



# *Town of Forest Heights*

## MEMORANDUM

TOWN COUNCIL

Subject: Strategic Plan for Forest Heights  
From: Councilman George Wiggers  
To: Mayor Paula Noble

Date: September 16, 2004

As a follow-up to my amendment to the motion to approve the Town contracting for lobbying services, I am submitting the attached rough draft of a strategic plan for your consideration. I am sure that other Council members may want to add to the list, or may want to modify my proposals. I suggest that such a plan include any project or activity requested by a member of the Council, unless a majority of the Council requests that it be excluded from the plan.

Unless you appoint a Council committee to further development of this plan, I suggest that the Town Administrator be tasked to compile further inputs to the document.

I spoke to Mr. Proctor after the meeting last night, and he encouraged us to approve a plan as soon as possible so that he could begin work on elements that have near deadlines for submitting grant applications.

cc: Members, Forest Heights Town Council  
Town Administrator  
Chief of Police

## Strategic Plan for the Town of Forest Heights

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this planning document is to have a ready reference of the needs of Forest Heights for improvements to its infrastructure and services, and to establish priorities for the accomplishment of these improvements. This is a long range plan covering a ten year period from the time of its adoption. It is also a living plan in that its updated annually such that it always represents the current long term needs of the Town.

Inclusion of a project or program in this document does not guarantee the item will be included in the Town's annual budget, which is required before funds are appropriated to complete any improvement. Priorities noted in this plan should be considered in the budget process. However, before items are included in the budget, they should have been already approved by the Town Council for inclusion in the strategic plan.

This strategic plan shall be a public document available to the Town's citizens. At the October Town meeting each year, the Town Council will hold a public discussion of the plan and request suggestions from Town citizen's as to the inclusion or deletion of any improvement items contained in the plan, and the priorities attached to the items.

### INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Street Reconstruction** - Forest Heights streets (including curbs & gutters) should be maintained and reconstructed as necessary so that they are structurally sound to ensure safe and comfortable access by automobile, bicycle and pedestrian access, and be presentable so as to augment property values in the Town.
- **Sidewalks** - Existing Town sidewalks should be maintained to ensure safe pedestrian traffic, be free from obstructions and vegetation growth, and be presentable so as to augment property values in the Town. Furthermore, new sidewalks are required in the following locations for pedestrian safety:
  - On Arapahoe Drive from Livingston Road to Modoc Lane, placed in the easement area between Arapahoe Drive and Indian Head Highway.
  - Sachem Drive from Delaware Drive to Tecumseh Drive
  - Other????
- **Speed Bumps** Conduct a study to determine the comparative effectiveness and cost of the speed bump design now in place in Forest Heights compared to those that have more gradual inclines. Install additional speed bumps in those areas where excessive speeding has been occurring.

- **Buildings**
  - Complete Handicap Access to the Forest Heights municipal building, including access to restroom facilities on the second floor.
  - Repair of the building roof to eliminate leaks and assure drainage of rainwater from the roof.
  - Addition of public internet access in the municipal buildings to serve senior citizens and others who want to communicate over the internet, and for training of youth and others in the use of the internet.
  - Modification of existing structures or construction of a new structure that would provide indoor recreation for Town citizens such as basketball courts for youth or exercise facilities for older and senior citizens.
  - Repair the Municipal Building Parking lot.
  
- **Parks** - In cooperation with the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (MNCPPC) maintain the two parks for the Town of Forest Heights, with the addition of a ballfield at the park located at the north end of Terrell Avenue.
  
- **Street lights** - Upgrade the existing street lights in the Town of Forest Heights to high efficiency sodium vapor lights. In addition, for security purposes, install additional lights at the following locations: ???? Choctaw Drive
  
- **Pedestrian Connections Between the East and West Sides of Town** Many of the Town citizens do not drive or otherwise need to traverse Indian Head Highway (IHH) on foot. These include shoppers toward the north end of IHH within the Town limits, and bus commuters near the South end of the Highway. To accommodate the needs of these citizens, the Town will work with the State Highway Administration and others to install a pedestrian bridge across IHH near Quade Street and Tecumseh Drive, and for the improvement of crosswalks, including pedestrian controlled traffic lights, at the south side of the IHH/Livingston Road intersection.
  
- **Traffic Lights** - The turn from Comanche Drive onto Livingston Road is unsafe because of the speed of vehicles on Livingston Road and the limit of sight distance at the intersection because of the curve in Livingston Road near the intersection. Furthermore, the intersection is a school crossing for students walking from Birchwood City to Flintstone Elementary School. While the intersection is entirely within the Town of Fores Heights, Livings Road is a county facility and the responsibility of PG County. The Town will work with the County to install a traffic light at that intersection which is coordinated with the traffic light at the intersection of Birchwood Drive and Livingston Road (also within the Town's jurisdiction).

## SERVICES

- **Health & Sanitation**
  - Abandoned and/or disabled vehicles present a health hazzard to the Town when they

become infested with vermin, and present an eyesore that detracts from property values. The Code Enforcement will work with property owners to remove these vehicles and issue fines as necessary to enforce their removal.

- Pets are valued companions to many residents of the Town, but can become a health concern and nuisance to neighbors if not properly cared for. The Town will pass necessary ordinances, not in legal conflict with County ordinances, that will limit restrict the number and types of animals that can be harbored in the Town.
- **Police**
  - Effective enforcement of laws, particularly controlled substance and abuse laws, requires a full time force of seven officers, including the Chief of Police. Given the presence of firearms on many of the suspects being investigated for possible violations, a Town backup officer needs to be available during periods when such investigations are likely to occur.
  - The Town Police require \_\_\_ number of vehicles for their work, equipped with appropriate communications equipment. There should be at least one backup vehicle available in case of a breakdown during a shift with a maximum number of officers on duty. This is also important because the need for the Forest Heights police to work with law enforcement of other jurisdictions during a homeland security alert or incident. The Town's plan is to retire any vehicle more than \_\_ years old, or greater than \_\_\_ miles on the odometer.
- **Recreation** - In cooperation with the MNCPPC, maintain a recreation program for Forest Heights Youth at the two MNCPPC parks, including the hiring of counselors during the summer months to organize team sports and activities for teenagers.
- **Transportation** (Elderly) - In cooperation with PG County agencies, organize local transportation services for senior citizens that would accomodate the citizen's needs for access to shopping, medical and recreational services.
- **Street Maintenance** Maintain the Town's streets in a clean condition, free of debris and litter, using both Public Works and Code Enforcement personnel. In the Fall, contract with street cleaning services to sweep accumulations of leaves from the streets. In the winter, maintain snow plow readiness to assure streets are passable by 6:00 a.m., unless an area wide snow emergency is called and Federal offices are closed.
- **Education** - Provide assistance to Forest Heights' two elementary schools as requested. Encourage and promote the use the of the Municipal Building for adult education programs.
- **Town Beautification** Conduct a program to replace street trees where appropriate.

## APPENDIX A

**Priorities assigned to improvements.** To be determined.

## APPENDIX B

### **Basic Town Statistics**

Statistics covering the following areas will be added to the plan for reference purposes:

- Population/Demographics
- Housing
- Commercial Area
- Street Network (Maps & Milage)
- Employment