



City of Takoma Park Maryland **ANTI- LITTER INITIATIVE**

PURPOSE

To encourage City residents to take responsibility for keeping Takoma Park clean and litter free, through public education and engagement, outreach and enhancement of City services.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Though quantifiable data is currently unavailable, initial areas of concern include:

Roadway and Sidewalks: The accumulation of trash at bus stops and along sidewalks of primary thoroughfares, the proliferation of newspaper boxes and illegally posted handbills and signage along transportation routes and in commercial corridors contributes greatly to the City's overall littering problem.

Multi-Unit Residential Buildings (12+ units): The City of Takoma Park does not provide trash or recycling collection services for larger multi-unit residential properties. Trash accumulation at multi-unit residencies appears to be due to a combination of factors: a) insufficient refuse containers or scheduling too few pick-ups a week; b) lack of recycling services; and c) improper disposal of trash. City Code 10.12.090 - *Multifamily unit recycling collection regulations* requires recycling at multi-family buildings.

Commercial Properties. The City does not collect recycling from businesses nor does it mandate that businesses recycle as is required under Montgomery County Code. Few business hire commercial collectors and many businesses are either not recycling or using the City's street recycling containers in violation of City Code Chapter 10.80.070.

Anacostia and Potomac Watershed: Sligo Creek is part of the Anacostia and Potomac Watershed. Litter that washes into Sligo Creek can eventually make its way into the Potomac River. The Fall 2013 Sweep the Creek event brought in 236 bags of trash and 19 bags of recycling (this included all sections of Sligo Creek, the Takoma Park sections are 1, 2 and 3).

To further define the extent of littering in the community, staff will conduct additional research to identify specific problem areas.

FOCUS OF INITIATIVE

The litter problem in Takoma Park is a challenge of education and community buy-in as well as the lack of adequate infrastructure and legislation and enforcement. For purposes of this initial effort, the focus of the City's FY14 anti-littering campaign will be on heavily traveled roadways (bus routes, major intersections, state highways, etc.) and densely populated residential and commercial areas. Future programming will be determined following an evaluation of current conditions and may include one or more community events and a community-wide educational campaign in addition to legislative and enforcement efforts

PROGRAMMING OPTIONS

Analysis of current conditions:

To further define the extent of littering in the community, additional research will be conducted to identify specific locations where trash and debris – litter - is an ongoing concern. Analysis to include mapping of a variety of features including major roadways, bus routes, bus stops, bus shelters, placement of trash and recycling containers, multi-family rental facilities, and PW pick-up sites, etc. Inspections of potential problem areas identified during the mapping process will be conducted on a daily basis for a period of one week. Information will be used to identify specific problem areas, refine proposed educational campaign, guide new or revised legislation, develop recommendations for possible modification of the City's current refuse/recycling collection procedures and code enforcement activities; and organize proposed community events.

Implementation of educational campaign:

Development of a community-wide educational campaign encouraging the appropriate disposal of trash and recyclable materials. Campaign is to be undertaken in partnership with the Alice Ferguson Foundation (AFF) Trash Free Potomac Watershed Initiative. The AFF campaign provides access to a variety of anti-littering campaign materials, including print ads with City logo, social media and PSAs.

Campaign to include one or more of the following:

- a) Takoma Park City Newsletter (articles, community briefs);
- b) CityTV (snapshot, community bulletin board, etc.);
- c) Council communication with constituents;
- d) Education presentations and anti-littering messaging for community groups, recreation programs, and area schools; and
- e) Distribution of educational materials at local multi-family residential buildings and condominiums.

Adoption of Montgomery County Code / Execution of Memorandum of Agreement:

Amend City Code formally opting into [Montgomery County Code 48.00.03.03](#) Solid Waste and Recycle Program and [Montgomery County Executive Regulation 15-04AM](#) to require business owners or property managers of multi-unit dwellings (larger than 12 units) to recycle and facilitate County enforcement of current recycling laws in Takoma Park.

Modification of current solid waste collection program:

Placement of additional trash and recycling receptacles at locations identified during the evaluation process as problematic; expand collection services at high-use bus stops, heavily trafficked intersections, commercial districts, etc.

Establish schedule for cleaning of individual trash collection areas in heavily used locations. Clean-up to include power washing of surface area, broom cleaning, pick-up of scattered debris and washing of interior of containers.

Expand City collection efforts at problematic areas along Roanoke Avenue (Wednesdays), Houston Court (Wednesdays) and Lockney Avenue (Fridays) to include weekly pick-up of bulk items and scattered debris at properties serviced by the City during regularly scheduled routes. Initiative will include waiver of bulk pick-up fees and installation of informational signage in select residential neighborhoods.

Organization of community events:

Organization of a series of community events designed to encourage residents and businesses to dispose of trash and debris in a responsible manner and to reinforce City's anti-littering message. Examples of possible events include:

- a) *Anti-litter Month*: Publicize and encourage participation in events during the month of April. Include Friends of Sligo Creek's Sweep the Creek, Washington Adventist University's Biannual Service Day and the Old Takoma Business Association's (OTBA) cleanup day and Earth Day festivities. Encourage Montgomery College and other local public and private school participation and offer education in conjunction with events.
- b) *Sick of Signs*: Competition encouraging community residents, community groups and others to remove illegally posted handbills and flyers from utility poles, light fixtures, public right of way, etc.
- c) *Adopt-a-Spot*: Program patterned after Maryland Adopt-a-Highway and Montgomery County Adopt-a-Road programs; establish annual recognition program to encourage participation.

**IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE
PRELIMINARY 2013 - 2014**

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
ANALYSIS										
Mapping of major roadways and other features										
Identification of problem "Hot Spots"										
Monitoring of targeted problem areas										
COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT OPTIONS										
Community-wide educational campaign										
Community-wide removal of illegally posted signs and handbills										
Adopt-a-Spot Program										
Community Clean-up Days/Earth Day activities										
INFRASTRUCTURE OPTIONS										
Installation of additional Trash and Recycling Containers										
Cleaning of Trash and Recycling Containers and Sites										
Expansion of Bulk Pick-up Services										
Installation Of Informational Signage In Select Residential Neighborhoods										
LEGISLATIVE AND ENFORCEMENT OPTIONS										
Adoption of Montgomery County Code										

April is Anti-Litter Month in Takoma Park.

“Your litter hits close to home.” That’s the slogan behind a new anti-litter initiative launching this month in Takoma Park.

With major state roads such as New Hampshire Avenue passing through our community and Sligo Creek (part of the Anacostia Watershed), litter is of key concern for residents, Council Members and City staff. Through a partnership with the Alice Ferguson Foundation (AFF), the City will launch the initiative using AFF’s Trash Free Potomac outreach campaign materials with the City logo. Residents will notice banners at litter hotspots and on the City trash trucks, posters at school and community buildings and a refrigerator magnet for every home.

The Public Works Department will place additional trash and recycling receptacles at locations with a history of litter and expand collection services at high-use bus stops, heavily trafficked intersections, and commercial districts.

Additionally, businesses and community groups have been approached to keep a spot litter free by collecting litter once a month in exchange for signage recognizing their efforts. The program, dubbed *Adopt-a-Spot*, is patterned after the Maryland Adopt-a-Highway and Montgomery County Adopt-a-Road programs.

The Young Activists Club has signed on to keep Piney Branch Elementary School and the Community Center grounds litter free. Advance Auto, at the corner of Eastern and New Hampshire Avenues, has agreed to maintain the area around the store.

The Young Activists Club at Piney Branch Elementary School is also organizing *Trash Free Lunch* day on this spring. After all, the first R in the “Three ‘R’s” stands for *reduce*, then reuse and then recycle.

If you are looking to get your hands dirty to help make Takoma Park clean, opportunities abound. Mark your calendar for some of these upcoming events:

- March 29: Friends of Takoma/Langley New Hampshire Ave Clean Up
- April 2: Washington Adventist University Student Service Day, corner of Eastern Avenue and New Hampshire Avenue
- April 5: Old Takoma Business Association, Old Takoma Clean Up
- April 5 and 6: Friends of Sligo Creek, Sweep the Creek

Additional information about these sites and others can be found at:

<http://fergusonfoundation.org/trash-free-potomac-watershed-initiative/potomac-river-watershed-cleanup/>

Sick of Signs Week – later this spring, residents will be encouraged to remove signs illegally posted on utility poles, transformer boxes, bus shelters and other public property in Takoma Park and turn them in to be tallied. Illegal signs include the free standing signs displayed in the public right of way and along the boulevard (the grassy area between the sidewalk and the curb). Signs displayed in someone’s front yard are legal and should be left in place.

To be considered in “the count,” the signs residents collect must be turned into the Takoma Park Community Center at the end of the week when the signs will be tallied and judged. Prizes will be awarded for the most signs, the wackiest sign, the most colorful sign (and more) collected during the week.

To get involved in the Anti-Litter Initiative or participate in the Adopt-a-Spot program contact lucyn@takomaparkmd.gov.

City of Takoma Park



Adopt-A-Spot Program

Keeping Takoma Park Clean and Green!

Thanks to

YOUNGACTIVISTSCLUB.ORG

PROGRAM & SAFETY GUIDELINES

The Adopt-a-Spot is a new program created as part of Takoma Park's Anti-Litter Initiative. This program allows individuals or groups to adopt area located within Takoma Park and agree to make regular litter pick-ups at the site. The City of Takoma Park will recognize the group's efforts with a sign with the group's name on it. The City will also provide cleaning equipment, such as trash bags and gloves.

A commonly owned area located within the City may be adopted. Examples of such locations would include parks, landmarks, schools, vacant lots, walkways or trails, campuses, public grounds, or other sites prone to litter. Clean-up activities should be performed during daylight hours and in favorable weather conditions. The Group Coordinator must be at least 21 years old. Individuals 17 years or younger should be supervised by an adult. If the individual or group is unable to continue with the program, the Anti-Litter Coordinator must be notified.

Litter should be picked up regularly from the adopted spot; at a minimum, we request the adopted spot be cleaned TWELVE (12) times a year (or every month). The City of Takoma Park reserves the right to reassign an adopted spot should it receive two or more complaints within a six month period regarding the spot's condition (litter).

Small amounts of litter (2-3 bags) should be disposed of through normal trash collection. For larger amounts (4 or more bags) or large, difficult to handle items contact Takoma Park Public Works (PW), 301 891-7633 or visit <http://www.takomaparkmd.gov/publicworks>. Advise PW that you are a participant of the Adopt-A-Spot program and request a one-time trash pick-up.

Participants are required to report their cleanings to the Anti-Litter Coordinator. This information will be used for tracking litter "hot spots" and if complaints arise.

A sign will be provided and installed by Public Works at the adopted spot. This sign does not require a permit. The sign must be placed in the right of way owned by the City or permission must be secured from the adopted spot's owner before installing. All signs will be a standard 10 inches tall x 7.75 inches wide. It is not required that a sign be posted to participate in the program.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1. The Adopt-A-Spot Program (“Program”) is open to individuals, nonprofit or civic organizations, businesses, and governmental entities. Individuals who wish to participate in the Program must reside in the City. Organizations, businesses, and governmental entities that wish to participate in the Program must be located within the City or conduct substantial activities within the City.
2. An individual or an officer, manager, director, or principal of any business or governmental entity who desires to participate in the Program must sign the application form and provide his or her name, phone number, email and mailing address. The individual, organization, business, or entity that joins the Adopt-A-Spot program agrees to inform all team participants of the terms, eligibility criteria and safety guidelines.
3. The City reserves the right to contact the person on the application to verify participation and discuss issues or concerns as they arise.
5. Participation in the program conveys no rights or privileges upon any person or entity. The City of Takoma Park, in its sole discretion, may refuse to allow any person, organization, business, or entity to participate in the Program. Use of the sign in commercial, social or political literature of any kind is prohibited. Violation of this prohibition will be considered cause for termination.
6. Indemnification: All participants in the Program hereby release the City of Takoma Park and its agents and employees from any liability for damages or injuries resulting from their participation in the Program. The individual, organization, business, or entity that adopts a spot agrees to indemnify and hold the City of Takoma Park harmless for any injuries, damages, or claims arising from the Program.

ADOPT-A-SPOT APPLICATION

NAME OF GROUP _____

Group Coordinator First/Last Name _____

Daytime Phone _____ Email Address _____

Street Address, City, State, Zip _____

NAME OF "SPOT" TO ADOPT _____

LOCATION _____

PLEASE ATTACH A MAP OF EXACT ADOPT-A-SPOT LOCATION

SIGN REQUESTED: _____ YES _____ NO

NAME TO APPEAR ON SIGN: _____

I HAVE READ, UNDERSTAND, AND AGREE TO COMPLY WITH THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

RETURN APPLICATION TO: City of Takoma Park
Housing and Community Development
7500 Maple Avenue
Takoma Park, Maryland 20912
Attn: Anti-Litter Coordinator