency and Access
  - Continuing to work on this – very close to having an RFP for website development
  - Working on streaming council meetings and sharing documents online
- Branding
  - Reaching out to new residents
  - Creating identity signage
  - Utilizing a communications intern
  - The Council and Staff are working on remembering to refer to Route 1 as Baltimore Avenue
  - Made changes to permitting process
- Code Enforcement
  - Changed to be proactive; officer is no longer restricted to just responding to complaints
- Transportation
  - Working on trying to make sure nearby transportation projects are progressing
  - University Park asked the county to fund a transportation expert/consultant who will be working with municipalities to study transportation projects
- Stream
  - Still working on the funding of the stream and associated initiatives
- Veterans Memorial
  - Has been completed, but need to finish signage and landscaping
- University Park Elementary School – Shared Community Space
  - Working on getting school improved and have had conversations with the School Board
- Town Manager
  - The Council hasn't had much discussion and/or conversations regarding a Town Manager.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges

The group was asked to consider community strengths and weaknesses as well as organizational opportunities and challenges. The following lists were part of a brainstorming exercise and are not ranked by priority.

Lists are not ranked by priority

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Available outdoor public spaces • Trees • High inclusion rate (inclusive community) • Finances, conservative fiscal approach, financially solid • Police Department • Continuity of staff/great level of staff • Responsiveness • Embrace Change • Love of the town – community loves the town • Geographic proximity to UMD, metro and other desirable destinations • Confined space – tight, contiguous environment (bounded by definite boundaries) • Public transportation • Green leaders • Oasis with lots of amenities nearby • Well educated residents • Leadership • Shared commitment from community, elected officials and staff • Shared values • Capable and honest staff • Volunteers – dedicated Committees • People/institutional knowledge • Perimeter road brings easy access • Broad Civic Involvement • Term Limits • 100% residential – no businesses	• Mayor and Council leadership is entirely dependent on volunteers willing to serve. Mayor works 40-hours a week for little pay • County Planning staff (waste/dependent) • Limited manpower within the Town • Facilities – Town Hall/ADA accessible • Perimeter roads • Limited public indoor space • Crowded Town Hall • High tax rates/limit on revenues • No commercial properties • Town Attorney may be overworked • Responsiveness (too responsive at times) • Prince Georges County • Prince George's County Public Schools • Small size means less capacity to take on more projects • Town Council meetings are held in elementary school building • Often not regarded well by other communities • External pressures • Budget based solely on private tax • Little control over nearby commercial development • Lack of resident buy-in. Property owners on the perimeter road are not well integrated into the community

Lists are not ranked by priority

Opportunities	Challenges
• Development should utilize more mass transit • Buy local • Build a walkable, bikeable environment • Hire a town manager • Park improvements • Renovate Town Hall • Possibly co-locate police, public meeting space, and elementary school • State and County Grants • Leverage residents' talent • Take advantage of regional amenities • Purple line and public transportation • Optimize use of the Town shuttle bus • Social activities • Improve the condition of perimeter properties • Continued growth in Prince Georges leads to better schools • Increase in property values – increase in taxes • Police and public spaces • Move from a commuter community to a walkable community • Set a good example with sustainability initiatives • Growing commerce nearby • Increased inter-generational networking – aging in place – take advantage of the age diversity and increase interaction • Re-establish relationship with church in the center of town	• Creeping degradation of quality of life – ugly remodeling, leaf blowers, noise • Safety and development around UP • Density and its impact • Perimeter around the community – decline of property • Effective county engagement • Traffic • Adapting the town bus system route when the Purple Line is built • Sustaining improvements fiscally – not enough money to do everything • Loss of mature tree canopy/maintenance • Decline of education system/school • Increased property taxes to address stresses • Building relationship with other communities • Socio-economic status divide • Loss of institutional knowledge due to retirements • County rezoning • Security system for town hall • Town meeting space for community • Town administration

Defining Our Legacy

The group was asked how they wanted to define their legacy and how they wanted the next decade to be remembered or characterized in University Park.

- Every home occupied by its owner
- Availability of affordable housing – want people who teach in schools or work for the town to be able to live here
- Safe place to live (low crime, traffic safety) with continued emphasis on community policing
- Continue transparency efforts
- Redevelopment of the perimeter properties
- Improve the physical presence of the school
- Develop a plan of how to co-locate police, public meeting space and the elementary school, and encourage the county to invest there
- Town has consistent lens for review of all developments; 5-6 criteria, which can be applied to all developments
- Provide walkable/bikeable ways in town – design town
- Do more to make the community walkable and bikeable
- Better job reaching out to the boundary residents – first impression of the community
- Develop sustainable efforts and programs to attract residents
- Establish Town Manager system
- Establish community meeting space
- Commitment to tree canopy
- Make the community better. The park is the core of the town and we should continue to maintain it. Make it better, stronger and faster
- Queens Chapel Road development – more sustainable
- Become a small, progressive community where we can test new practices and programs, and become a resource for surrounding communities
- Look for ways to do charging stations for electric cars
- All our residents pay taxes. We could leverage the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPP) monies for parks, community gardens, bike paths, etc.
- Revitalize the park to include elimination of the 44th Avenue Bridge or reconstruct pedestrian bridge
- Renovation or elimination of the tennis courts and construct a new playground
- Retain town amenities
- Retain, engage, and connect – retain University Park as a residential oasis within walking distance of places we want to go. Find ways to effectively engage community residents and nearby communities. Connect – find ways to connect the perimeter areas to the rest of the community. Pay more attention to and develop safe crossings and connections along the perimeter roads.
- Develop an Adelphi Road ramp by replacing the stairs with a ramp to make it more accessible
- Look at ways to consolidate facilities
- If we revitalize or develop new facilities/amenities, it may create a need for more staffing and change how we do business.
- Ensure that we have the skill set and staff to maintain new initiatives

Day Two – Saturday, November 19, 2016

Welcome
The facilitator opened Day Two of the retreat and reviewed the agenda for the day. Participants were asked to reflect on Day One and share what they thought went well and what could have gone better.

What went well?
- Everyone appeared to be forthcoming – high participation
- Generated a lot of ideas
- Listening to one another
- Food was good
- Respectful

What could have been better?
- There were a lot of sidebar conversations and made it hard to hear

Our Vision for University Park
The facilitator provided participants a draft Vision Statement and handout related to the elements of a strategic plan. It was explained that a Vision Statement is aspirational and is a description of the desired future, written in the present tense.

The draft Vision was developed based on key phrases and words used during the "I Believe" and "Legacy" discussions from Day One.

Draft Vision
The Town of University Park is a safe residential oasis that provides high-quality services to its residents with bikeable, walkable connections to cultural amenities, transportation facilities, our Nation's Capital, and the world class University of Maryland. The Town has retained its identity of inclusion, innovation, and transparency within a vibrant and growing urban area. The Town values community engagement, fiscal sustainability and environmental stewardship.

The group was asked to respond to the draft Vision and share their thoughts. Throughout the retreat participants had the opportunity to edit, change and craft a final Vision Statement.

Final Vision
University Park is inclusive and innovative, fostering a strong sense of community within a vibrant and growing urban area. The Town values community involvement, fiscal sustainability, and environmental stewardship. It is a safe, tree-lined, walkable residential community that provides excellent services to residents. University Park is well-connected to schools, local businesses, employment centers, cultural amenities, transportation facilities, the Nation's Capital, and the University of Maryland.

Critical Success Factors

A "Trendbender" diagram was presented, which illustrates the concept that critical success factors influence the development of a community's quality of life. The Councilmembers were asked to rate the current quality of life in University Park on a scale of 0% – 100%.

The Council agreed that a starting point of 80-95% was appropriate. The Council articulated what would happen to their vision if they did nothing and provided no leadership: the Town's progress would stall and decline. They also identified what would happen if they remained focused on their vision: the Town would move closer to the vision over time. The Trendbender diagram is reproduced below for reference.
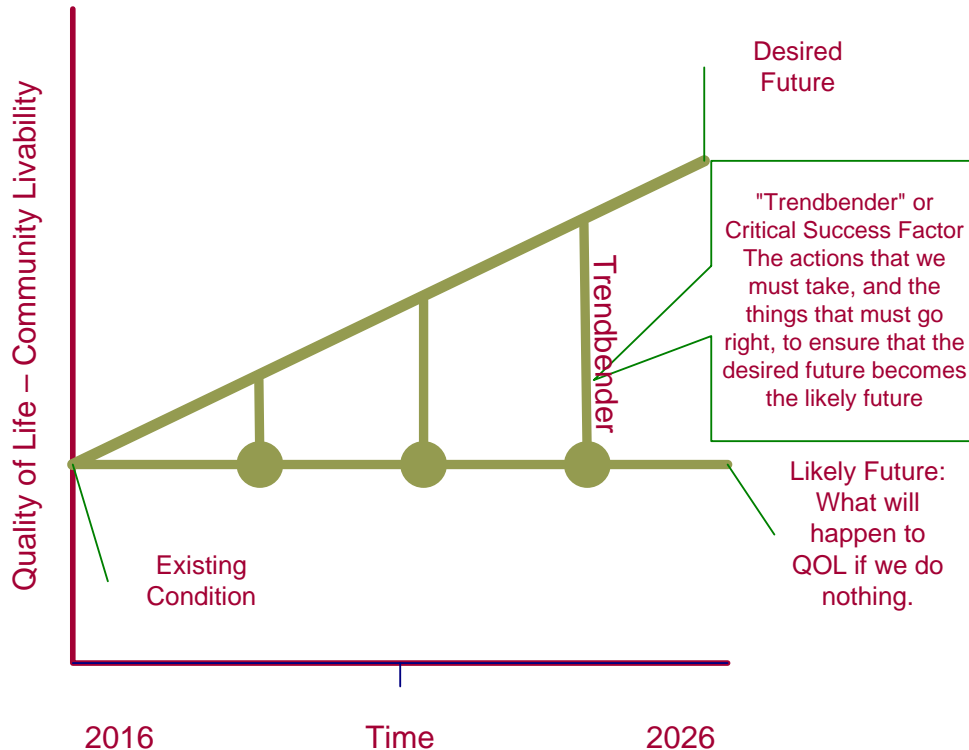
The group identified critical success factors, those things that must go well to bend the trend, or improve the quality of life, in the desired direction.

What must go well and/or will impact the Quality of Life in University Park:
- Traffic mitigation
- Cut through traffic
- Community space
- Basic services – *have to keep on keeping on*
- Lack of office space
- Leadership/Town management
- Improve the physical environment and quality education of the school
- Stormwater management
- Influence of development around University Park
- Support of civic activities

- Baltimore Avenue is terrible to walk or bike on. If we are going to be connected, then the State Highway Administration (SHA) must redesign how the traffic interacts with bikers and walkers. How does University Park influence the decision?
- Protect the tree canopy
- Place where people can afford to live – housing stock
- Can't allow ourselves to get taxed to death – fiscal responsibility

Based on the brainstormed ideas and input from the participants, the following draft Critical Success Factors were developed.

- High Quality Leadership
- Physical Community Space
- Excellent Public Services
- Strong Community Partnerships
- Fiscally Responsible Government
- Intergovernmental Influence
- Safe Connectors
- Desirable Housing Stock

Brainstorming Potential Initiatives

The Council had the opportunity to develop initiatives and ideas to support each of the Critical Success Factors. Together the Mayor and Council developed forty-five individual initiatives; then each Councilmember was asked to vote for their top initiatives (each Councilmember had 15 possible votes). The chart below shows each initiative and the associated votes.

Critical Success Factor	Potential Initiative
High Quality Leadership	- Hire a Town Manager (6) - Inspire future leadership/recruit residents to leadership (5) - Encourage and support Mayor/hybrid manager & strong Mayor (3) - Plan for transitions and institutional knowledge (1)
Physical Community Space	- Town Hall addition/expand Town Hall/demolish Town Hall and build a combination community center and town offices (5) - Replace 44th St. Bridge and replace with pedestrian bridge (3) - Dog park (3) - Potential purchase of problem property (2) - Amenities for neighborhoods – playground/tennis courts (2) - Dual use or co-located space/negotiate community/meeting space use (2) - Improvements to website (2) - Stormwater best management practices (1 – existing initiative) - Queen Chapel Tennis Court renovation (2 – existing initiative) - Use library for Council (1) - Addition and upgrade services of Town Hall - Website - Discuss putting limitations on gas powered leaf blowers

Critical Success Factor	Potential Initiative
Excellent Public Services	• Maintain public and private tree canopy (4) • How to manage and maintain town fields/resolve town field degradation issue (4) • Redesign permit process – create a process that better assists with determination (2) • Recycle hazardous waste (stuff in barn) (2) • Move or create an entryway to Town Hall – to be more attractive and welcoming (1) • Stormwater management • Revise how all communication and documentations are placed on the web • Native plants
Strong Community Partnerships	• Improve transparency and communications by maximizing interface of website (4) • Website (2 – existing initiative) • Increase diversity of Council (1) • Proclamation that states the Town will not tolerate prejudice or reduction in civil liberties • Veteran's Memorial (existing initiative) • New resident welcome package (existing initiative) • Branding & Signage (existing initiative)
Fiscally Responsible Government	• Move trash pickup to once a week (3)
Intergovernmental Influence	• Establish guiding principles and vision for surrounding development (6) • Enable the Mayor to spend more time on intergovernmental issues by having a Town Manager (1)
Safe Connections	• Establish safe crossing of perimeter roadways by working with State Highway Administration (SHA) (5) • Bikeways grant (2 – existing initiative) • Connectors/trails from neighborhoods (College Heights) to University (2) • Discourage cut through traffic (2) • Widening sidewalks along Route 1 (1) • Refinish Queens Chapel Road (1) • Park path at Adelphi – replace stairs with ramp (1) • Ensure Chapel Hill Road is wide enough for safety vehicles • Foster better relationship with state highway department
Desirable Housing Stock	• Step up code enforcement (6 – existing initiative) • Update Housing Code (2) • Buy and/or encourage the purchase of properties along Perimeter Road (1) • Architecture Review Board • Put powerlines underground

Mayor and Council Goals

Those initiatives that received four or more votes were identified as Mayor and Council goals. The following goals were identified:

- High Quality Leadership
  - Hire Town Manager
  - Inspire residents to get involved
- Physical Community Space
  - Future Town Hall
- Excellent Public Services
  - Maintain tree canopy
  - Town parks plan
    - Queens Chapel tennis courts
    - Replace tennis courts with playgrounds
    - Develop a plan for town fields
    - Determine how to manage parks/fields
- Strong Community Partnerships
  - Improve transparency and communications, maximizing interface of website
- Fiscally Responsible
- Intergovernmental Influence
  - Establish guiding principles for future development (surrounding areas)
- Safe Connections
  - Paths across major roadways/coordinate with SHA
  - Bikeway grants
- Desirable Housing Stock
  - Strong code enforcement

In addition to the new initiatives, participants were asked to review the Mayor and Council's existing and ongoing initiatives and categorize them as ongoing, completed or incorporate them into the new Critical Success Factors and/or initiatives.

Current Council Priorities

- Stormwater best practices –ongoing
- Playground –incorporate into Parks Plan
- Tennis Courts – incorporate into Parks Plan
- Veterans Memorial – mostly completed
- Branding & Signage – mostly completed
- Welcome packet –ongoing
- Bikeway grants – ongoing

Refining Mayor and Council Goals

The Mayor and Council spent time further refining their top goals. They defined each initiative and articulated the problem they were trying to solve or the opportunity they were trying to seize, what success would look like, and identified a responsible party.

High Quality Leadership
Elected officials and staff having a shared vision and being credible, committed, and hardworking as well as responsive and accessible.

High Quality Leadership – Hire a Town Manager
What is the problem and/or opportunity?
- Currently, the Mayor's position is a full-time job.
- Only a few residents can afford to run (financial and time constraints).
- Continuity of leadership.

What does success look like?
- Having a Town Manager/seamless town management.
- The Mayor can be less than full-time.
- Allows the Mayor to have the opportunity and time for an effective and external presence.

Who is the responsible party?
- Mayor and Council

High Quality Leadership – Recruit & Inspire Community Leaders
What is the problem and/or opportunity?
- There is not a long line of potential leaders. Incivility keeps people away.

What does success look like?
- Seamless succession of leadership. People available to fill positions.

Who is the responsible party?
- Mayor and Council

Physical Community Space
Adequate community space that meets the needs of the organization as well as its residents.

Physical Community Space – Limited Town Hall Space
What is the problem and/or opportunity?
- There is limited workspace for staff.
- Lack of public meeting space controlled by town.
- Expense and inconvenience of remote garage.
- Storage for police/public works/Citizen Emergency Responsive Team (CERT).

What does success look like?
- Development of a single facility in town.
- The Town currently pays $45,000 a year for rent (storage space); these funds could be saved or used for new space.
- Explore purchasing adjacent structure(s) along Baltimore Avenue to make room for a Public Works facility.

Who is the responsible party?
- Council Committee on Public Facilities and Services
- Public Facilities Committee

Excellent Public Services
Provide residents with the services and benefits that meet their needs and improve their quality of life.

Excellent Public Services - Tree Canopy
What is the problem and/or opportunity?
- The Town's tree canopy is thinning out due to multiple stressors (Pepco, age, preference, drought).

What does success look like?
- Having the right trees in the right place.
- Having enough tree cover to reduce heat, noise, and improve the air quality.
- Educate residents regarding the benefits of trees in their yards.
- Emphasis placed on large canopy trees.

Who is the responsible party?
- Trees, Parks, and the Environment Committee
- Public Works

Excellent Public Services – Town Park
What is the problem and/or opportunity?
- Competing uses for Town fields/parks.
- Queens Chapel Road tennis courts are falling apart.
- Town field is torn up.

What does success look like?
- Development of a Parks Management Plan which identifies the right use and the right place.
- Repair and/or remove playgrounds.
- Develop a use permit process for the fields/parks.

Who is the responsible party?
- Public Facilities Committee
- Council
- Public Works

Strong Community Partnerships
Develop and maintain strong community partnerships and relationships with local jurisdictions and our residents.

Strong Community Partnerships – Improve Transparency and Communications, while Maximizing Website Interface
What is the problem and/or opportunity?
- Decreasing trust in government at all levels, including local government.
- Town website is more static than dynamic and difficult to navigate.

What does success look like?
- Website that incorporates all the Town's current information.
- Website that is easy to navigate and residents can easily find information.
- The website is viewed as trusted source of information for residents.

Who is the responsible party?
- Mayor and Council
- Staff

Intergovernmental Influence
Proactively work with other governmental entities to identify shared interests and influence outcomes that are in the best interest of the community.

Intergovernmental Influence – Development Guiding Principles
What is the problem and/or opportunity?
- Town is reactive not proactive.
- Ad-hoc response to development.
- Town has a negative, not positive vision.

What does success look like?
- Develop a Positive Active Policy Document with 3-5 "lenses" or key priorities for the Town.
- Document would explain what the Town wants to see, versus what it doesn't want to see.
- Document would be shared with and understood by surrounding jurisdictions and the County.

Who is the responsible party?
- Development Overview Committee
- Mayor and Council

Safe Connections
Establish safe transportation access and facilities for residents to access and commute to other communities.

Safe Connections – Paths across major roadways/coordinate with SHA
What is the problem and/or opportunity?
- It is dangerous crossing perimeter roads.
- Current transportation system discourages biking and walking.
- It is hard to connect from/to neighboring areas.

What does success look like?
- More people on the street.
- More University Park use of local resources.
- Fewer car trips and more crosstown bike paths, bike share stations, and sharrows.
- Approach State Highway Administration with a coalition of communities.

Who is the responsible party?
- Council Committee on Police, Traffic and Public Safety

Desirable Housing Stock
Maintain and improve housing in the community.

Desirable Housing Stock – Stronger Code Enforcement
What is the problem and/or opportunity?
- Non-compliant homes detract from community.
- Town can only be as strict as the County allows.
- Foreclosed properties are not maintained.
- Non-compliant fences built without permits.
- Multiple out-buildings.
- Homes without driveways.

What does success look like?
- Stable (and/or increasing) property values.
- Tidy community ambience.
- Mowed lawns.

Who is the responsible party?
- Policy, Rules and Municipal Structure Committee
- Mayor and Council

Next Steps

The Facilitator explained that the University Park Town Council would receive a Retreat Report which will include a summary of the Retreat and their vision, critical success factors, and goals. The Mayor shared that when the Council receives the plan, they'll review it and make any necessary changes and then would formally adopt and operationalize it. The next step would be for the Council to develop an Action Plan. The plan would then be used during work sessions and would assist in developing the budget. He shared that the plan will allow the Council to be purposeful in what they are doing and the decisions they make.

In addition to using the Strategic Plan with the Council, participants also discussed how the information would be shared with staff and the public. The Strategic Plan could be discussed publicly at a Council meeting, posted on the Town's website and a link to the document could be included in an email to residents on the Mayor's list.

Parting Thoughts/Adjourn

The facilitator closed out the Strategic Planning Retreat by giving everyone the chance to provide closing thoughts about the Retreat and their work.
- Helpful to spend time looking ahead.
- Reached consensus on our goals.
- Appreciate Council – it was inspiring.
- Developed a game plan; liked hearing different ideas.
- Helped figure out how to focus on what's possible.
- Proud of work, collaborative together – great product.
- Learned how to communicate and get things done.
- It is always good to think more than just a day at a time. Useful process to think about where we want to go.
- Expeditious way to see what's possible and what doesn't make sense.

- Appreciate the group as a whole. Appreciate being invited.
- It is important to have a game plan – different people with different ideas who came together to focus on what is important for this town.
- Proud of our work together.
- It was a great activity learned some things about fellow Councilmembers and how to communicate and get things done.
- It was great for the Council and staff to be able to talk directly.
- Liked being in the room with really smart people who care about the Town. It was stimulating.
- It met expectations. I appreciated everyone participating and staying knowing that the retreat took away from home/family life.