



## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR MONTHLY MEMO

January 2025

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

Happy New Year! Despite the holiday season, the town of Bladensburg has been busy last month. We have continued to work on several projects and items to keep us moving forward for the betterment of our community.

### Exciting Improvements are Coming to Bladensburg in 2025!

The Town of Bladensburg is thrilled to announce several upcoming projects to enhance our community and infrastructure in the year ahead. Thanks to grant funding and collaborative efforts, these improvements aim to boost accessibility, sustainability, and community engagement.



### Highlights for 2025:

- **Additional Sidewalk Repairs:** \$255,000 in grant funding from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program will be used to repair and improve sidewalks, enhancing safety and accessibility throughout the Town.
- **Green Bus Shelters:** A \$60,000 grant from the Maryland Department of Energy will support the installation of eco-friendly bus shelters, promoting sustainability and comfort for transit users.
- **Energy Audits for the Port Town Facilities:** The Town was recently awarded funding that will support energy audits for all of the Port Towns.
- **57th Avenue Lighting Project (Phase 2):** Building on the success of Phase 1, this project will improve visibility and safety along 57th Avenue.
- **Town Hall Design and Outreach:** Starting January 2025, the Town will begin the design process for a new Town Hall, including community outreach to ensure the facility meets the needs of residents.
- **Bostwick House Study Completion:** By March 2025, the Town will conclude its events and structural study for Bostwick House, paving the way for adaptive reuse and future programming.

These initiatives reflect our commitment to creating a safer, greener, and more vibrant Bladensburg. Stay tuned for progress updates and opportunities to get involved!



### **Supporting Local Businesses: Business Roundtables 2025 | January 22, 2025 – Town Hall**

The Town of Bladensburg is committed to fostering a thriving local business community, and our Business Roundtable is at the heart of these efforts. Over the past year, Mayor Takisha James has led this initiative, creating a platform for business owners to connect, share insights, and collaborate with the Town.

In 2025, we are excited to expand this program by moving the Business Roundtable to lunchtime sessions, making it even more accessible to our business community. We are also proud to announce that Larry Hentz, Executive Director of the Prince George's Economic Development Corporation, will join us as a special guest.

These sessions offer a valuable opportunity to network, learn about growth resources, and contribute to shaping a supportive economic environment in Bladensburg. Stay tuned for dates and details. We look forward to seeing you at the table here at Town Hall on 1/22/25 from 11:30 AM to 1 PM.



### **Bostwick House | Technical Assistance Panel Report: *Exploring the Future of Bostwick House***

The Town of Bladensburg recently partnered with the Urban Land Institute for a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) to envision a sustainable future for the historic Bostwick House. Located at 3901 48th Street, this 18th-century gem has the potential to become a vital community hub.

The TAP brought together experts, community members, and key stakeholders over two days to develop recommendations for preserving the site's rich history while making it accessible and beneficial to residents. Ideas included adaptive reuse for urban farming, educational programs, and event spaces that honor Bostwick's past while meeting the Town's present needs.

Thanks to partnerships with the Aman Memorial Trust, the University of Maryland, and the Anacostia Watershed Society, Bostwick remains a cornerstone of Bladensburg's heritage. The TAP report highlights the importance of blending economic vitality, historic preservation, and community engagement to make Bostwick a vibrant asset for future generations. **Stay tuned for updates as the Town works to bring this vision to life! A copy of this report is available on the Town website.**

**Board of Supervisors of Election (BOSOE) Meeting Update** | The town of Bladensburg has a Board of Supervisors (BOSOE) that finished up 2024 strong, accomplishing many of the tasks assigned by the Council after the October 2023 election.



The board committed to ensuring a smooth and compliant election process in its most recent meetings. For further details or to access updated documents, please visit the town website or contact the Board of Elections Supervisors. In January, the Council will make some new appointments for the 2025-2027 term. If you are interested in volunteering, don't hesitate to get in touch with our Town Clerk/ Assistant Town Administrator, Regine Watson @ [clerk@bladensburgmd.gov](mailto:clerk@bladensburgmd.gov)

**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:



- **January 2025 Budget Review | Town Council Meeting**
  - On **January 13, 2025**, a comprehensive **Budget Review** for Fiscal Year 2025 will be held, and key budget issues and initial departmental needs will be presented and discussed.
- **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)**

### **Green Updates and Actions:** *Building a Sustainable Future*

The Town of Bladensburg is making strides in environmental sustainability with new initiatives to enhance our green infrastructure. Partnering with the Neighborhood Design Center (NDC) and utilizing funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), the Town completed a comprehensive tree canopy survey and report to guide our urban forestry strategy.



### **Key Highlights:**

- **Training Opportunities:** As part of the initiative, NDC will provide training sessions for Town staff and the Green Team to build expertise in tree care and canopy management.
- **Future Planting Plans:** The report includes suggestions for future tree plantings, recommendations for maintaining the current canopy, and identifying trees that may need replacement.
- **Tree City USA Designation:** Following the Town Council's approval to join the National Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA program, Bladensburg is committed to fostering a robust tree care strategy.
- **Resolutions and Ordinance:** In November and December 2024, the Council passed resolutions and a Tree Care Ordinance to formalize the Town's commitment to urban forestry.

These actions mark an exciting step forward in preserving and enhancing Bladensburg's natural beauty while promoting environmental health and sustainability for future generations.



**NDC and Town Hall Design | *Building a new future for the Town!*** We will meet with NDC this month to discuss the Town Hall planning process. This has been a long-term project for the Town Council. The implementation process will involve staff, council, and residents so that we can ensure that our facilities meet the town's overall needs. This project is the first step in allowing us to move forward and start community outreach in the spring of 2025.

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## **ANNEXATION: Annexation Update for the Town of Bladensburg**

For over 280 years, the Town of Bladensburg has witnessed much of our nation's history. Today, the Town Council is boldly pursuing growth and expansion to serve its community better. Many residents, property owners, and business owners located just outside the Town's limits have expressed interest in annexation, recognizing the benefits of Bladensburg's focused and dedicated services.

A public hearing on the annexation initiative was held on December 19, 2024 providing a forum for community input and discussion. The Town has also made comprehensive information and resources about the annexation process available on its website to ensure accessibility and transparency.

Bladensburg remains committed to seeking opportunities for thoughtful expansion and will continue to provide updates, keeping residents informed and engaged throughout the process. The Town is dedicated to ensuring all actions align with its vision for a vibrant and inclusive future.

Best Regards,

*Michelle Bailey-Hedgepeth*

Michelle Bailey-Hedgepeth, Town Administrator