



TOWN ADMINISTRATOR MONTHLY MEMO

June 2025

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

June is here! Summer is finally here, and the Town is heating up with activities and opportunities. This month's message will center around some of the town's Major items and activities.

FY 2026 Budget | As we navigate ongoing economic and political shifts, I remain deeply committed to ensuring financial responsibility and community well-being guide our decisions. The rising costs of goods and services, coupled with anticipated utility rate adjustments, pose challenges but also present a valuable opportunity for us to reassess priorities, strengthen fiscal practices, and invest where it matters most.



Throughout April 2025, we diligently reviewed and revised the FY 2026 budget, including during the Special Work Session held on April 29. At that meeting, the Town Council introduced additional adjustments designed to address the projected shortfall. These changes reflect our shared commitment to balancing the budget while maintaining high-quality services for our residents.

From the outset of the budget process, we have intentionally weighed the need for increased revenues against the importance of sustaining essential operations and programs. While initial drafts incorporated cost-of-living and merit-based salary increases, we have since explored a range of responsible options — including targeted expenditure reductions, strategic use of available grant funding, and selective adjustments to revenue sources — to reduce financial pressure without compromising service levels.

One example includes carefully examining our grant activity to maximize reimbursements and refining approaches to property and business tax rates to ensure equity and fairness. The most recent draft, completed on June 4, maintains the residential property tax rate at \$0.74 while requiring more equitable contributions from commercial and multifamily properties. We have also enacted a freeze on non-essential hiring and capital purchases, adjusted health insurance deductions, cuts to discretionary spending, and managed some personnel costs. We are committed to retaining a high level of Public Safety coverage for the community.

With continued input and collaboration from the staff, Council, and our residents, I am confident our most recent budget reflects our values, sustains core services, and supports the Town's future resilience.



Green Team Update | The Town will be approving a contract for two (2) green bus shelters in the Town. We are also working on several green projects that support our Sustainable Maryland agenda.

We're grateful for the growing support from residents and community partners and look forward to continuing our sustainability work together throughout the year.

Business Roundtable: The Town will hold its Quarterly Business Roundtable in late July 2025. During this last meeting, we were able to attract some new businesses and discuss updates from the most recent State legislative session. We continue to work with the other Port Towns to partner with us on this project and create a Port Towns Business Roundtable as we develop the new Community Development Corporation (CDC) for the Port Towns.

COG Update: On June 4, 2025, I attended the Washington Council of Governments (COG) Chief Administrative Officers Meeting. At this month's meeting, we heard a myriad of updates on grant programs and initiatives being offered to COG municipalities and others in the region. These meetings are helpful to provide the Town with exposure to regional issues and concerns.

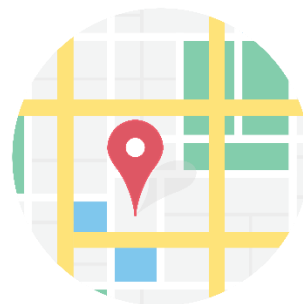


Upcoming Town Events: Below are the Town Events that will occur in June. Please look out for information on the various Town social media platforms:

Juneteenth: Paint & Unity

- Date: Friday, June 20
- Time: 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm
- Location: David C. Harrington Park

Town Annexation Update: The Town of Bladensburg is taking a bold step forward with its revised annexation plan, which reflects a focused and strategic approach to growth. While the Hospital Hill site is no longer part of the proposed area, the Town is actively finalizing a resolution to expand our municipal boundaries in alignment with community priorities and long-term planning goals. At the June 9, 2025, meeting, the Council will hold the final hearing on the annexation of Kenilworth Avenue and the adjoining parcels.



The Town remains committed to a transparent, inclusive, and forward-thinking approach to annexation. We invite all residents and stakeholders to stay engaged as we continue shaping a more connected, resilient, and prosperous Bladensburg.

More updates will follow as we make progress on this exciting initiative.

Items in Process for FY 2026: As we begin the new fiscal year in July 1, 2025, the Town is gearing up to start some key projects and make improvements:



1. CDBG Funding: On the June agenda, the Council will approve two contracts for Community Block Grant improvements that were approved by the County last year.
 - a. 57th Avenue Lighting: We are continuing to add lights on 57th Avenue to create a safer environment in the area.
 - b. Curb and Gutter project on Taussig: This bid came in lower than we expected, and we will be releasing more funds to cover additional streets.
2. America In Bloom: Have you noticed the flowers around Town? Our Public Works team has been sprucing up the town with new and improved public right of way landscaping and our banner program.
3. Technology Upgrades: Yes, it is 2025, and the Town will be moving many of its services online and moving away from manual processes. This will significantly enhance our ability to track and respond to issues, ultimately improving our service to the public.

There are just a few of the things planned for FY 2026, and I am excited to have been serving as your Town Administrator for almost two years.

If you have any questions, I am here to answer them!

Best Regards,

Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth,

Michelle Bailey-Hedgepeth, Town Administrator