

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR MONTHLY MEMO

February 2025

Dear Town Council, Residents, Business owners, and
Employees of the Town of Bladensburg;



Town of Bladensburg – 2024 Accomplishments

Introduction: The Town of Bladensburg has made significant strides over the past year, enhancing infrastructure, public safety, financial operations, historic preservation, and sustainability initiatives. This summary highlights key accomplishments from 2024. A more detailed report will be available during the upcoming budget process.

I. Infrastructure & Public Safety Enhancements

- **57th Avenue Street Light Project – Phase 1:** Progress continues on improving street lighting to enhance public safety. Additionally, the Town secured new CDBG PY 49 funding to expand the project in 2025.
- **Bridge Repairs (CDBG PY 48R):** Successfully secured \$135,000 to complete critical repairs on Taylor, Varnum, and Spring Street bridges.
- **Roadway & Sidewalk Upgrades (CDBG PY 48R):** Secured \$155,000 to resurface Upshur Street and replace sidewalk ramps along 57th Avenue.
- **Police Department & Town Hall Upgrades:**
 - Completed essential building repairs to improve the work environment for employees and enhance visitor experience.
 - Finalized roofing repairs for Town Hall and the Annex in December 2024.
- **Ring Camera Security Program:** Utilized ARPA funds to launch a reimbursement program, helping residents enhance home security.
- **Traffic & Pedestrian Safety Enhancements:** Installed new LED stop signs and pedestrian crossing signs in key locations throughout the Town.
- **Public Safety Investments:** Acquired new mobile lighting and security cameras to enhance monitoring in key areas.
- **Fleet Modernization:** Replaced aging Town vehicles to ensure reliable services and transportation.
- **County Flood Awareness Initiative:** Launched public outreach efforts to educate residents along Quincy Run and Edmonston Channel about flood mitigation strategies.

II. Financial & Administrative Improvements

- **ARPA Funding Success:** Successfully closed out federal funding programs in December 2024, supporting:
 - Business relief initiatives
 - Mortgage, rental, and utility assistance programs

- **New Online Agenda System:** Implemented a modernized digital agenda platform to improve government transparency and accessibility.
- **Legislative Advocacy & Engagement:**
 - Strengthened partnerships with state and local representatives through our contract with LA Perez.
 - Hosted a **Legislative Open House (October 2024)** to highlight Town initiatives and advocate for community needs.
 - Developed and distributed the **2025 Legislative Priorities** document to support future policy efforts.

III. Historic Preservation & Workforce Development

- **Bostwick House Preservation:** Secured funding and completed key restoration projects, including:
 - Conducting a **ULI Technical Assistance Panel (TAP)** assessment.
 - Installing new windows and stabilization work using Bond Bill funding.
- **Bladensburg Trade School Initiative:** Began collaborating with **EMPLOY Prince George's** to launch workforce development programs.

IV. Green & Sustainable Initiatives

- **Maryland Energy Administration Grant:** Secured \$400,000 to support energy audits of Port Towns facilities, green infrastructure, and staffing for sustainability initiatives.
- **Rain Barrel Training & Distribution:** Partnered with the **University of Maryland** to promote water conservation through hands-on training and distribution of rain barrels.
- **Urban Reforestation Efforts:** Planted over 50 trees in Town parks and public spaces in collaboration with **Joe's Movement Emporium** and **CKAR**.
- **America in Bloom Participation:** Joined this national program and participated in its evaluation process to further beautification and sustainability efforts.
- **Sustainable Maryland Certification:** Recertified at the **Bronze level**, recognizing the Town's leadership in environmental sustainability.
- **Tree City USA Commitment:** The Town Council passed a **Tree Ordinance** to promote urban forestry and is awaiting final approval from the National Arbor Day Foundation.

Conclusion

The past year has been one of the progress and achievement for Bladensburg. These accomplishments reflect the Town's commitment to improving infrastructure, public safety, financial stability, historic preservation, and environmental sustainability. We look forward to building on this momentum in the year ahead!

Budget Calendar | It's budget time again; recently, the Council passed the Budget Ordinance for FY 2026, which sets the dates and various meetings for winter and spring. Below are the FY 2026 Budget dates:

- **Budget Session #1 | Town Council and Events**
 - On **February 18, 2025**, the first public **Budget Session** will be held, focusing on Town Council Budgets and Town Events.



- **Budget Session #2 | Introduction and Public Safety**
 - On **March 10, 2025**, the Town Council will receive an Introduction to the revenues and a review of **the Public Safety budget**, with presentations from the Police Department with their requests for the upcoming fiscal year.
- **Budget Session #3 | Finance, Clerk, and Town Administrator**
 - On **March 18, 2025**, a **Special Council Meeting** will be held to review budget requests from the **Finance Department, Town Clerk, and Town Administrator**.
- **Budget Session #4 | Special Budget Meeting | Public Works and Public Safety**
 - On **April 1, 2025**, another **Special Council Meeting** will focus on budget requests from the **Public Works** and review **Public Safety** items discussed in March.
- **First Reading of the Budget Ordinance**
 - On **April 14, 2025**, the **First Reading** of the Budget Ordinance will occur during the Town Council Meeting.
- **Tax Rate and Constant Yield Hearings (if needed)**
 - On **April 14, 2025, or May 12, 2025**, the Town Council Meeting would meet to set a new tax rate or conduct a Tax Rate or Constant Yield Hearing. This is a separate meeting
- **Budget Session #5 | Special Council Budget Meeting**
 - On **April 29, 2025**, the Town Council will hold a **Special Budget Meeting** for any remaining discussions and adjustments.
- **Proposed Budget Adoption – Second Reading**
 - On **May 12, 2025**, during the Town Council Meeting, the **Proposed Budget** for FY 2025-2026 will be presented for **Adoption**.
- **Alternative Budget Adoption Date – June 9, 2025 (if needed)**

Trade School Update: The Town of Bladensburg is actively advancing its commitment to workforce development through the establishment of a new trade school. The Town received an \$1 M earmark for the development on Trade School with in the Town. In collaboration with EMPLOY Prince George’s, efforts are underway to implement programs that will equip residents with valuable vocational skills. While specific details about the new trade school's programs and opening date are forthcoming, this initiative underscores the town's dedication to providing educational opportunities that align with current job market demands.

Town Annexation Update: The Town of Bladensburg is actively pursuing annexation to expand its municipal boundaries, aiming to enhance services and foster community growth. Annexation allows adjacent property owners and residents to become part of Bladensburg, benefiting from dedicated municipal services, enhanced public safety, and various community programs. . This strategic expansion is vital for influencing economic growth, environmental protection, quality of life, and the Town's fiscal well-being.

Bladensburg remains committed to thoughtful expansion and will continue to provide updates, keeping residents engaged throughout the process.

Green Team Update: The Town of Bladensburg's Green Team is making great strides in advancing our commitment to sustainability! In our latest meeting this January, the team had the opportunity to review the Town's Tree Inventory and participate in a hands-on training session with the Neighborhood Design Center (NDC) on tree maintenance and selection. This important step reinforces our dedication to green infrastructure and paves the way for a healthier, more vibrant environment for our community. We're excited to continue building a greener future for Bladensburg!

Best Regards,

Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth

Michelle Bailey-Hedgepeth, Town Administrator