

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council

FROM: David J. Deutsch
City Manager

SUBJECT: **Status Report**

DATE: April 5, 2012

Status Report

1. Rain Barrel Workshop

On Saturday, March 31, 2012, the Planning Department held a successful 4th Annual Rain Barrel Workshop with the Bowie Lions Club with 29 residents in attendance. This annual event is part of implementing Action Plan 4 of the Environmental Infrastructure Action Strategy Plan. Several residents also expressed interest in the stream cleanup scheduled for April 21 and in receiving the Green Bowie e-newsletter.

2. Hydrant Flushing

Our annual hydrant flushing begins Monday, April 9th. The schedule with information is attached for your use.

3. Bowie State/MARC Station ULI Report

In your package, there is a copy of the final report prepared by the Urban Land Institute's Technical Assistance Panel (TAP), which focused on the future land use plans for the area around the existing MARC train station at Bowie State University. Last fall, the Bowie State MARC Station Development Board invited the Panel to take a critical look at the Sector Plan's recommendations, as well as the University's growth plan, and to provide advice on implementation strategies. The report provides some insightful perspectives on the characteristics of a successful mixed-use project. One of the scenarios studied includes the establishment of a Washington Redskins training facility on the undeveloped land north of the MARC station, creating the potential for new or expanded University opportunities related to the facility, such as nursing, business and recreational programs. At the Development Board meeting this week, County staff stated that the results of the Stadium Authority's study should be ready for public release in about a month, and

that the County is moving ahead with a Phase 1 Environmental Study and boundary survey of its property. An economic feasibility study for the mixed-use scenario will not be prepared until the results from the Stadium Authority are available.

4. Facility Management Study

Attached is a memorandum that proposes that the City hire a consultant to help with an analysis of facility management in the City. We expect to bring a consultant recommendation to you in July 2012. We plan on the consultant presenting their analysis to Council in November 2012. It is estimated that this analysis would cost in the \$30,000 to \$50,000 range. Funding is proposed through funds allocated in the Nondepartmental Professional Services account. Based on the recommendations contained in this study, we may request Council to consider a supplemental budget ordinance in FY 2013. Please let me know if this proposal creates any concerns.

5. HB 563 and SB 567 Update

The Maryland General Assembly has passed a bill establishing a Communications Tax Reform Commission to study the disparity in telecommunications taxes and fees in the State of Maryland. While some of the amendments the City proposed were included in the final legislation, there is still concern for the potential impact on City revenues.

As requested by the City, the final legislation includes two representatives from MML on the Commission, and the moratorium which would have impacted our current cable renewal negotiations has been deleted. The franchise fees and PEG fees are no longer specifically listed in the bill as items to be studied; however the legislation now calls for the study of all "communications taxes and fees" which by definition will include franchise fees and PEG grants. An interim report from the Commission is scheduled to be submitted by December 31, 2012 with a final report to the General Assembly by June 30, 2013. Staff will continue to monitor the progress of the Commission and keep Council apprised of the Commission's findings/recommendations.

6. Tree Canopy Goal Recommendation

At their April 4th meeting, the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) unanimously voted to recommend that the City establish a tree canopy goal of 45 percent. This goal was set after much discussion over many meetings and upon consideration of the Urban Greening Strategy prepared by the City's consultant, Applied Ecological Services, Inc. and research conducted by EAC members themselves. The EAC is scheduled to present the proposed canopy goal and related initiatives to City Council at your June 18th Regular Meeting.