



City of College Park, Maryland

2015–2020 Strategic Plan

Approved August 11, 2015

City Vision

The City of College Park is a vibrant and prosperous top 20 college town, which has established collaborative relationships with the residents, the University, businesses, non-profit sector, and other governments that benefit the entire community. The City is known for distinctive and connected neighborhoods, thriving commercial districts, cultural amenities, attractive green space and streetscapes, convenient transportation systems serving all users, and a strong sense of community pride.

City Mission

The City of College Park provides open and effective governance and excellent services that enhance the quality of life in our community.

City Values

Open and Effective Government

The City conducts its business in a lawful, open, and democratic manner. The City values communication and public discussion on issues affecting the City.

High-Performing, Dedicated, and Valued Employees

City staff provide the highest level of service possible. They act with honesty and integrity and are empowered to solve problems. The City values and rewards excellent performance.

Sustainability and Long-term Planning

The City is committed to a sustainable built environment and active stewardship of our natural resources. The City's long-term planning contributes to the well-being and prosperity of our community.

Fiscal Responsibility

The City maintains appropriate financial reserves, provides accurate financial information for decision-making, and spends revenue as effectively as possible.

Collaboration

The City values teamwork across departments and between Council and Staff. The City will strive to have productive, collaborative relations with the University, the County, the State, and neighboring jurisdictions in order to improve the City and the region.

City Goals

Goals are the long-term overarching areas in the City or "things that must go well" for the City to achieve its vision. Each goal statement includes a description of the goal as if it were already accomplished. Below the goal statement are ongoing priorities within the goal area that have been carried over from the 2010–2015 Strategic Plan. These priorities are included in the 2015–2020 Action Plan, either as separate action items or incorporated within other action items. The list of action items necessary to fulfill each goal follows the priorities carried over from the previous plan. The implementation of these action items is detailed in the Action Plan.

The 2020 Strategic Plan Goals are:

1. One College Park
2. Environmental Sustainability
3. High Quality Development and Reinvestment
4. Quality Infrastructure
5. Effective Leadership
6. Excellent Services

Goal 1: One College Park

The City of College Park and its residents, the University of Maryland (UMD) and its students, faculty and staff, and all stakeholders are connected to the community and work together for the best interest of College Park. All stakeholders are actively engaged in achieving our vision. The City actively supports opportunities for members of diverse cultural groups, residents from different neighborhoods, and students to have positive interactions with each other and their City government. All College Park residents feel connected to the City in addition to their neighborhood. People who work in the City, including University staff, federal employees, and students, feel connected to the City. College Park is a place where empathy and respect of diverse groups provide greater understanding and community strength. The City leverages the rich talent and skill in the community, including the non-profit sector and civic associations. The City allocates sufficient staff resources for community engagement to create appealing opportunities for engagement that generate significant involvement in City-sponsored or co-sponsored community, social, and cultural events and public meetings. The City utilizes tools effectively to engage with and receive feedback from a broad range of residents.

Ongoing City Priorities:

- *CMAST monthly meetings*
- *Enforcement of Student Code of Conduct off campus*
- *Grant program for neighborhood events*
- *Good Neighbor Day, College Park Day events*
- *Email notification of code violations*
- *Good Neighbor recognition program*
- *Improve dissemination of public safety information and information regarding all City programs and services*
- *Utilize a customer request management system for online communication, tracking of service requests (status and staff action), and to provide feedback on services*

GOAL 1 ACTIONS ITEMS:

- 1a. Increase positive interaction among neighbors, including long-term residents and UMD students, faculty, and staff
- 1b. Promote cooperation among neighborhoods and the City as a whole
- 1c. Facilitate a range of quality housing options that respect neighborhoods
- 1d. Increase owner-occupancy of the existing single-family homes
- 1e. Research and implement measures that allow residents to age in place
- 1f. Develop communications and community engagement plans that will significantly improve the City's impact and capacity in these areas
- 1g. Develop a marketing plan for the City

Goal 2: Environmental Sustainability

The City is a leader in the protection and restoration of natural resources and the implementation of energy efficiency and renewable energy programs, technologies, and plans. The City reduces its impact on the environment through collaboration, research, and the adoption of best practices to incentivize reduced energy usage. The City has well-managed and attractive natural resources, such as parks, trails, and outdoor recreation areas. The City supports new development that is sensitive to environmental issues and that strives to limit impacts on the environment.

Ongoing City Priorities:

- *Hollywood Gateway Park property purchase and development*
- *Sustainability Plan for City Operations*
- *Sustainable Maryland Certified and the City's goal for renewable energy generation of 20% of the City's electrical demand*

GOAL 2 ACTION ITEMS:

- 2a. Execute the permaculture plan in partnership with residents and organizations
- 2b. Develop a plan for community gardens in partnership with residents and organizations
- 2c. Adopt a City Operations Sustainability Plan that will reduce solid waste and increase recycling; increase fleet efficiency; increase energy efficiency of facilities; and reduce electrical demand; and annually monitor City progress
- 2d. Develop a Community Sustainability Plan that includes support for solar energy
- 2e. Partner with the UMD Partnership in Active Learning for Sustainability (PALS)
- 2f. Partner with agencies to identify funds and implement stormwater management improvements
- 2g. Complete purchase and development of Hollywood Gateway Park

Goal 3: High Quality Development and Reinvestment

The City works with partners to facilitate investment along Baltimore Avenue, in the College Park metro station area, Berwyn Commercial District, and the Hollywood Commercial District to expand commercial development and housing options and increase the tax base to finance improvements in services and infrastructure. The City has strong neighborhoods with ample home ownership opportunities and varied housing and retail options. The City welcomes development proposals and actively works with developers in a structured process to incorporate community input and collaboration in order to support projects that have high design quality, are environmentally sustainable, and have a positive impact on neighborhoods. Resources are provided for City services to meet increases in demand or changes in community needs/desires, including a range of senior housing options.

Ongoing City Priorities:

- *Continued advocacy for State funding for Baltimore Avenue reconstruction*
- *Support and attract diverse, locally-owned retail and restaurant establishments*
- *Matching grant programs for small business to locate in College Park and/or improve their business*
- *Maintain up-to-date inventory of available sites for redevelopment*
- *Annual Economic Development report*
- *Shop College Park initiative*
- *Support for the Downtown College Park Management Authority*
- *Continued advocacy for the Purple Line*
- *Continued advocacy for the Greenbelt FBI site*

GOAL 3 ACTION ITEMS:

- 3a. Promote and focus economic investment in these priority development areas:
 1. Downtown College Park (from the City limits south of Guilford Drive to College Avenue) to implement the University District Vision Plan.
 2. College Park metro station area
 3. Baltimore Avenue corridor area to create walkable nodes and promote residential infill
 4. Hollywood Commercial District to evaluate options for redevelopment
 5. City-owned Calvert Road property to create a strategy for redevelopment and use
 6. Berwyn Commercial District to revise zoning to allow more neighborhood-serving uses; work with community and M-NCPPC
 7. North core of the Greenbelt Metro Station development to work with stakeholders to maximize the benefits and minimize the negative impacts on College Park residents (including proposed Greenbelt FBI location and accompanying retail)
- 3b. Monitor plans and progress of the University of Maryland Innovation District with the goal of ensuring long-term economic benefits and job growth for the City of College Park
- 3c. Support and attract diverse, locally-owned retail and restaurant establishments

Goal 4: Quality Infrastructure

The City's infrastructure, including roads, sidewalks, paths, technology, utilities, parks, playgrounds, City Hall, and other City facilities are constructed and maintained at a high quality standard and meet the needs of residents, employees, and visitors. College Park regularly evaluates its public infrastructure and facilities and provides funding so that all facilities meet the expectations of residents and the planned growth of College Park and surrounding neighborhoods. College Park's infrastructure is resilient and designed to function under potentially adverse conditions.

Ongoing City Priorities:

- *Develop a complete and green streets policy (fall 2015)*
- *Develop a City-wide bicycle plan (fall 2015)*
- *Create a network of proposed streets and bike trails (long-term)*
- *Utilization of Safe Routes to Schools funding for new sidewalks*
- *Implement a bike share program and support for Bike to Work Day*
- *Annual Pavement Management Plan*
- *Settle outstanding issues related to completion of the Berwyn portion of the trolley trail*
- *Utilize public security cameras and license plate readers*

GOAL 4 ACTION ITEMS:

- 4a. Adopt a Complete Streets policy and implement a comprehensive network of trails and sidewalks
- 4b. Facilitate Baltimore Avenue reconstruction and sidewalk project
- 4c. Build a new City Hall
- 4d. Expand parks, playgrounds, and open space
- 4e. Ensure effective public safety infrastructure and evaluate surveillance cameras and locations
- 4f. Implement a bike share program

Goal 5: Effective Leadership

The City models excellent leadership and teamwork among Council, staff, and community partners to achieve the City's vision and goals. The Council and staff have a clear vision for the community and have engaged and inspired community members to embrace a positive view of College Park's future. The Council acts as one policy body, clearly communicates expectations to staff, and provides leadership for advancing College Park's vision and strategic plan. The Council balances the need to be both responsive and decisive and communicates its actions clearly and frequently to residents, providing a forum for residents to be better informed. The City develops leaders who listen, challenge perceptions, educate community members, and help people see things from different points of view.

Ongoing City Priority:

- *Council and staff training via membership in the Maryland Municipal League and professional associations*

GOAL 5 ACTION ITEMS:

- 5a. Develop a highly effective partnership between Council and staff
- 5b. Develop a continuous learning program for staff
- 5c. Prepare for staff retirements

Goal 6: Excellent Services

College Park has high quality, consistent, and cost-effective services in every department that contribute to a desirable, welcoming, and safe City. All City services are responsive to the community's needs, add value, improve the quality of life, and utilize technologies effectively. Services are aligned with the City vision and goals and are implemented in a cost-effective manner. City policies are communicated clearly and professionally and are implemented and enforced equitably. The City has a holistic view of public safety and engages all City departments, public safety agencies serving the City, and residents to ensure that College Park is a safe and secure community. City staff are highly trained, solution-oriented, and committed to delivering excellent services.

Ongoing City Priorities:

- *Streamline City permitting processes*
- *Improve effectiveness of City code enforcement*
- *Establish permitting process guide*
- *Support the College Park Academy*
- *Lakeland Stars mentoring program*
- *Grants to public schools serving College Park residents*
- *Utilize contract police and collaborate with other police agencies to improve public safety*
- *Advocate for streamlined and inter-connected City and County's permitting systems, where possible, to minimize the number of steps by residents and property owners*

GOAL 6 ACTION ITEMS:

- 6a. Establish meaningful and effective performance measures and assess department performance
- 6b. Streamline City department business processes involving multiple steps and departments by evaluating service procedures and by utilizing technology more effectively
- 6c. Implement online payments and online permits for City services and permits
- 6d. Support a new north County animal care facility
- 6e. Improve public schools serving College Park children through collaboration with strategic partners, including Prince George's County Public Schools, local PTAs, and the University of Maryland