



Bladensburg, Maryland

2026 Community Profile

Contact Information

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Community Information

Population: The population of Bladensburg, Maryland, is approximately 9,660 residents.

County/township: Bladensburg is in Prince George's County, Maryland.

Municipal Website: The official website for the Town of Bladensburg is www.bladensburgmd.gov.

Municipal Facebook page: The official Facebook page for the Town of Bladensburg can be found at www.facebook.com/BladensburgMD.

Area in square miles: The total area of Bladensburg is 1.0 square mile.

Acres of active recreation: Bladensburg has approximately 25 acres dedicated to active recreation, which includes sports fields, playgrounds, and other recreational facilities.

Acres of passive recreation: The town has about 30 acres designated for passive recreation, including parks, natural areas, and walking trails.

Form of government (mayor, council, manager, etc.): Council– Town Administrator

Jurisdiction(s) operates the public-school system: No

Jurisdiction operates the utilities (water, sewer, electrical, trash, recycling, etc.): No - Contracted

Professional and/or civic organizations and/or designations (Tree City USA, Main Street, etc.): Tree City USA, Sustainable Maryland Certification

Volunteer coordinator name if position exists: NA

Any challenges this year weather-related or otherwise the Advisors should know about: None

Years participated in America in Bloom Program: 2024, 2025

Previous America in Bloom Awards and Recognitions: Community Vitality Award (2024)

INTRODUCTION TO BLADENSBURG

Welcome to the Town of Bladensburg! Nestled along the historic Anacostia River in Prince George's County, Maryland, Bladensburg is a proud, resilient, and forward-looking community rich in history, culture, and natural beauty. Our motto, *"Discovery Starts Here,"* reflects both our storied past and the exciting future we continue to build together.

Founded in 1742 and incorporated in 1854 as Prince George's County's first municipality, Bladensburg has played a significant role in the American story. From the Battle of Bladensburg during the War of 1812 to the nation's first unmanned balloon ascension, our town has long been a place of courage, innovation, and perseverance. Today, four preserved 18th-century structures stand as lasting reminders of our heritage while our community continues to create new chapters rooted in that proud history.

Bladensburg is a community shaped and strengthened by the people who call it home. We are a vibrant, multicultural town made up of hardworking residents from diverse backgrounds, including blue-collar workers, office professionals, entrepreneurs, service providers, and creatives alike. This diversity enriches our community, creating a dynamic blend of traditions, languages, cuisines, and experiences that foster unity, connection, and a strong sense of belonging.

Nature also plays a central role in Bladensburg's identity. The Anacostia River flows through our town, offering both beauty and opportunity. Bladensburg Waterfront Park serves as a treasured destination for residents and visitors alike, providing a peaceful setting for recreation, environmental education, and wildlife observation. Whether watching bald eagles soar overhead or enjoying a walk along the river, the natural landscape invites exploration, reflection, and discovery.

We are proud to participate in our second year of America in Bloom, a nationwide program that promotes community enhancement through environmental stewardship, beautification, and civic engagement. Through this initiative, we are enhancing public spaces, advancing sustainability efforts, and deepening community pride through vibrant plantings, cleaner streets, collaborative projects, and active resident participation. Bladensburg is flourishing, and our commitment to creating a beautiful, sustainable, and welcoming community continues to grow.

Our progress is further strengthened through regional collaboration. As one of the Port Towns, alongside Colmar Manor, Cottage City, and Edmonston, Bladensburg embraces a spirit of partnership and shared purpose. Together, we pursue initiatives that transcend municipal boundaries and enhance the quality of life throughout our region.

"Discovery Starts Here" serves as an invitation to residents and visitors alike to explore our history, experience our culture, connect with nature, and engage with the people who make Bladensburg special. Whether walking our trails, attending community events, visiting historic sites, or simply sharing a conversation with a neighbor, there is always something new to discover.

Bladensburg stands as a thriving community where history, culture, and innovation come together to shape a bright and promising future.

COMMUNITY VITALITY

The Town of Bladensburg demonstrates strong community vitality through active civic engagement, robust public programming, accessible recreational amenities, and a deep commitment to preserving and enhancing quality of life for residents of all ages and abilities. While small in size, Bladensburg offers a remarkable range of programs, partnerships, facilities, and events that foster social connections, encourage volunteerism, support local businesses, and celebrate the town's rich history and cultural diversity.

Civic Engagement and Volunteerism

Bladensburg residents are actively engaged in shaping their community through numerous committees, boards, volunteer groups, and educational programs.

The Town's Green Team serves as a leading force in environmental stewardship and beautification efforts. Since its revitalization, the Green Team has launched initiatives such as No Mow April, encouraging pollinator habitat and biodiversity throughout the community. Volunteers participate in three annual Clean and Green events, including the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service invasive vine removal project, a spring community planting and litter cleanup, and a fall cleanup event featuring document shredding and bulky trash disposal opportunities for residents.

The Town also supports an active Neighborhood Watch program that partners closely with the Bladensburg Police Department to promote public safety and strengthen relationships among neighbors.

In 2026, Bladensburg launched its first-ever Community Civics Academy, providing residents with a behind-the-scenes look at municipal government. Participants learned about the roles of elected officials and staff, explored municipal operations, and even participated in mock Town Council meetings. The Town also hosts annual Citizens Police Academies, Junior Police Academies, and a thriving Police Explorer Program that introduces middle and high school students to careers in public safety through educational sessions, leadership training, and field experiences. To foster economic vitality, the Town hosts quarterly Business Roundtable meetings that connect local businesses with Town leadership, encourage collaboration, and provide updates on municipal initiatives. Recently, Bladensburg secured funding to support façade improvements for local businesses, helping strengthen commercial corridors and enhance community appearance.

Potential Categories: Community Vitality, Environmental Initiatives, Floral Impact, Overall Impression

Communication and Community Outreach

The Town maintains a comprehensive communication strategy to ensure residents remain informed and engaged. Information regarding municipal policies, programs, events, and services is shared through monthly Town Council meetings, quarterly Saturday community meetings, an official Town website, social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube, TikTok, and LinkedIn, a weekly electronic newsletter titled *The Port*, and the quarterly print and digital publication, *The Bladensburg Chronicle*. Residents may also submit concerns through the Town's online Report a Concern portal.

These communication channels provide accessible information on government operations, recreation, public safety, sustainability initiatives, community events, and educational opportunities.

Potential Categories: Community Vitality, Overall Impression

Planning and Economic Development

Bladensburg continues to advance long-term planning and economic development initiatives. While the Town's previous Strategic Plan (2016-2021) has reached the end of its planning cycle, a comprehensive closeout report was completed in 2026 documenting accomplishments and ongoing initiatives. The Town is currently preparing to develop a new strategic plan that will guide future growth, economic development, sustainability, and community investment priorities.

Economic development efforts include business engagement initiatives, commercial façade improvement programs, and partnerships designed to support existing businesses while attracting future investment.

Potential Categories: Community Vitality, Overall Impression

Parks, Recreation, and Public Spaces

Bladensburg residents enjoy access to a wide array of parks, green spaces, and recreational opportunities.

Bladensburg Waterfront Park serves as the Town's signature recreational destination. Located along the Anacostia River, the park offers canoeing, kayaking, boating, fishing, bird watching, picnicking, playground facilities, and access to the nationally recognized Anacostia Riverwalk Trail, which connects residents and visitors to Washington, D.C. and communities throughout the region. The park also hosts summer concerts, yoga programs, environmental education activities, and the annual Waterfront Art Festival.

Wildlife viewing opportunities abound throughout the park, where visitors frequently observe bald eagles, great blue herons, osprey, and numerous migratory bird species.

Additional recreational amenities include David C. Harrington Park, featuring fitness stations, shaded seating areas, a gazebo, playground equipment, and gathering spaces; Bladensburg Memorial Grove Park, a contemplative public space honoring military veterans; Rosalie "Rosa" L. Bouldin Park; and the Town-owned 52nd Street Tot Lot, which provides neighborhood play opportunities for young children.

The Town also benefits from strong partnerships with Prince George's County facilities, including the Bladensburg Community Center, which offers a gymnasium, fitness room, art room, dance studio, and year-round programming for residents of all ages.

Public gathering spaces such as Town Hall, the Bladensburg Branch Library, community parks, faith-based institutions, and outdoor event venues provide accessible spaces for civic engagement and social interaction throughout the year.

Potential Categories: Community Vitality, Landscaped Areas, Urban Forestry, Environmental Initiatives, Overall Impression

Cultural, Educational, and Historic Assets

The Bladensburg Branch Library, reopened in 2023, has quickly become a cornerstone of community life. Inspired by the Town's maritime heritage, the architecturally distinctive building incorporates nautical themes throughout its design, including an interior children's play boat, meeting spaces, quiet study rooms, technology workstations, and flexible programming areas. The library offers educational, cultural, and recreational programs year-round for residents of all ages.

Bladensburg also benefits from strong partnerships with six public schools, local churches, and cultural institutions. Faith-based organizations, including Decatur Heights Baptist Church and Port Towns Church, regularly host food distributions, community gatherings, and outreach programs that strengthen neighborhood connections.

The Publick Playhouse serves as an important regional cultural asset, presenting theatre, dance, music, film, and family entertainment throughout the year.

Historic resources further contribute to community vitality. The B&O Railroad Red Caboose, located at Bladensburg Waterfront Park, celebrates its centennial in 2026 and remains a beloved local landmark connecting visitors to the Town's transportation history. Additionally, Ernest Maier, a family-owned business founded in 1926 and celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2026, continues to serve as both an economic anchor and a symbol of Bladensburg's enduring entrepreneurial spirit.

Potential Categories: Community Vitality, Historic Preservation, Overall Impression

Community Events and Celebrations

Community events serve as the heartbeat of Bladensburg, bringing together residents and visitors while celebrating the Town's diversity, history, and civic pride.

The Town's signature event, the annual Bladensburg Fireworks Celebration, now in its seventh year, has evolved into one of the region's premier Independence Day celebrations, attracting visitors from across Prince George's County and beyond.

Additional annual events include National Night Out, Bladensburg Day Festival and Parade, Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies, Juneteenth Paint & Unity, Eggstravaganza, Trunk or Treat, Coffee with a Cop, Black History Month celebrations, Senior Gala, Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway, Shop with a Cop, Yule Log celebration, Summer Jam, and numerous community cleanups and volunteer activities.

In 2026, the Town expanded its health and wellness programming by hosting its first Community Health Fair, connecting residents with health screenings, wellness resources, fitness activities, and educational opportunities. The Police Department also revived the popular Movie in the Park series, further enhancing family-friendly recreation opportunities.

Juneteenth Paint & Unity exemplifies Bladensburg's commitment to placemaking and public art. During the 2026 celebration, residents painted ten community benches constructed by the Department of Public Works, transforming functional public infrastructure into colorful works of art that will be installed throughout the community.

Potential Categories: Community Vitality, Floral Impact, Landscaped Areas, Environmental Initiatives, Overall Impression

Transportation, Accessibility, and Public Safety

Residents benefit from multiple transportation options, including Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) bus service connecting Bladensburg to Metro stations and destinations throughout the region. Senior transportation services provide additional mobility options for older adults, while bicycle rentals available at Bladensburg Waterfront Park encourage active transportation and recreation.

Bladensburg recently installed its first green roof bus shelter, demonstrating the Town's commitment to sustainability, stormwater management, urban cooling, and enhanced rider comfort.

Public safety remains a top priority. The Town is served by the Bladensburg Police Department and the Bladensburg Volunteer Fire Department, a dedicated all-volunteer organization that has faithfully protected the community for generations.

In 2026, Bladensburg secured \$450,000 in federal funding to launch a Gun Violence and Juvenile Diversion Program. The initiative will provide youth mentorship opportunities through boxing, educational technology, and gaming programs designed to engage and support young people throughout Prince George's County.

Potential Categories: Community Vitality, Environmental Initiatives, Urban Forestry, Overall Impression

Sustainability, Education, and Local Food Systems

Bladensburg is home to Eco City Farms, an innovative urban farming organization dedicated to cultivating healthy food, healthy communities, and healthy environments. Established in 2010 on a previously vacant lot in Bladensburg, Eco City Farms transformed underutilized land into a thriving urban farm and educational hub. The organization serves as a national model for sustainable urban agriculture and community-based food systems. Today, the Bladensburg Farm grows a wide variety of sustainably produced fruits, vegetables, herbs, and flowers while providing educational opportunities, workforce development, and hands-on training in urban farming practices. Through workshops, youth programming, volunteer opportunities, and partnerships with local schools and organizations, Eco City Farms connects residents to fresh, locally grown food and promotes environmental stewardship, nutrition, and food security. Eco City Farms also operates a farmers market and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, increasing access to healthy food options while supporting the local economy. The farm regularly welcomes visitors, students, researchers, and community groups, reinforcing Bladensburg's reputation as a leader in sustainability and innovation. What began as a vision to address food access and environmental challenges has grown into a vibrant community asset that strengthens social connections, educates future generations, and demonstrates how urban agriculture can positively transform communities.

Potential Categories: Community Vitality, Environmental Initiatives, Floral Impact, Landscaped Areas, Overall Impression



FLORAL IMPACT

Floral The Town of Bladensburg continues to strengthen its floral identity through strategic beautification efforts, sustainable landscaping practices, and partnerships that enhance both aesthetics and environmental health. Participation in America in Bloom has inspired the Town to expand floral displays, increase the use of native plantings, and create new opportunities for residents to engage with horticulture and community beautification.

Beautification of Public Spaces

Since joining America in Bloom, Bladensburg has significantly enhanced the appearance of its primary commercial corridor along 57th Avenue. In 2025, the Town installed decorative hanging flower baskets throughout the downtown corridor, introducing vibrant seasonal color and creating a welcoming streetscape for residents, businesses, and visitors. These floral displays contribute to a stronger sense of place while enhancing the pedestrian experience within the Town's commercial district.

Building upon this success, Bladensburg added six new self-watering slat planters along 57th Avenue in 2026. These attractive planters provide year-round visual interest and support sustainable landscape maintenance practices by reducing water consumption and improving plant health during periods of drought and extreme heat.

Together, these enhancements have transformed key public spaces, creating colorful, inviting streetscapes that encourage community pride and support local businesses.

Potential Categories: Floral Impact, Landscaped Areas, Community Vitality, Overall Impression

Native Plantings and Stormwater Management

Bladensburg recognizes that floral displays can provide ecological benefits in addition to aesthetic value. The Town has increasingly incorporated native plants and green infrastructure into public landscapes to improve environmental health, manage stormwater, and support pollinators and wildlife.

A new rain garden was recently installed in front of the Bladensburg Volunteer Fire Department, accompanied by interpretive signage that educates residents and visitors about the importance of green stormwater infrastructure. The rain garden captures and filters stormwater runoff while showcasing attractive native flowering plants and demonstrating sustainable landscaping practices.

An additional rain garden was established at the newly constructed Bladensburg Branch Library. Complementing this installation are two native plant habitat gardens that were created on the library grounds. These gardens feature native species selected to support pollinators, birds, and other wildlife while serving as outdoor learning spaces for library visitors, students, and community members.

These projects illustrate the Town's commitment to blending beauty, education, and environmental stewardship in highly visible public spaces.

Potential Categories: Floral Impact, Environmental Initiatives, Landscaped Areas, Urban Forestry, Community Vitality, Overall Impression

Community Gardening and Partnerships

Bladensburg continues to expand opportunities for residents to connect with nature and participate in hands-on horticultural activities. Through a partnership with Eco City Farms, the Town is developing a new community garden adjacent to Port Towns Elementary School. Once completed, the garden will provide residents, students, and families with opportunities to grow fresh produce, learn sustainable gardening practices, and strengthen community connections.

The community garden will complement the educational and agricultural work already taking place at Eco City Farms' flagship Bladensburg Farm, further reinforcing the Town's commitment to local food systems, environmental education, and community engagement.

By investing in community gardening initiatives, Bladensburg is cultivating both beautiful landscapes and stronger neighborhood relationships.

Potential Categories: Floral Impact, Community Vitality, Environmental Initiatives, Landscaped Areas, Overall Impression

Looking Forward

Bladensburg continues to build upon its beautification successes by incorporating floral displays, native landscapes, and green infrastructure into future projects and public spaces. Through partnerships, volunteer efforts, and strategic investments, the Town is creating landscapes that are visually appealing, environmentally beneficial, and reflective of community pride.

Participation in America in Bloom has accelerated these efforts and inspired residents, staff, and community partners to view flowers and landscaping as important tools for placemaking, sustainability, and civic engagement.

Potential Categories: Floral Impact, Community Vitality, Environmental Initiatives, Overall Impression



LANDSCAPED AREAS

The Town of Bladensburg recognizes that thoughtfully designed and maintained landscapes contribute significantly to community identity, environmental sustainability, and overall quality of life. Throughout the community, landscaped spaces incorporate a mix of native and ornamental plantings, public art, green infrastructure, and decorative features that enhance the beauty and functionality of public spaces while creating welcoming environments for residents and visitors.

Participation in America in Bloom has inspired Bladensburg to further invest in streetscape enhancements, creative placemaking, and sustainable landscape design. These efforts reflect the Town's commitment to creating attractive, vibrant, and environmentally responsible public spaces.

Town Hall Campus Enhancements

The Bladensburg Town Hall campus has undergone a remarkable transformation over the past two years and serves as a showcase for the Town's beautification efforts.

In 2025, ornamental rose bushes were installed at the entrance and exit points of the Town Hall parking lot, creating a colorful and inviting gateway for residents and visitors conducting business at Town Hall. The roses provide seasonal interest while softening the appearance of paved areas and enhancing curb appeal.

Additional enhancements were completed in 2026 to further improve the campus. A small decorative bridge, located within the Town Hall landscape, was replaced and intentionally maintained in a natural wood finish to complement the surrounding environment. Solar lighting was incorporated to improve visibility, safety, and nighttime aesthetics while supporting energy conservation goals.

A new green roof bus shelter was also constructed adjacent to Town Hall. This innovative feature combines transportation infrastructure with sustainable landscape design by incorporating vegetation atop the shelter structure. The green roof helps absorb stormwater, reduces urban heat island effects, provides habitat opportunities for pollinators, and enhances the visual character of the surrounding streetscape.

Together, these improvements have transformed the Town Hall campus into a welcoming civic space that reflects Bladensburg's commitment to beautification, sustainability, and placemaking.

Potential Categories: Landscaped Areas, Environmental Initiatives, Community Vitality, Floral Impact, Overall Impression

Creative Placemaking and Public Art

Bladensburg embraces creativity and adaptive reuse as important components of landscape design.

In 2026, the Town repurposed a retired canoe from Bladensburg Waterfront Park and transformed it into a decorative planter. Positioned near the green roof bus shelter, the canoe planter celebrates the Town's strong connection to the Anacostia River and its maritime heritage while creating a distinctive focal point within the landscape.

This unique feature exemplifies how public spaces can tell a community's story while adding visual interest and reinforcing local identity.

Potential Categories: Landscaped Areas, Community Vitality, Historic Preservation, Environmental Initiatives, Overall Impression

Library Landscape Enhancements

The newly constructed Bladensburg Branch Library continues to serve as a model for integrating landscape design, public art, and community identity.

In 2026, additional landscaping improvements were introduced to complement the library's nautical architectural theme. A new decorative planter was installed on the library grounds, further enhancing the site's visual appeal.

The Town also introduced its first moss-filled topiaries, featuring two heron sculptures prominently displayed at the library. The herons were intentionally selected as symbols of Bladensburg's natural and cultural heritage. Great blue herons and other wading birds are frequently observed along the Anacostia River and at Bladensburg Waterfront Park, while Blue Heron Way is one of the Town's recognized street names.

These living sculptures create a memorable sense of place, celebrate the community's environmental assets, and provide residents and visitors with an engaging and distinctive landscape feature.

Potential Categories: Landscaped Areas, Floral Impact, Community Vitality, Environmental Initiatives, Overall Impression

Community-Wide Landscape Philosophy

Bladensburg continually seeks opportunities to improve and expand landscaped areas throughout the community. Landscape enhancements are designed not only to beautify public spaces, but also to promote sustainability, celebrate local heritage, support pollinators and wildlife, and strengthen community pride.

Through the thoughtful incorporation of ornamental plantings, green infrastructure, public art, and creative placemaking, Bladensburg is creating landscapes that are both functional and inspiring. These investments contribute to a welcoming community environment and reinforce the Town's vision of being a beautiful, sustainable, and vibrant place to live, work, and visit.

Potential Categories: Landscaped Areas, Community Vitality, Environmental Initiatives, Floral Impact, Overall Impression



URBAN FORESTRY

The Town of Bladensburg recognizes trees as essential community assets that enhance environmental quality, improve public health, beautify neighborhoods, and contribute to a higher quality of life. Through strategic partnerships, proactive tree planting efforts, and community engagement, Bladensburg is steadily expanding and diversifying its urban tree canopy while promoting long-term environmental sustainability and resilience.

Tree City USA Recognition

In 2025, Bladensburg proudly earned designation as a Tree City USA community through the Arbor Day Foundation, recognizing the Town's commitment to sound urban forestry practices, tree stewardship, and community investment in its urban canopy.

Achieving Tree City USA status reflects Bladensburg's dedication to maintaining and expanding its tree resources through responsible management, public engagement, and ongoing investment in community greening initiatives. The designation also demonstrates the Town's commitment to preserving and enhancing one of its most valuable natural assets for future generations.

Potential Categories: Urban Forestry, Environmental Initiatives, Community Vitality, Overall Impression

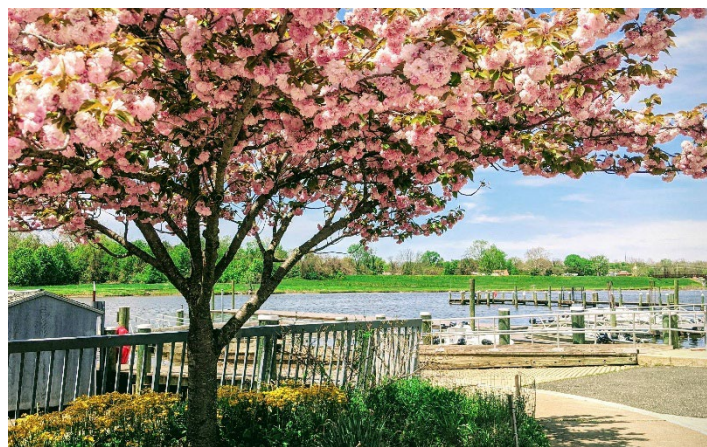
Expanding the Urban Tree Canopy

Bladensburg has made significant investments in expanding its tree canopy throughout the community. Since 2024, approximately 600 trees have been planted within the Town, dramatically increasing canopy coverage and enhancing streetscapes, neighborhoods, and public spaces.

A major milestone occurred in spring 2026 when the Town partnered with the Prince George's County Department of the Environment to plant 440 new trees within public rights-of-way throughout Bladensburg. The initiative focused on strategically increasing tree canopy in residential neighborhoods and along public streets, helping create greener, healthier, and more resilient communities.

Tree planting locations included numerous streets and neighborhoods throughout the Town, ensuring that the environmental, aesthetic, and social benefits of trees are shared broadly among residents.

Potential Categories: Urban Forestry, Environmental Initiatives, Community Vitality, Landscaped Areas, Overall Impression



ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

Environmental The Town of Bladensburg is committed to fostering a sustainable, resilient, and environmentally conscious community through policies, partnerships, education, and hands-on stewardship activities. Environmental sustainability is integrated into many aspects of Town operations and community life, reflecting a shared commitment among residents, elected officials, staff, volunteers, and partner organizations to protect and enhance the natural environment for future generations.

Community Stewardship and Public Engagement

Bladensburg recognizes that environmental sustainability begins with community participation. Since 2024, the Town has encouraged residents to participate in **No Mow April**, an initiative designed to support pollinators, improve biodiversity, and promote environmentally friendly landscaping practices. By delaying the first lawn mowing of the season, residents help provide early-season habitat and food sources for bees, butterflies, and other beneficial pollinators.

The initiative, championed by the Town's Green Team, has increased awareness about the important role residents play in supporting local ecosystems and has sparked broader conversations about sustainable landscape practices throughout the community.

Bladensburg also continues to promote civic pride and environmental stewardship through public awareness campaigns. Educational signage and outreach materials, including the Town's *"Keep Bladensburg Beautiful"* and *"Don't Be Bitter, Pick Up Your Litter"* campaigns, encourage residents and visitors to take an active role in maintaining clean and welcoming public spaces.

These initiatives reinforce the message that environmental stewardship is a shared community responsibility.

Potential Categories: Environmental Initiatives, Community Vitality, Overall Impression

Waste Reduction and Community Cleanliness

Maintaining a clean community remains a top priority for Bladensburg. The Town, in partnership with the Green Team and community volunteers, hosts three major community cleanup events annually.

Each January, residents participate in a Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service cleanup focused on removing invasive vines and litter from environmentally sensitive areas near Bladensburg Waterfront Park and behind the Publick Playhouse. Additional spring and fall Clean and Green events combine litter removal, beautification activities, and environmental education. The fall event also provides document shredding services and opportunities for residents to properly dispose of bulky items, helping reduce illegal dumping and promote responsible waste management. To further enhance litter prevention efforts, the Town currently utilizes Bigbelly solar-powered trash and recycling receptacles in key public spaces. In 2026, Bladensburg plans to install ten additional Bigbelly units throughout the community, expanding waste collection capacity while improving the appearance and cleanliness of public areas. These smart waste receptacles increase efficiency, reduce collection frequency, and support the Town's ongoing beautification and sustainability goals.

Potential Categories: Environmental Initiatives, Community Vitality, Landscaped Areas, Overall Impression

Education and Sustainability Resources

The Town provides residents with easy access to sustainability information through its dedicated Environmental Sustainability webpage. The online resource serves as a central hub for information related to environmental programs, volunteer opportunities, recycling initiatives, community cleanups, tree planting efforts, and sustainability best practices.

By making information readily accessible, the Town empowers residents to become active participants in environmental stewardship and sustainable living.

Potential Categories: Environmental Initiatives, Community Vitality, Overall Impression

Partnerships and Watershed Stewardship

Bladensburg's location along the Anacostia River makes watershed protection an essential component of the Town's environmental efforts.

A key partner in these efforts is the Anacostia Watershed Society (AWS), a nationally recognized nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the Anacostia River and its watershed. Headquartered in the historic George Washington House, also known as the Indian Queen Tavern, in Bladensburg, AWS works to improve water quality, restore habitat, advocate for environmental policies, and connect residents to the river through education and volunteerism.

Throughout the year, the organization hosts river cleanups, environmental education programs, paddling excursions, and volunteer restoration events that engage residents and visitors in protecting one of the region's most important natural resources.

The partnership between the Town and AWS strengthens local stewardship efforts while fostering greater appreciation for the Anacostia River and its ecological significance.

Potential Categories: Environmental Initiatives, Community Vitality, Historic Preservation, Urban Forestry, Overall Impression

Looking Forward

Bladensburg continues to expand its environmental initiatives through beautification projects, sustainable infrastructure, tree planting programs, green infrastructure installations, and community partnerships. By combining environmental education, volunteer engagement, and strategic investments, the Town is creating a healthier, cleaner, and more resilient community.

These ongoing efforts demonstrate Bladensburg's commitment to environmental leadership and its vision of ensuring that future generations inherit a community that is both sustainable and beautiful.

Potential Categories: Environmental Initiatives, Community Vitality, Urban Forestry, Landscaped Areas, Overall Impression



CELEBRATING HERITAGE

Bladensburg's heritage reflects a deep and enduring connection to American history, cultural diversity, and community identity. Founded in 1742, the Town continues to honor its past while actively preserving, interpreting, and celebrating the historic, cultural, and natural resources that define who we are today. Guided by the motto *"Discovery Starts Here,"* Bladensburg embraces its role as a steward of nationally significant landmarks, stories, and traditions that continue to shape civic pride and community engagement.

Historic Landmarks and Preservation

Bladensburg is home to some of the most significant historic sites in Prince George's County, many of which date back to the 18th century and earlier.

One of the Town's most important landmarks is **Bostwick House**, built in 1746. This historic mansion stands as a centerpiece of Bladensburg's preservation efforts and a symbol of its colonial-era heritage. In 2026, the Bladensburg Town Council unanimously approved a resolution supporting a comprehensive vision for the restoration and adaptive reuse of Bostwick House. The plan envisions the site as a vibrant cultural destination featuring event spaces, educational programming, walking trails, and the restoration of historic outbuildings, including a proposed wine tasting café and garden gathering space. This initiative represents both historic preservation and economic revitalization, ensuring that the property remains a living part of the community's future.

Additional 18th-century landmarks include the Market Master House, the Hilleary Magruder House, the George Washington House/Indian Queen Tavern, and St. Paul's Baptist Church, each contributing to Bladensburg's rich architectural and cultural legacy.

The Town also continues to support historic recognition efforts, including the Evergreen Cemetery, which received official historic site designation and a commemorative plaque in 2025, further honoring the community's layered history.

Potential Categories: Celebrating Heritage, Historic Preservation, Community Vitality, Overall Impression

Memorials and Commemoration

Bladensburg's landscape includes several significant memorial spaces that honor national service, sacrifice, and historic events.

The **Bladensburg Memorial Park** features multiple memorials dedicated to veterans of the Vietnam War, Korean War, and September 11, 2001, along with a Pearl Harbor memorial. These additions, installed in 2025 through the efforts of Eagle Scout Ethan Mendoza, reflect the Town's commitment to honoring those who served while providing a space for reflection and remembrance.

The iconic **Bladensburg Peace Cross**, which marked its 100th anniversary in 2025, remains one of the most recognizable and historically significant monuments in the region, symbolizing remembrance and national service.

The **Bladensburg Balloon Park**, uniquely designed in the shape of a hot air balloon, commemorates the Town's connection to the first manned balloon ascension in the United States, an important milestone in American aviation history. Nearby, the Battle of Bladensburg memorial honors the site of the 1814 conflict during the War of 1812, a defining moment in both local and national history.

Together, these memorials create a landscape of reflection, education, and remembrance that connects residents and visitors to the broader American story.

Potential Categories: Celebrating Heritage, Historic Preservation, Community Vitality, Landscaped Areas, Overall Impression

Cultural Traditions and Community Storytelling

Bladensburg's heritage is also expressed through its vibrant cultural traditions and ongoing storytelling efforts that highlight the diversity and lived experiences of its residents.

The Town celebrates Black History Month annually with programs that explore Bladensburg's Black history and encourage residents to engage with the community's historical narratives in meaningful and interactive ways. These events provide educational opportunities while strengthening cultural awareness and inclusion.

Bladensburg Day, revived after decades of hiatus, now serves as a signature festival and parade that showcases local organizations, schools, and community groups, reinforcing civic pride and community participation. The Town's annual Bladensburg Fireworks Celebration continues to grow in significance and, in 2026, features an America 250 theme along with mobile museum exhibits, including Sankofa and Star-Spangled Banner displays, bringing history to life through immersive storytelling and public engagement. Additional cultural celebrations include the Caribbean Heritage Festival at Bladensburg Waterfront Park and annual Cinco de Mayo and Mexican Independence Day celebrations hosted by local business owners, reflecting the Town's rich multicultural identity and inclusive community spirit.

Potential Categories: Celebrating Heritage, Community Vitality, Cultural Programming, Overall Impression

Education, Interpretation, and Media

Bladensburg continues to expand efforts to document and share its history through educational programming and media projects.

Patriotic Committee member Renee Green is currently producing a documentary on Bostwick House, scheduled for release later this year, further contributing to public awareness and historical interpretation.

Programs such as the Citizens Civics Academy and Police Explorer initiatives also incorporate elements of local history, civic education, and storytelling, helping residents of all ages connect with Bladensburg's past and present.

Potential Categories: Celebrating Heritage, Community Vitality, Historic Preservation, Overall Impression



OVERALL IMPRESSION

The Town of Bladensburg is actively working to strengthen its overall impression through intentional investments in infrastructure, streetscapes, public amenities, signage, and community-driven placemaking. These efforts are designed to enhance visual identity, improve safety and accessibility, reduce visual clutter, and create a welcoming environment that reflects community pride and character.

A consistent focus of Town initiatives is improving how residents and visitors experience Bladensburg at first glance, whether arriving by roadway, walking through neighborhoods, or visiting public facilities. Recent improvements demonstrate a clear commitment to elevating both appearance and functionality across the community.

Gateway Signage and Visual Identity

In 2024, Bladensburg completed the replacement of its town gateway signs for the first time in over two decades. The new signage features a refreshed design incorporating the Town seal in a bright yellow color palette that enhances visibility and reinforces community identity. These gateway signs serve as key entry points into the Town and establish a stronger sense of arrival and place for residents and visitors.

This update represents a major step forward in strengthening Bladensburg's brand identity and improving the visual coherence of its public-facing infrastructure.

Potential Categories: Overall Impression, Community Vitality, Landscaped Areas, Urban Forestry

Streetscape Enhancements and Public Amenities

Bladensburg has made significant improvements to its streetscapes, particularly along 57th Avenue, one of the Town's primary corridors.

In 2025, the Town installed five community-painted benches during its Juneteenth Paint & Unity event. These benches were created through direct resident participation, transforming functional infrastructure into public art that reflects community creativity and engagement. In 2026, the Department of Public Works expanded this initiative by constructing an additional ten benches for community painting. These benches are strategically placed in areas with limited seating, including bus stops and pedestrian corridors, improving comfort, accessibility, and usability of public space.

These efforts not only enhance visual appeal but also strengthen community ownership of shared spaces.

Potential Categories: Overall Impression, Community Vitality, Floral Impact, Landscaped Areas

Streetscape Infrastructure and Safety Improvements

The Town is currently upgrading its streetscape infrastructure along 57th Avenue with a coordinated focus on aesthetics, safety, and functionality. Annual banner installations on light poles introduce seasonal color and visual interest throughout the corridor.

In addition, new light poles have been installed to improve visibility and enhance pedestrian and vehicular safety. The Town is also in the process of replacing outdated gray street poles and green signage with a cohesive design featuring Bladensburg blue street poles, black hardware, and the Town's yellow seal. This updated design creates a consistent visual identity that strengthens the sense of place and reinforces community branding throughout the corridor.

These improvements significantly reduce visual clutter while enhancing the overall cohesion and appearance of the public realm.

Potential Categories: Overall Impression, Community Vitality, Urban Forestry, Landscaped Areas

Signature Public Facilities

Bladensburg's public facilities contribute strongly to its overall impression and serve as key anchors of community identity.

The Bladensburg Branch Library, opened in 2023, is a LEED Gold certified facility, reflecting high standards in environmental sustainability, energy efficiency, and green building design. LEED (Leadership in Energy and

Environmental Design) certification indicates that the building meets rigorous benchmarks for reduced environmental impact, improved indoor air quality, and long-term operational efficiency.

The library's striking nautical-inspired architectural design makes it a visual landmark along Annapolis Road while also providing residents with a modern, accessible, and multifunctional community resource space. Its presence enhances both the aesthetic character and functional vitality of the corridor.

Potential Categories: Overall Impression, Environmental Initiatives, Community Vitality, Landscaped Areas
Community Experience and Perception

Bladensburg's overall impression is shaped not only by infrastructure and design but also by the way residents and visitors experience the Town's public spaces. Investments in seating, lighting, signage, public art, and facility improvements collectively contribute to a more welcoming, safe, and attractive environment.

Through continued upgrades and community engagement, Bladensburg is actively reshaping perceptions of the Town while reinforcing pride among residents and strengthening its identity as a vibrant and evolving community.

Potential Categories: Overall Impression, Community Vitality, Floral Impact, Landscaped Areas, Environmental Initiatives



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

While the Town continues to build and expand opportunities for engagement, several established committees, programs, and partnerships already play a vital role in fostering participation and connecting residents to local government and community initiatives.

Civic Committees and Volunteer Groups

Bladensburg's **Patriotic Committee** plays an important role in planning and supporting major community observances and events throughout the year. This includes Memorial Day ceremonies, Veterans Day programs, Independence Day celebrations, and other commemorative activities that honor service members and promote civic pride. The committee helps ensure these events remain meaningful, organized, and inclusive for residents of all ages.

The **Green Team** supports the Town's environmental stewardship goals by organizing cleanup events, promoting sustainability initiatives, and encouraging resident participation in beautification and environmental education efforts. Key activities include No Mow April outreach, three annual community cleanups, invasive species removal near the waterfront, and seasonal planting and litter reduction events. The Green Team continues to grow as the Town seeks to increase volunteer participation and expand its impact.

The **Neighborhood Watch Program** works in partnership with the Bladensburg Police Department to enhance community safety, strengthen communication between residents and law enforcement, and encourage proactive engagement in crime prevention. This collaboration helps build trust while fostering a shared commitment to maintaining safe and connected neighborhoods.

The **Police Explorer Program** and related youth engagement initiatives provide opportunities for middle and high school students to learn about public safety careers through training, mentorship, and hands-on experiences. These programs help develop leadership skills while strengthening ties between youth and public safety professionals.

Potential Categories: Community Involvement, Community Vitality, Overall Impression

Partnerships and Community Investment

Bladensburg benefits from strong partnerships with nonprofit organizations and community-based institutions that expand opportunities for engagement and development.

The **Aman Memorial Trust** is a key partner in advancing the vision for the restoration and adaptive reuse of the historic Bostwick House. Through collaboration with the Town, the Trust supports planning, fundraising strategy, and long-term development efforts aimed at transforming the property into a cultural and community destination. This project will create new opportunities for public programming, educational experiences, and community gatherings that invite residents and visitors to actively engage with Bladensburg's history and future.

This partnership reflects a broader model of community investment that combines historic preservation, economic development, and public access.

Potential Categories: Community Involvement, Historic Preservation, Community Vitality, Overall Impression

Community Events and Public Engagement

Bladensburg offers a wide range of community events that encourage participation, volunteerism, and civic pride. Signature programs such as National Night Out, Bladensburg Day Festival and Parade, Juneteenth Paint & Unity, Shop with a Cop, Coffee with a Cop, and seasonal celebrations provide opportunities for residents to connect with one another and with Town staff, elected officials, and community partners.

These events rely heavily on volunteer participation and collaboration with local organizations, schools, faith-based groups, and businesses. They serve as key touchpoints for community engagement while fostering a strong sense of belonging and shared identity.

Potential Categories: Community Involvement, Community Vitality, Cultural Programming, Overall Impression

Community Feedback and Engagement Growth

The Town has also explored additional ways to increase resident participation through beautification contests and community-wide engagement initiatives. While previous beautification contests received limited participation and mixed feedback, the Town intentionally paused the program to reassess its structure and outreach approach. Bladensburg remains committed to reintroducing a refreshed and improved version of the initiative in the future, with a focus on stronger marketing, broader accessibility, and more meaningful incentives for participation. This adaptive approach reflects the Town's commitment to listening to residents and continuously improving engagement strategies based on community response.

Potential Categories: Community Involvement, Community Vitality, Overall Impression

Strengthening Future Engagement

The Town of Bladensburg continues to seek new ways to expand and deepen community involvement. Current priorities include increasing volunteer participation in existing programs, creating new opportunities for youth engagement, and developing additional partnerships with civic, educational, and nonprofit organizations. By building on existing programs and encouraging broader participation, the Town aims to strengthen civic pride, enhance communication, and ensure that residents have meaningful opportunities to contribute to the community's growth and success.

Potential Categories: Community Involvement, Community Vitality, Overall Impression



Community-painted bench – Juneteenth Paint & Unity Event

BEST IDEA

The best idea implemented in Bladensburg this year is the creation of the **upcycled canoe planter**, a long-envisioned placemaking concept that transforms retired canoes into functional public art and community landscaping features.

This idea connects directly to Bladensburg's identity as a riverfront community along the Anacostia River and builds on the recreational and historic role of canoeing at Bladensburg Waterfront Park. By repurposing a canoe into a planter, the Town has created a unique visual symbol that reflects both the natural environment and the lived experience of residents who use and enjoy the river.

The first installation of an upcycled canoe planter demonstrates how creativity, sustainability, and community pride can come together in a simple but powerful way. Positioned in a public-facing location, the canoe planter introduces seasonal plantings while serving as a distinctive landmark that immediately communicates place and identity. It turns a familiar recreational object into a lasting feature that blends horticulture with storytelling.

Beyond its visual impact, the project represents a practical example of environmental reuse. Instead of discarding retired materials, the Town has given them new life as functional landscape elements. This approach supports sustainability goals while also enhancing public spaces without significant infrastructure cost.

The concept also strengthens community branding. Visitors encountering the canoe planter are reminded of Bladensburg's connection to the river, its outdoor recreation opportunities, and its ongoing investment in beautification and creative design. It reinforces a sense of discovery and helps position Bladensburg as a town that values innovation rooted in local identity.

The success of this first installation has generated strong interest in expanding the concept throughout the community. Future opportunities include placing additional canoe planters in parks, along streetscapes, at gateways, and near public facilities. Each installation can be designed with seasonal plantings or themed displays, creating a network of recognizable features that tie the community together visually and culturally.

The upcycled canoe planter project reflects several key America in Bloom principles, including community vitality, environmental stewardship, floral impact, and overall impression. It demonstrates how small-scale, creative interventions can have a meaningful impact on how a community looks, feels, and is experienced.

Bladensburg's canoe planters are more than decorative features. They are storytelling pieces that connect residents and visitors to the river, to the town's history, and to its ongoing commitment to sustainability and place-based design.



ADVISOR VISIT ITINERARY

2026 America in Bloom Advisor Visit Itinerary

Bladensburg, Maryland

Advisors: Alex Pearl & Melanie Riggs

July 18–22, 2026

Saturday, July 18

Arrival Day

- Advisors arrive in Bladensburg.
-

Sunday, July 19

Welcome & Explore Day

- Advisors have time to familiarize themselves with the community.
-

Monday, July 20

Community Engagement, Neighborhoods & Environmental Stewardship

- Welcome and introductions at Bladensburg Town Hall
 - Town overview presentation highlighting:
 - America in Bloom progress
 - Community engagement
 - Beautification, sustainability, and economic development initiatives
 - Community and neighborhood tour
 - Lunch with Town staff and community partners
 - Visit to Bladensburg Branch Library
 - Environmental tour of Bladensburg Waterfront Park
 - Anacostia River and watershed restoration overview
 - Green Team and environmental stewardship initiatives
 - Evening dinner with Town leadership and community partners
-

Tuesday, July 21

Heritage, Beautification & Community Partnerships

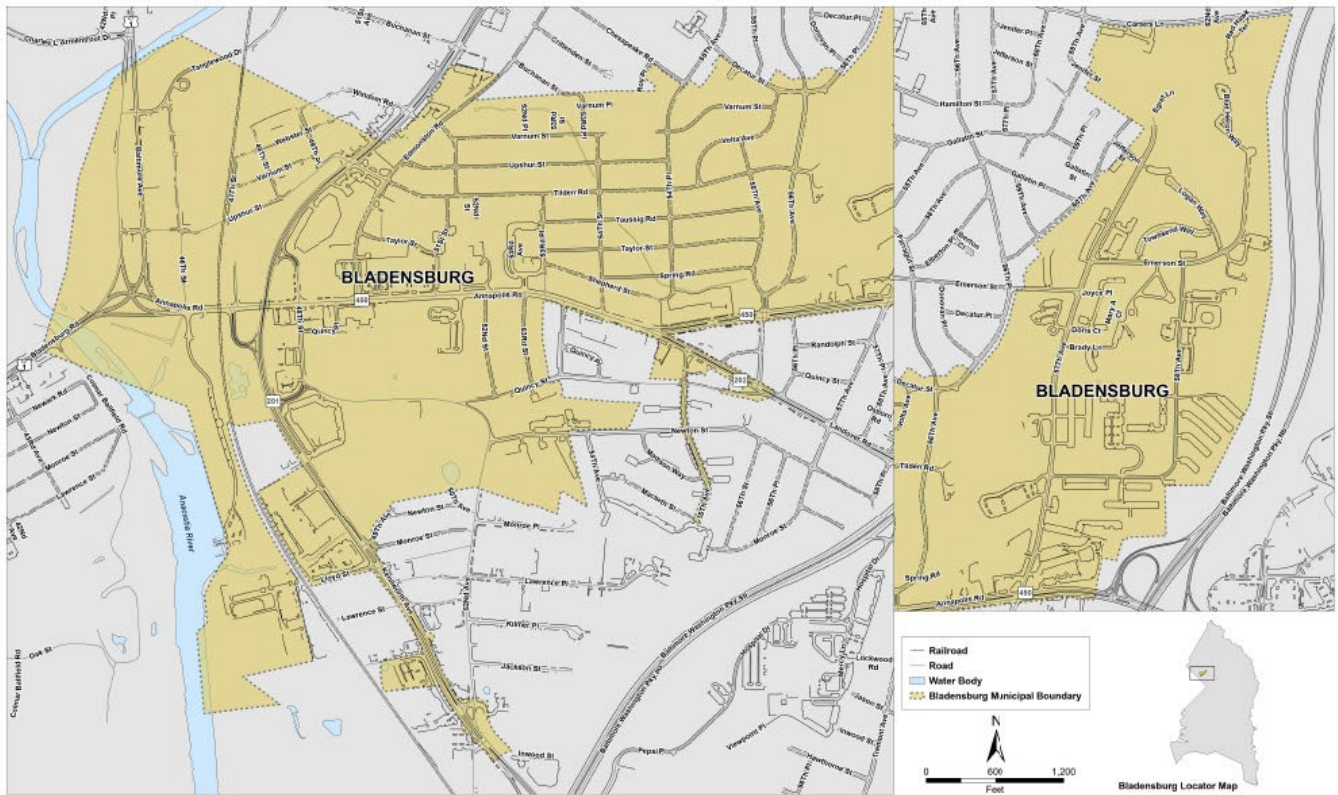
- Public Works, beautification, and economic development presentation
 - Visit to Eco City Farms and regional community assets
 - Lunch with community partners
 - Tour of Bladensburg's historic and cultural sites, including:
 - Bostwick Historic Home
 - Bladensburg Heritage Sites
 - Bladensburg Memorial Grove Park
 - Evening dinner
-

Wednesday, July 22

Departure Day

- Advisors depart following the conclusion of the visit.

COMMUNITY MAP



Town Of Bladensburg



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Prince George's County
Planning Department
Job #4632