



**Town of Chevy Chase
Strategic Plan: 2006 – 2016**

**Update
September 2008**

Town of Chevy Chase Strategic Plan Update September 2008

In September 2005, the Town of Chevy Chase Town Council created a 15-person Visioning Committee. It charged this committee with the responsibility of developing a ten-year strategic plan for the Town. After a 15-month effort, which included monthly public meetings and much community input, the committee presented a plan to the Town Council in December 2006. Following a three-month period of work sessions and public hearings, the Town Council adopted the Strategic Plan in March 2007.

The Strategic Plan includes the Town of Chevy Chase's Mission Statement and defines five Town Core Values. The document identifies four broad principles which serve to guide the Town in its decision-making. Each principle includes specific goals, each with strategies and the required tasks, resources, target dates and persons/groups assigned to the tasks to achieve a specific goal.

Principle 1: The Town of Chevy Chase government is accountable to its residents, harnesses their talents and expertise, and serves their best interests and needs.

Principle 2: The Town of Chevy Chase protects the Town's distinctive neighborhood character.

Principle 3: The Town of Chevy Chase encourages a strong sense of community and neighborliness through a comprehensive range of activities, services, and resources for its residents.

Principle 4: The Town of Chevy Chase seeks to be a model community in its stewardship of its natural resources.

What sets the Town of Chevy Chase's Strategic Plan apart from many other municipal plans is the formalized, meaningful role that its citizens play in Town governance. The Strategic Plan creates five standing committees to assist the Town Council in its deliberations. The Standing Committees serve as advisory bodies to the Town Council and support the furtherance of the Strategic Plan. Each is chaired by a Town resident. Each has a Town Council representative who acts as a liaison between the Standing Committee and the Town Council. Committee members are appointed by the Mayor in consultation with Town Council and serve a one-year term beginning each September. Candidates for appointment submit to the Mayor a letter of interest indicating his/her willingness to participate and citing any relevant experience. The Standing Committees include the following.

**Community Relations Committee
Environment Committee
Land-Use Committee
Long-Range Planning Committee
Public Services Committee**

Since the adoption of the Strategic Plan in March 2007, much has been accomplished. Town Staff created a tracking document that delineates the principles, goals, strategies and tasks and the percentages of completion. Highlights are many and include the following.

Principle 1: Town Accountability of Government and Services

Town Staff improved the Town Web site to provide better access to information on Town matters. E-documents are now available—everything from A (Consulting Arborist Request Form) to W (Water Drainage Permit Form). Town Council meeting and Standing Committee meeting agendas and minutes are now accessible on-line. The Web site also provides links to community resources beyond those offered by the Town.

Town Staff established a process for tracking and reporting complaints, the forms of which are on-line and can be submitted electronically.

The Town Staff, with review from the Community Relations Committee, created and published the *Community Handbook* for Town residents. The 85-page publication provides a detailed guide of Town programs, services and regulations. The Community Relations Committee published *Ten Things to Know Before Renovating or Building in the Town of Chevy Chase* to assist property owners.

The Public Safety Committee and the Town Council moved forward with sidewalks on certain Town streets and with an enhanced traffic safety plan around Chevy Chase Elementary School.

The Long-Range Planning Committee actively followed several development plans in Bethesda to protect Town interests and advocated in public forums on behalf of the Town. It worked with a Town consultant on transit issues around the Purple Line and the Capital Crescent Trail.

Principle 2: Town Protection of its Distinctive Neighborhood Character

The Land-Use Committee recommended to the Town Council legislation that promoted the use of a Floor-to-Area Ratio and other building calculations to maintain Town character. In April 2008, the Town Council passed new building regulations.

Principle 3: Town Encouragement of Neighborliness and Community-Mindedness

The Community Relations Committee, in cooperation with Town Staff, initiated series of community events on an assortment of topics and promoted the conduct of block parties throughout the Town.

Town Staff launched Town Crier, a Town-sponsored listserv to serve as an electronic bulletin board for important Town matters. Town Neighbors, a resident-launched listserv, compliments the Town Crier and provides another vehicle for resident communication.

Principle 4: Town Stewardship of its Natural Resources

The Town Council initiated Storm Water Drainage Improvements and coordinated efforts with WSSC to replace water pipes in the Town.

The Tree Board worked to preserve the Town's tree canopy.

The Climate Protection Committee issued *Forecast* articles and held public forums to encourage Town residents to become more environmentally sustainable.

Now, several years into the Strategic Plan, it is important for the Town Council to re-examine the document. It is important to identify areas which have not been fully addressed and to determine if these areas are still as critical to the Town today as they were when the plan was adopted in March 2007. Several areas for consideration include the following.

Principle 1: Town Accountability of Government and Services

The efficiency of municipal operations (Town Council/Town Staff)

The effectiveness of communication with residents (Community Relations Committee)

The education and training of Town Council, staff and committees (Town Council/Town Staff)

The process to review annually the Strategic Plan (Long-Range Planning Committee)

Principle 2: Town Protection of its Distinctive Neighborhood Character

The dissemination of information on house and property improvements in keeping with the character of the Town (Community Relations Committee/Land-Use Committee)

Principle 3: Town Encouragement of Neighborliness and Community-Mindedness

The development of additional public service amenities (Public Services Committee)

Principle 4: Town Stewardship of its Natural Resources

The effectiveness of the tree ordinance (Environment Committee)

The encouragement of voluntary planting of canopy trees on private property
(Environment Committee)