

TOWN OF BLADENSBURG WORK SESSION | FEBRUARY 10, 2025

February 10, 2025 at 5:30 PM
4229 Edmonston RD, Bladensburg, MD 20710
AGENDA

Public Access Virtual via live stream of the Town's Facebook and YouTube pages:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoflhVTBelD3c9oH8GYSW0g

https://www.facebook.com/Bladensburgmd

- 1. Call to Order 1 min
- 2. Approval of Agenda 1 min
- 3. Approval of Minutes
 - A. Town Council Work Session Minutes I January 13, 2025
- 4. Financial Business
 - A. Approval and Adoption of FY 2024 Audit (7 Minutes)
 - B. 10-2025 | AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE FISCAL YEAR 2025 TO CLOSE OUT THE ARPA FUNDS. (5 minutes)
 - C. FY 2026 Budget Overview | FY 2025 Budget Update (10 minutes)

5. New Business

A. Appointments | BOSOE and Ethics Commission (7 minutes)

Resolution 14-2025 | Appointment of BOSOE Members for 2025 - 2027

Resolution 15-2025 | Appointment of Ethics Commission Members for 2025 - 2027

B. Resolution 16-2025 | A Resolution of Support for the Town of Bladensburg's Application to the Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns (G3) Grant Program (3 Minutes)

- C. Resolution 17-2025 | A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE PORT TOWNS APPLICATION FOR THE FY 2026 TRANSPORTATION LAND-USE CONNECTIONS (TLC) PROGRAM AND THE REGIONAL ROADWAY SAFETY PROGRAM (RRSP) (3 Minutes)
- Approval for a Contract with Ramos HR Consulting Inc for Human Resources Services (5 minutes)
- **E.** Trade School Update | February 2025 (5 minutes)
- F. Fleet Replacement Update | February 2025 (7 minutes)
- **G.** Law Enforcement Retirement (LEOPS) Update | February 2025 (5 minutes)
- H. Bostwick House Update | Community Activation Event | February 2025 (5 minutes)
- Strategic Plan Update | February 2025 (5 minutes)
- L. Council of Governments (COG) Update | February 2025 (3 minutes)

6. Adjournment



TOWN OF BLADENSBURG WORK SESSION | JANUARY 13, 2025

January 13, 2025, at 5:30 PM 4229 Edmonston RD, Bladensburg, MD 20710 MINUTES

Attendance: Mayor James, CM Brown, CM Blount, CM McBryde, CM Dixon, TA Bailey Hedgepeth, TC Watson, Treasurer Tinelli, Chief Collington and CE Supervisor Rinehart.

1. Call to Order

Mayor James called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

Mayor James called for a motion to approve the agenda. CM Brown moved the motion, CM Dixon seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

3. Presentations

4. Approval of Minutes

A. Town Council Work Session Minutes | December 9, 2024

Mayor James called for a motion to approve the December 9th Work Session minutes, CM Dixon moved the motion, CM McBryde seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

5. Unfinished Business

A. Legislative Session Update | January 2025

Mr. Perez and Mr. Brown presented legislative updates to the council. They discussed several key bills, such as zoning fairness, retail theft and proposed legislation, such as speed camera enforcement. They also provided information on the upcoming governor's budget release.

B. Presentation | NFWF Urban Forestry Update | January 2025

The Neighborhood Design Center presented updates on urban forestry. They discussed the benefits of trees, including their role in temperature reduction and overall community well-

being. They also highlighted the potential of planting 200 new trees in various locations throughout Bladensburg.

C. Presentation | Maryland 250th Anniversary Update

Town Administrator Bailey-Hedgepeth shared that the town is continuing to work on plans for the anniversary event. She noted that a small grant had been received to support the event. She also mentioned that appointments would be made by the Mayor in the next fiscal year.

D. ORDNANCE 09-2025 | AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH A FRAMEWORK FOR PROPER TREE MAINTENANCE – SECOND READING

Town Administrator Bailey-Hedgepeth read Ordinance 09-2025, which outlines the tree maintenance framework.

6. Financial Business

A. FY 2026 Budget Overview | FY 2025 Budget Update

Treasurer Tinelli reviewed the financial report through December 2024. He discussed key topics such as revenue collections and budget variances. He also shared that the town has begun planning for the FY 2026 budget.

7. New Business

A. Resolution 13-2025: A Resolution changing the Town's Resident Agent to Regine Watson,
Town Clerk.

Town Administrator Bailey-Hedgepeth explained the request to file a change with the State of Maryland regarding the Resident Agent. The current Resident Agent, the previous Town Clerk, needs to be updated to the new Town Clerk, Ms. Watson.

B. Appointments | BOSOE and Ethics Commission

Resolution 14-2025 | Appointment of BOSOE Members for 2025 - 2027

Resolution 15-2025 | Appointment of Ethics Commission Members for 2025 - 2027

Town Clerk Watson discussed the appointment of the BOSOE (Board of Supervisors of Elections) and the Ethics Commission. She recommended to the Mayor and Council that each new appointee be interviewed before the Council makes the final appointments.

C. Bostwick House Update | ULI Report Final – January 2025

Town Administrator Bailey-Hedgepeth provided a summary report for the Bostwick House.

D. PEPCO | Street Light Update – January 2025 (5 minutes)

Town Administrator Bailey-Hedgepeth provided an update on PEPCO streetlights. She explained PEPCO's process for adding new streetlights, as well as the procedures for replacing and repairing streetlights within the town. She also mentioned that she and the Chief attended the WSSC meeting regarding water usage.

8. Adjournment

Mayor James called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. CM Dixon moved the motion, and CM McBryde seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 pm



Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date: February 10, 2025	Submitted by: Vito Tinelli, Treasurer
Item Title: Approval and Adoption of FY 2024 Audit	
Approval and Adoption of FY 2024 Audit	
Work Session Item [X] Council Meeting Item [X]	Documentation Attached: Report Financial Statement
Recommended Action:	
Approval of Report for FY 2024: the Town Treasurer w Council Approval.	vill submit the audit to the State upon Town
Item Summary:	
Presenter: Vito Tinelli, Town Treasurer	
Background: The Town has completed it FY 2024 To by LGWG. These are the Independent Accountants' R the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund	eport on Applying Agreed Upon Procedures for
Staff will answer any questions on this item.	
Budgeted Item: Yes [] No []	Continued Date:
Budgeted Amount:	
One-Time Cost: Ongoing Cost:	
Council Priority: Yes [] No []	Approved Date:

1

Town of Bladensburg, Maryland

Financial Statements, Supplementary Information and Independent Auditor's Report

For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

DRAFT AUDIT

TOWN OF BLADENSBURG, MARYLAND Table of Contents June 30, 2024

<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	EXHIBIT
Independent Auditor's Report	
Management's Discussion and Analysis	
Basic Financial Statements:	
Government-Wide Financial Statements:	
Statement of Net Position	A-1
Statement of Program Activities	A-2
Fund Financial Statements:	
Governmental Funds Financial Statements:	
Balance Sheet	A-3
Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances	A-4
Reconciliation of the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances of Governmental Funds to the Statement of Program Activities	A-5
Notes to Financial Statements	A-6
Required Supplementary Information:	
Budgetary Comparison Schedule - General Fund	B-1
Notes to Required Supplementary Information	B-2
Schedule of Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability and Related Ratios	B-3
Schedule of Required Contributions	B-4
Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control over Financial Report and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial	rting

Statements Performed in Accordance with Government Auditing Standards

Independent Auditor's Report

To the Mayor and Council of the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinions

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the governmental activities, each major fund and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2024, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland's basic financial statements as listed in the table of contents.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, each major fund and the aggregate remaining fund information of the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland, as of June 30, 2024, and the respective changes in financial position for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinions

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinions.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland's ability to continue as a going concern for twelve months beyond the financial statement date, including any currently known information that may raise substantial doubt shortly thereafter.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinions. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and

therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and *Government Auditing Standards* will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override

of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and *Government Auditing Standards*, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control-related matters that we identified during the audit.

Required Supplementary Information

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require that the management's discussion and analysis and budgetary comparison information, proportionate share of the net pension liability and related ratios, and required contributions be presented to supplement the basic financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and, although not a part of the basic financial statements, is required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board who considers it to be an essential part of financial reporting for placing the basic financial statements in an appropriate operational, economic, or historical context. We have applied certain limited procedures to the required supplementary information in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America, which consisted of inquiries of management about the methods of preparing the information and comparing the information for consistency with management's responses to our inquiries, the basic financial statements, and other knowledge we obtained during our audit of the basic financial statements. We do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on the information because the limited procedures do not provide us with sufficient evidence to express an opinion or provide any assurance.

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated January xx, 2025, on our consideration of the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of Town of Bladensburg, Maryland's internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering Town of Bladensburg, Maryland's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

LSWG, P.A.

Rockville, Maryland January xx, 2025



Town of Bladensburg, Maryland Statement of Net Position For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

	vernmental <u>Activities</u>
Assets	
Cash and cash equivalents - unrestricted	\$ 235,301
Cash and cash equivalents - restricted	500
Investments	4,224,086
Investments - restricted	1,811,404
Accounts receivable	127,503
Amounts due from other governments	310,554
Prepaid expenses	196,391
Right to use subscription assets - net of amortization	78,627
Right to use leased assets - net of amortization	155,856
Capital assets - net of depreciation	 3,209,559
Total Assets	 10,349,781
Deferred Outflows of Resources	 1,466,132
Liabilities	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	301,446
Accrued salary	124,441
Accrued compensated absences	915,850
Long-term liabilities:	
Due within one year	70,502
Due in more than one year	 3,016,634
Total Liabilities	 4,428,873
Deferred Inflows of Resources	 1,307,386
Net Position	
Invested in capital assets, net of related debt	3,243,312
Restricted	551,917
Unrestricted	 2,284,425
Total Net Position	\$ 6,079,654

TOWN OF BLADENSBURG, MARYLAND

Statement of Program Activities For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

				Indirect		Progra	m Re	evenue	R	et (Expense) Revenue and Changes in Net Position Primary Government	
		_		Expense	(Charges for	_	erating Grants	G	overnmental	
Europeiona / Drograma		Expenses		Allocation		Services	and	Contributions		Activities	Total
Functions/Programs Primary Government											
Governmental Activities:											
General government	\$	2,836,198	\$	11,761	\$	222,725	\$	1,507,302	\$	(1,117,932)	\$ (1,117,932)
Public safety		6,963,871				1,260,578		331,389		(5,371,904)	(5,371,904)
Public works		1,231,151				/\		305,519		(925,632)	(925,632)
Interest	4	11,761		(11,761)			Щ			<u> </u>	
Total Governmental Activities	_	11,042,981	_	<u>-</u>	_	1,483,303	_	2,144,210		(7,415,468)	(7,415,468)
Total Primary Government	\$	11,042,981	\$		\$	1,483,303	\$	2,144,210		(7,415,468)	(7,415,468)
General Revenues											
Taxes											
State shared taxes										673,744	673,744
Property taxes										5,107,657	5,107,657
Interest income										442,193	442,193
Miscellaneous										204,057	 204,057
Total General Revenues										6,427,651	 6,427,651
Change in Net Position										(987,817)	(987,817)
Net Position, Beginning of Year										7,067,471	 7,067,471
Net Position, End of Year									\$	6,079,654	\$ 6,079,654

TOWN OF BLADENSBURG, MARYLAND

Balance Sheet Governmental Funds June 30, 2024

		General Fund	Special Revenue Fund	G	Total overnmental Funds
Assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	\$	235,301	\$	- \$	235,301
Restricted cash		500		-	500
Investments		4,224,086		-	4,224,086
Investments - restricted		1,811,404		-	1,811,404
Accounts receivable		127,503		-	127,503
Amounts due from other governments		310,554		-	310,554
Prepaid expenses		196,391			196,391
Total Assets		6,905,739			6,905,739
Deferred Outflows		<u> </u>		<u>-</u> _	<u>-</u>
Liabilities					
Accounts payable and accrued expenses		301,446		-	301,446
Accrued salaries		124,441		-	124,441
Accrued compensated absences - current portion		111,967			111,967
Total Liabilities		537,854			537,854
Deferred Inflows	+	876,806			876,806
Fund Balances Nonspendable		196,391		_	196,391
Restricted		551,917		_	551,917
Assigned		575,114		-	575,114
Committed		750,000		-	750,000
Unassigned		3,417,657		-	3,417,657
Total Fund Balances	\$	5,491,079	\$	- \$	5,491,079
Reconciliation of Total Governmental Fund Balances To Net					
Position of the Governmental Activities					
Total Governmental Fund Balances				\$	5,491,079
Right to use leased assets used in governmental activities are not financial					
resources and therefore not reported in the funds.					155,856
Right to use subscription assets used in governmental activities are not					70.627
financial resources and therefore not reported in the funds.	1_				78,627
Long-term liabilities, including compensated absences, are not due and payab in the current period and therefore are not reported in the funds.	le				(3,891,019)
Deferred inflows for property taxes not deferred in the statement of net position	on.				96,094
Deferred outflows of resources relating to pension contributions are not reported in the fund financial statements.					1,466,132
Deferred inflows of resources pertaining to net pension liability are not					
reported in the funds.					(526,674)
Capital assets used in governmental activities are not financial resources					
and therefore are not reported in the funds.					3,209,559
Net Position of Governmental Activities				\$	6,079,654

TOWN OF BLADENSBURG, MARYLAND Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances Governmental Funds For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

	General <u>Fund</u>	Special Revenue <u>Fund</u>	Total Governmental <u>Funds</u>
Revenues			
Taxes	\$ 5,771,876	\$ -	\$ 5,771,876
Intergovernmental revenues	684,754	-	684,754
Grant revenues	1,507,302	-	1,507,302
Licenses and permits	100,906	-	100,906
Franchise fees	121,529	-	121,529
Service charges	1,259,250	-	1,259,250
Other revenues	638,269		638,269
Total Revenues	10,083,886	-	10,083,886
Expenditures			
General government	1,234,884	-	1,234,884
Public safety	7,507,272	1,741	7,509,013
Public works	1,366,731		1,366,731
American Rescue Plan Act	1,495,353	_	1,495,353
Grants - restricted	14,443	-	14,443
Debt service - interest	4,867	-	4,867
Debt service - principal	96,276		96,276
Total Expenditures	11,719,826	1,741	11,721,567
Excess of revenues over (under) expenditures	(1,635,940)	(1,741)	(1,637,681)
Other Financing Sources			
Leases	56,084		56,084
Total Other Financing Sources	56,084		56,084
Net change in fund balance	(1,579,856)	(1,741)	(1,581,597)
Fund Balance - Beginning of Year	7,070,935	1,741	7,072,676
Fund Balance - End of Year	\$ 5,491,079	\$ -	\$ 5,491,079

Exhibit Sect

Section 4, Item A.

TOWN OF BLADENSBURG, MARYLAND

Reconciliation of the Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balances of Governmental Funds to the Statement of Program Activities For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

Net Change in Fund Balance - Governmental Funds	\$ (1,581,597)
Governmental funds report capital outlays as expenditures. However, in the statement of program activities, the cost of those assets is allocated over their estimated useful lives as depreciation expense. This is the amount by which depreciation exceeded or is less than capital outlays in the current period.	714,175
Changes in deferred inflows of resources relating to property taxes do not provide current financial resources and are not reported as revenue in the funds.	9,525
Right to use leased assets of \$45,761, which were capitalized net of amortization of \$62,778.	(17,017)
Right to use subscription assets of 26,181,which were capitalized net of amortization of \$27,887.	(1,706)
Repayment of long-term debt is an expenditure in the governmental funds, but the payment reduces long-term liabilities in the statement of net position.	47,317
Difference between accrual and modified accrual in accounting for compensated absences.	(120,536)
Pension expense pertaining to net pension liability is not reported in the funds.	(37,978)
Net Change in Net Position	\$ (987,817)

Note 1 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

A. Financial Reporting Entity

The Town of Bladensburg (Town) was established in 1854 and incorporated in 1947 under the laws of the State of Maryland. The Town operates under a Mayor-Council form of government consisting of a Mayor and Town Council. The Town provides the following services as authorized by its charter: streets, recreation, public safety, public works and community promotion. The basic financial statements of the Town have been prepared in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America (GAAP) as applied to governmental units. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is the accepted standard setting body for established governmental and financial reporting principles. The Town implemented accounting and financial reporting requirements of GASB Statements No. 34, Basic Financial Statements and Management's Discussion and Analysis for States and Local Governments. GASB Statement No. 34 added the following components to the financial statements:

<u>Management's Discussion and Analysis</u> – A narrative introduction and analytical overview of the government's financial activities. This analysis is similar to analysis the private sector provides in their annual reports.

Government-Wide Financial Statements – These include financial statements prepared using full accrual accounting for all of the government's activities. This approach includes not just current assets and liabilities (such as cash and accounts payable) but also capital assets and long-term liabilities (such as buildings and infrastructure, including bridges and roads). Accrual accounting also reports all of the revenues and cost of providing services each year, not just those received or paid in the current year or soon thereafter. The government-wide statements include the Statement of Net Position and the Statement of Program Activities.

<u>Statement of Net Position</u> – The Statement of Net Position displays the financial position of the Town. All assets, deferred outflows, liabilities and deferred inflows of resources associated with the operation of the Town are included on the Statement of Net Position. The net position of a government is broken into three categories –1) invested in capital assets, net of related debt; 2) restricted; and 3) unrestricted.

<u>Statement of Program Activities</u> – The Statement of Program Activities reports expenses and revenues in a format that focuses on the cost of each of the government's functions. The expense of individual functions is compared to the revenues generated directly by the function (for instance, through user charges or intergovernmental grants.)

Note 1 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

A. Financial Reporting Entity (continued)

<u>Budgetary Comparison Schedules</u> – Demonstrating compliance with the adopted budget is an important component of a government's accountability to the public. Many citizens participate in the process of establishing the annual operating budgets of state and local governments, and have a keen interest in following the actual financial progress of their governments over the course of the year. The Town and many other governments revise their original budgets over the course of the year for a variety of reasons.

The financial statements were prepared in accordance with GASB Statement No. 14, The Financial Reporting Entity, which establishes standards for defining and reporting on the financial reporting entity. The definition of the financial reporting entity is based upon the concept that elected officials are accountable to their constituents for their actions. One of the objectives of financial reporting is to provide users of financial statements with the basis for assessing the accountability of the elected officials. The financial reporting entity consists of the Town of Bladensburg. There are no organizations for which the Town is financially accountable and there are no component units of the Town.

B. Government-Wide and Fund Financial Statements

The basic financial statements include both government-wide (based on the Town as a whole) and fund financial statements. The reporting model focus is on both the Town as a whole and the fund financial statements, including the major individual funds of the governmental and business-type categories, as well as the fiduciary fund. The government-wide financial statements (i.e., the statement of net position and the statement of program activities) report information on all of the non-fiduciary activities of the Town. Governmental activities, which normally are supported by taxes and intergovernmental revenues, are reported separately from business-type activities, which primarily rely on fees and charges for support. The Town does not have any business-type activities at this time. The Town currently has no fiduciary funds reportable in the government-wide financial statements.

The statement of program activities demonstrates the degree to which the direct expenses of a given function are offset by program revenues. Direct expenses are those that are clearly identifiable with a specific function. Program revenues include 1) charges to customers or applicants who purchase, use, or directly benefit from goods, services or privileges provided by a given function and 2) grants and contributions that are restricted to meeting the operational or capital requirements of a particular function. Taxes and other items not properly included among program revenues are reported instead as general revenues.

Note 1 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

C. Measurement Focus, Basis of Accounting, and Financial Statement Presentation

The government-wide statements are reported using the economic resources measurement focus, and the accrual basis of accounting. Reimbursements are reported as a reduction to expenses. Revenues are recorded when earned and expenses are recorded when a liability is incurred, regardless of the timing of related cash flows. Property tax revenues are recognized in the year for which they are levied while grants are recognized when the grantor eligibility requirements are met.

Governmental fund financial statements are reported using the current financial resources measurement focus and the modified accrual basis of accounting. Revenues are recognized when they are both measurable and available. Available means collectible within the current period or soon enough thereafter to pay current liabilities. The Town considers revenue to be available if they are collected within 60 days of the end of the fiscal year. Expenditures are recorded when the related fund liability is incurred, except for general obligation debt principal and interest payments which are reported as expenditures in the year due. However, principal and interest on long-term debt, which has not matured, are recognized when paid.

Property taxes, franchise fees, utility taxes, licenses, intergovernmental revenues, and investment income associated with the current fiscal period are all considered to be susceptible to accrual and so have been recognized as revenues of the current fiscal period. All other revenue items are considered to be measurable and available only when cash is received by the government.

The Town reports unearned revenues on its governmental funds balance sheet. Unearned revenues arise from taxes levied in the current year which are for subsequent years' operations. For governmental fund financial statements unearned revenues arise when potential revenue does not meet both the "measurable" and "available" criteria for recognition in the current period. Unearned revenues also arise when resources are received before the Town has a legal claim to them, as when grant monies are received prior to the incurrence of qualifying expenditures. In subsequent periods, when both revenue recognition criteria are met, or when the Town has a legal claim to the resources, the liability for unearned revenue is removed from the balance sheet and revenue is recognized.

The Town reports the following governmental funds:

The General Fund – This is the Town's primary operating fund and it is major. It is used to account for all financial resources except those required to be accounted for in another fund.

The Special Revenue Fund – Used to account for the proceeds of specific revenue sources that are restricted by law or administrative action to expenditures for specific purposes. This fund is used to account for all financial resources pertaining to the Town's ATF program.

Note 1 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

D. Assets, Deferred Outflows, Liabilities, Deferred Inflows and Net Position

1. Deposits and Investments

Cash and cash equivalents, which are cash and short-term investments with maturities of three months or less, include cash on hand and demand deposit accounts.

2. Prepaid Expenses

Prepaid expenses record payments to vendors that benefit future reporting periods. Prepaid expenses are similarly reported in government-wide and fund financial statements.

3. Capital Assets

Capital assets, which include furniture, buildings, improvements/infrastructure, vehicles and equipment, furniture and equipment, and computer software assets are reported in the governmental column in the government-wide financial statements. Capital assets are defined by the government as assets with an initial, individual cost of more than \$1,000 or more. Such assets are recorded at historical cost or estimated historical cost if purchased or constructed. Donated capital assets are recorded at estimated fair market value at the date of donation. The costs of normal maintenance and repairs that do not add to the value of the asset or materially extend asset lives are not capitalized. Major outlays for capital assets and improvements are capitalized as projects are constructed.

Property, plant and equipment of the Town are depreciated using the straight-line method over the following estimated useful lives:

Vehicles and equipment – 3 to 20 years Buildings – 25 to 50 years Furniture and equipment – 8 years Improvements/Infrastructure – 10 to 50 years Computer software – 3 to 7 years

Note 1 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

D. Assets, Deferred Outflows, Liabilities, Deferred Inflows and Net Position (continued)

4. Compensated Absences

Town employees are granted vacation in carrying amounts based on length of service. The Town policies regarding vacation time permit employees to accumulate earned but unused vacation leave. Also, the Town allows the employees upon termination to be paid for 50% of their sick leave to a maximum amount of \$12,000. The liability for these compensated absences is recorded as long-term debt in the government-wide statements. Those amounts estimated to be liquated with expendable financial resources for the general fund are reported as an expenditure and a fund liability of the general fund.

5. Property Taxes

Property taxes for the current year were assessed and collected by Prince George's County and subsequently remitted to the Town. Property taxes are assessed on July 1st and are due and payable one half by September 30th and one half by December 31st. All unpaid taxes levied July 1st become delinquent on October 1st ad January 1st. The real property tax rate for the Town for fiscal year ended June 30, 2024 was \$.74 per \$100 of assessed value. The corporate and personal property tax rates for the Town for fiscal year June 30, 2024 was \$2.09 per \$100 of assessed value. Procedures for the collection of delinquent taxes by Prince George's County are provided for in the laws of Maryland. Delinquent taxes are considered fully collectible and therefore no allowance for uncollectible taxes is provided.

6. Leases

The Town recognizes has recorded right to use lease assets as a result of implementing Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 87. The right to use assets are initially measured at an amount equal to the initial measurement of the related lease liability plus any lease payments made prior to the lease term, less lease incentives, and plus ancillary charges necessary to place the lease into service. The right to use assets are amortized on a straight-line basis over the life of the related lease.

Note 1 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

D. Assets, Deferred Outflows, Liabilities, Deferred Inflows and Net Position (continued)

6. Leases (continued)

Key estimates and judgments related to leases include how the Town determines (1) the discount rate it uses to discount the expected lease payments to present value, (2) lease term, and (3) lease payments.

• The Town uses an estimated incremental borrowing rate as the discount rate for leases. The Town's estimated incremental borrowing rate is the Federal prime rate plus 2% at the commencement of the lease.

Right to use leased assets are reported in assets and lease liabilities are reported as long-term liabilities on the statement of net position.

7. Subscription Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITA)

The Town has recorded right of use subscription assets as a result of implementing GASB 96 – Subscription Based Information Technology Arrangements (SBITA). The right of use subscription assets are initially measured at the subscription liability plus payments associated with the SBITA contract made to the SBITA vendor at the commencement of the subscription term plus capitalized initial implementation costs. The right of use subscription assets should be amortized over the shorter of the subscription term or the useful life of the underlying IT assets.

8. Net Position

Net position represents the difference between assets and deferred outflows of resources, and liabilities and deferred inflows of resources on the government-wide financial statements. Net position is classified in the following categories:

Invested in capital assets, net of related debt – This amount consists of capital assets net of accumulated depreciation and reduced by outstanding debt that is attributed to the acquisition, construction, or improvement of the assets.

Note 1 - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

D. Assets, Deferred Outflows, Liabilities, Deferred Inflows and Net Position (continued)

8. Net Position (continued)

Restricted net position – This amount is restricted by creditors, grantors, contributors, laws or regulations of other governments.

Unrestricted net position – This amount is the net position that does not meet the definition of "Invested in capital assets, net of related debt" or "restricted net position".

9. Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported in the financial statements and accompanying notes. Accordingly, actual results could differ from those estimates.

10. Deferred Outflows/Inflows of Resources

In addition to assets, the statement of net position includes a separate section for deferred outflows of resources. This separate financial statement element, deferred outflows of resources, represents a consumption of net position that applies to a future period(s) and so will not be recognized as an outflow of resources (expense/expenditure) until then. See Note 5 for deferred outflows related to GASB. 68.

In addition to liabilities, the statement of net position will sometimes report a separate section for deferred inflows of resources. The separate financial statement element, *deferred inflows of resources*, represents an acquisition of net position that applies to a future period and so will not be recognized as an inflow of resources (revenue) until that time. The Town considers unearned property taxes and grant revenue collected but not spent to be deferred inflows of resources. See Note 5 for deferred inflows related to GASB No. 68 and Note 6 for deferred inflows related to grant revenue.

Note 2 – Reconciliation of Government-Wide and Fund Financial Statements

A. Explanation of certain differences between the governmental fund balance and the government-wide statement of net position:

The governmental fund balance sheet includes a reconciliation between fund balance – total government funds and net position – governmental activities as reported in the government-wide statement of net position.

Note 3 – Detailed Notes on All Funds

A. Deposits and Investments

Deposits

State statutes require all deposits be insured by the Federal Depository Insurance Corporation (FDIC) or fully collateralized.

Town administration is authorized to invest in those instruments authorized by Maryland Statutes.

At June 30, 2024, the carrying amount of the Town's deposits was \$231,513 and the bank balances totaled \$343,873. Of the bank balances, the entire amount was either insured by Federal Depository Insurance Corporation (FDIC), or balances exceeding FDIC limits are collateralized at local banks.

<u>Investments – Maryland Local Government Investment Pool</u>

The Town's investments are categorized to give an indication of the level of custodial credit risk assumed by the Town at year-end. Category 1 includes investments that are insured or registered or where securities are held by the Town or its agent, in the Town's name. Category 2 includes uninsured and unregistered investments for which the counterparty's trust department or agent in the Town's name holds the securities. Category 3 includes uninsured and unregistered investments where the securities are held by the financial institution's trust department or agent, but not in the Town's name. The Town holds no such investment at this time. The investments the Town holds are investments in the Maryland Local Government's Investment Pool.

Note 3 – Detailed Notes on All Funds (continued)

A. Deposits and Investments (continued)

The Town categorizes its fair value measurements within the fair value hierarchy established by generally accepted accounting principles. The hierarchy is based on the valuation inputs used to measure the fair value of the asset. Level 1 inputs are quoted prices in active markets for identical assets; Level 2 inputs are significant other observable inputs; Level 3 inputs are significantly unobservable inputs.

The Town has the following recurring fair value measurements as of June 30, 2024:

MLGIP mutual funds of \$6,035,490 are valued using quoted market prices (Level 1 inputs).

B. Receivables

Receivables as of June 30, 2024 for the Town's individual major governmental funds, in the aggregate, including the applicable allowances for uncollectible accounts, are as follows:

Receivables:

Property taxes	\$ 58,067
Speed camera receivables	69,436
Gross receivables	 127,503
Less: allowance or uncollectible	-
Total receivables - Net	\$ 127,503

Governmental funds report unearned revenue in connection with receivables for revenues that are not considered to be available to liquidate liabilities of the current period.

C. Right to Use Assets

Lease Assets

The Town has recorded right to use leased assets for leased equipment. The related leases are discussed in the commitments subsection of this note. The right to use lease assets are amortized on a straight line basis over the terms of the related leases.

Note 3 – Detailed Notes on All Funds (continued)

C. Right to Use Assets (continued)

Right to use activity for the year was as follows:

	В	eginning]	Ending	
	<u> </u>	Balance		Increases		Decreases		Balance	
Right to Use Assets									
Tasers	\$	136,745	\$	-	\$	-	\$	136,745	
Body camera		101,859		-		-		101,859	
Equipment				56,084		_		56,084	
Total Right to Use Assets		238,604		56,084		_		294,688	
Less accumulated amortization for:									
Tasers		60,775		30,388		-		91,163	
Body camera		15,279		20,372		-		35,651	
Equipment	_			12,018	М	<u> </u>		12,018	
Total Accumulated Amortization	_	76,054	Ш	62,778	Д	_		138,832	
Right to Use Assets, Net	\$	162,550	\$	(6,694)	\$		\$	155,856	

Subscription Assets

The Town has entered into a subscription based information technology arrangement (SBITA) involving body camera software. The total cost of the Town's subscription asset recorded is \$120,964, less accumulated amortization of \$42,337.

Future subscription payments under the SBITA agreement are as follows:

	Subscriptions							
Fiscal Year	P	rincipal	Iı	<u>iterest</u>	<u>Total</u>			
2025	\$	23,101	\$	3,081	\$	26,182		
2026		24,085		2,096		26,181		
2027		25,111		1,070		26,181		
2028		-		-		-		
2029		-		-		-		
Total	\$	72,297	\$	6,247	\$	78,544		

Exhibit A-6 Page 11 of 21

Town of Bladensburg, Maryland Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2024

Note 3 – Detailed Notes on All Funds (continued)

D. Due from Other Governments

Due from other governments represent accrued revenue at June 30, 2024 consisting of the following:

Governmental Activities:

Primary Government

General Fund:

 $\begin{array}{cc} \text{State} & \$260,968 \\ \text{County} & \underline{49,586} \\ \text{Total Primary Government} & \$310,554 \end{array}$

Governmental Funds:

Primary Government

General Fund:

State \$260,968 County 49,586

Total Primary Government \$310,554

Note 3 – Detailed Notes on All Funds (continued)

E. Capital Assets

Capital asset activity for the year ended June 30, 2024 was as follows:

	Beginning Balance Increases		Decreases	Ending Balance
Governmental Activities				
Capital assets, not being depreciated				
Land	\$ 17,448	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 17,448
Total capital assets, not				
being depreciated				
Capital assets being depreciated				
Buildings	1,602,422	-	-	1,602,422
Equipment	3,543,511	1,220,419	(30,585)	4,733,345
Improvements	1,017,798	AU	(175,791)	842,007
Total capital assets	6,163,731	1,220,419	(206,376)	7,177,774
being depreciated				
Total capital assets	6,181,179	1,220,419	(206,376)	7,195,222
Less accumulated depreciation for:				
Building	978,435	41,463	-	1,019,898
Equipment	2,169,979	391,099	(21,516)	2,539,562
Improvements	537,381	35,433	(146,611)	426,203
Total accumulated depreciation	3,685,795	467,995	(168,127)	3,985,663
Net capital assets	\$ 2,495,384	\$ 752,424	\$ (38,249)	\$3,209,559

Depreciation was charged to functions as follows:

Governmental activities	
General government	\$ 23,223
Public safety	319,981
Public works	 124,791
Total governmental activities depreciation expense	\$ 467,995

Note 3 – Detailed Notes on All Funds (continued)

F. Leases

The Town entered into agreements to lease certain equipment. The lease agreements qualify as other than short-term leases under GASB 87 and, therefore, have been recorded at the present value of the future minimum lease payments as of the date of their inception.

The first agreement was executed on January 1, 2021, to lease police equipment and requires 5 annual payments, the first payment is \$7,688 followed by 4 annual payments of \$17,300. The initial lease liability was recorded in the amount of \$62,422. As of June 30, 2024, the value of the lease liability is \$16,416. The lease liability is measured at a discount rate of 5.25%. The right to use asset is discussed in more detail in the Right to Use Asset section C of this note.

The second agreement was executed on September 15, 2022, to lease certain police equipment and requires five annual payments of \$22,075. The initial lease liability was recorded in the amount of \$101,859. As of June 30, 2024, the value of the lease liability is \$60,873. The lease liability was measured at a discount rate of 4.25%, which is the prime rate plus 2% at lease inception. The right to use asset is discussed in more detail in the right to use assets section C of this note.

The third agreement was executed on March 1, 2023 for a copier and requires monthly payments of \$1,101. The initial lease liability was recorded in the amount of \$56,084. As of June 30, 2024, the value of the lease liability is \$44,813. The lease liability was measured at a discount rate of 4.19%. As a result of the lease, the Town has recorded a right to use asset with a net book value of \$44,066 on June 30, 2024. The right to use asset is discussed in more detail in the right to use assets section C of this note.

The future minimum lease obligations and the net present value of these minimum lease payments as of June 30, 2024 are as follows:

Year Ending	Principal	Interest		
<u>June 30</u>	Payments	Payments	Total	
2025	\$ 47,401	\$ 5,179	\$ 52,580	
2026	32,321	2,960	35,281	
2027	33,714	1,567	35,281	
2028	8,667	137	8,804	
2029	-	-	-	
Total	\$ 122,103	\$ 9,843	\$ 131,946	

Note 3 – Detailed Notes on All Funds (continued)

F. Leases (continued)

The following summarizes the changes in long-term liabilities for the year ended June 30, 2024.

	Balance	Increase /	Balance	Due within
	June 30, 2023	(Decrease)	June 30, 2024	one year
Bonds payable	\$ 47,318	\$ (47,318)	\$ -	\$ -
Lease liabilities	111,779	10,324	122,103	47,401
Subscription liabilities	94,783	(22,486)	72,297	23,101
Pension liability	2,463,599	4,291,378	2,892,736	-
Accrued compensated				
absences	755,578	160,272	915,850	
Total	\$ 3,473,057	\$ 4,392,170	\$ 4,002,986	\$ 70,502

G. Fund Balance

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) has issued Statement No. 54, Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Type Definitions (GASB 54). This Statement defines the different types of fund balances that a governmental entity must use for financial reporting purposes. GASB 54 requires the fund balance amounts to be properly reported within one of the fund balance categories listed below:

Nonspendable fund balance – such as fund balance associated with inventories, prepaid expenses, long-term loans and notes receivable and property held for resale.

Restricted fund balance – includes amounts that can be spent only for the specific purposes stipulated by constitution, external resource providers or through enabling legislation.

Committed fund balance – includes amounts that can be used only for the specific purposes determined by a formal action of the Mayor and Council of the Town of Bladensburg.

Assigned fund balance – includes amounts to be used by the government for specific purposes but do not meet the criteria to be classified as restricted or committed.

Note 3 – Detailed Notes on All Funds (continued)

G. Fund Balance (continued)

Unassigned fund balance – is the residual classification for the government's general fund and includes all spendable amounts not contained in the other classifications.

Fund balances for the Town's governmental funds consisted of the following as of June 30, 2024:

Nonspendable Fund Balance

As of June 30, 2024, the Town has \$196,391 of prepaid expenses included in non-spendable fund balance.

Committed Fund Balance

The Town Council has established a reserve fund in the amount of \$750,000 (emergency fund).

Assigned Fund Balance

The Town's fiscal year 2024-2025 adopted budget contains a \$575,114 projected use of the fund balance.

Restricted Fund Balance

At June 30, 2024, this balance represents unspent highway user revenues in the amount of \$551,719.

Unassigned Fund Balance

All remaining fund balance in the general fund is unassigned. At June 30, 2024, this amount was \$3,417,657.

Order of Fund Balance Spending Policy

The Town's policy is to apply expenditures against non-spendable fund balance, restricted fund balance, committed fund balance, assigned fund balance, and unassigned fund balance at the end of the fiscal year. First non-spendable fund balance is determined. Then restricted fund balances for specific purposes are determined, followed by committed fund balance and assigned fund balance. Unassigned fund balance cannot fall to a negative balance.

Note 4 – Commitment and Contingencies

A. Risk Management

The Town is exposed to various risks of loss related to torts, theft of, damage to, and destruction of assets; errors and omissions; and natural disasters. The Town's general liability risks are financed through participation in the Local Government Insurance Trust Risk Pool. For the year ended June 30, 2024, the Town paid annual premiums of approximately \$145,512, respectively, to the pool for its general, auto, umbrella, punitive damages and property insurance coverage. There have been no assessments during the year ended June 30, 2024 and the amounts of settlements have not exceeded coverage for each of the past three years. The agreement with the pool provides that it will be self-sustaining through member premiums, and will reinsure through commercial companies for claims in excess of \$500,000. The Town continues to carry commercial insurance for employee health, life insurance and workers' compensation. Settled claims resulting from these risks have not exceeded commercial insurance coverage for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024. No significant reduction in insurance coverage have occurred in any of the past three fiscal years.

B. Contingent Liabilities

Grants

The Town receives financial assistance from federal, state and local governmental agencies in the form of grants. The disbursement of funds received under these programs generally requires compliance with terms and conditions specified in the grant agreements and are subject to audit by the grantor agencies. Any unallowed disbursements resulting from such audits could become a liability of the Town. In the opinion of Town management, no material refunds will be required as a result of unallowed disbursements (if any), by the grantor agencies.

Litigation

In the normal course of business, the Town is a defendant in lawsuits and other claims. The outcome of these claims and lawsuits cannot be reasonably estimated. Therefore, a reserve has not been established. Management believes that such lawsuits and claims will not have a material adverse impact on the Town's financial condition.

Exhibit A-6 Page 17 of 21

Town of Bladensburg, Maryland Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2024

Note 5 – Retirement Plans

Cost Sharing Multi-Employer Defined Benefit Plan

The Town has previously implemented GASB Statement No. 68, *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Pensions* (GASB No. 68) which requires governments providing defined benefit pensions to recognize their long-term obligation for pension benefits as a liability and to more comprehensively and comparably measure the annual costs of pension benefits.

The Town has also previously adopted GASB Statement No. 71, Pension Transition for Contributions Made Subsequent to the Measurement Date – An Amendment of GASB No. 68. GASB No. 71 requires that contributions to the pension plan subsequent to the measurement date be recognized as a deferred outflow of resources. The Town's fiscal year 2024 contribution of \$425,141 is therefore recognized as a pension-related deferred outflow of resources.

Plan description – On July 1, 2007, the Town entered into the State of Maryland Retirement and Pension System (System). The System was established by the State Personnel and Pensions Article of Annotated Code of Maryland. Responsibility for the System's administration and operation is vested in a 15 member Board of Trustees. The System provides retirement benefits to employees of participating governmental units. Pension benefits are calculated using both the highest three consecutive years' average final compensation (AFC) and the actual number of years of accumulated creditable service. In addition, the pension benefits attributable to service are subject to cost of living adjustments (COLA) that is based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and capped at 2.5% or 1% based on whether the market value investment return for the preceding calendar year was higher or lower than the investment return assumption used in the calculation. There is no indication that the plan is closed to new entrants. This system is handled by the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System, an agent that acts as a common investment and administrative agent for political subdivisions in the State of Maryland, and is, therefore, not reflected as a Town pension trust fund.

Under the terms of the Pension System, a member may retire after 30 years of service regardless of age, at age 65 with two years of service, at age 64 with three years of service, at age 63 with four years of service or at age 62 with at least five years of service. An employee may also take early retirement with reduced benefits at age 55 with 15 years of service.

A member is eligible for vesting after 5 years of service; however, the contribution must be left in the Pension System in order for benefits at age 62. Benefits under the Pension System are established under Titles 22 and 23, respectively, of the State Personnel and Pensions Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

Exhibit A-6 Page 18 of 21

Town of Bladensburg, Maryland Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2024

Note 5 – Retirement Plans (continued)

Cost Sharing Multi-Employer Defined Benefit Plan (continued)

There are currently 52 active Town employees, 14 inactive Town employees and 16 retired Town employees in the System. Actual System contributions billed to the Town are used as a basis for determining each employer's proportionate share of the collective pension amounts reported in the Schedule of Employer Allocations. The contribution rate for the year ended June 30, 2024 was 11.32%.

The Maryland Pension System issues a annual comprehensive financial report. The report can be obtained from the agency's offices.

State Retirement and Pension System of Maryland Attn: Melody Countess, CPA, CGMA 120 E. Baltimore Street, Suite 1660 Baltimore, Maryland 21202-1600

Net Pension Liability – the pension liability is determined using the individual entry age normal cost method. Under this method, actuarial present value of all future plan benefits that are expected to be paid to each active, terminated vested, and retired participant as of the measurement date is computed. For each active participant this is broken down between the portion that remains to be funded by future entry age normal costs based on a percentage of such participants expected future compensation, and the portion that is attributable to prior service. The latter is referred to as the entry age accrued liability.

Discount rate – a single discount rate of 6.80% was used to measure the total pension liability. This single discount rate was based on the expected rate of return on pension plan investments of 6.80%. The projection of cash flows used to determine this single discount rate assumed that plan member contributions will be made at the current contribution rate and that employer contributions will be made at rates equal to the difference between actuarially determined contribution rates and the member rates. Based on these assumptions, the System's net position was projected to be available to make all projected future benefit payments of current plan members.

Therefore, the long-term expected rate of return on pension plan investments was applied to all periods of projected benefit payments to determine the total pension liability.

Note 5 – Retirement Plans (continued)

Cost Sharing Multi-Employer Defined Benefit Plan (continued)

The net pension liability if the discount rate changes plus 1% or minus 1% from the discount rate used in the current projection is as follows:

		Current	
	1%	Discount	1%
	Decrease	Rate	Increase
	<u>(5.80%)</u>	<u>(6.80%)</u>	<u>(7.80%)</u>
Town's net pension liability	\$ 4,289,342	\$ 2,892,736	\$ 1,733,795

Other information – the measurement period is July 1st through June 30th. The valuation date is June 30, 2023 as this was the latest period available. There are no changes to the benefit terms.

Key Actuarial Assumptions — The rate of return on investments is 6.80%. The inflation assumption was 2.25% for general and 2.75% for wage. Salary increases from 2.75% to 11.25%, including wage inflation. The fully generational — PB-2010/MP2018 for males and females mortality tables were used. The amortization method is the level percentage of payroll, closed.

The Town's annual required contribution was \$425,141 for the year ended June 30, 2024, which is the same as the annual pension cost. The contributions made for fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 was \$425,141.

Deferred inflows and outflows – With the implementation of GASB Statement 68, deferred inflows and outflows are reported on the Statement of Net Position. The deferred inflows consist of changes in pension investment activity in the amount of \$526,674, for the year ended June 30, 2024, and will be amortized to income over the next 5 years. The Town's deferred outflows include changes in pension assumptions of \$1,466,132, for 2024 and will be amortized to expense over the next 5 years. The 2024 pension contribution was \$425,141. The pension contribution will reduce the net pension liability in the next fiscal year, and the changes in pension assumptions will be amortized over 23 years beginning July 1, 2015.

Money Purchase Plan

The Town established a 401A money purchase retirement plan to benefit employees by providing funds for retirement. All full time employees hired were required to contribute to the plan. In 2007, when the Town entered into the State of Maryland Retirement and Pension System, contributions to the 401A money purchase plan were no longer made. The 401A money purchase plan has a forfeiture amount of approximately \$103,000 which can be used to fund future contributions.

Town of Bladensburg, Maryland Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2024

Note 5 – Retirement Plans (continued)

457 Deferred Compensation Plan

The Town established a Governmental 457 deferred compensation plan available to all Town employees, which was established in accordance with Internal Revenue Code Section 457. This plan allows pretax deferrals from employees up to the maximum set by IRS regulations. Employees are fully vested in the pretax deferrals made to this plan.

Note 6 – Deferred Inflows

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was signed into Federal law in March of 2021, and established the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) program. This program provides financial support to State and Local governments in responding to the economic and public health impacts of COVID-19 and in their efforts to contain impacts on their communities, residents, and businesses. These funds may be used to cover eligible program costs incurred during the period beginning on March 3, 2021 and ending on December 31, 2024, as long as the award funds incurred by December 31, 2024 are expended by December 31, 2026. Any funds not obligated or expended for eligible uses during this period must be returned to the U.S. Treasury.

The Town applied for and was awarded SLFRF funding passed through the State of Maryland in the amount of \$4,933,972 of which \$2,466,986 was received in August of 2021. On August 5, 2022, the Town received its second payment in the amount of \$2,466,986. Revenue recognition of these funds will be deferred until the related eligible expenditures are incurred.

Eligible expenditures incurred during the fiscal year was \$1,495,353. The remaining \$780,712 has been included in deferred inflows at June 30, 2024.

Deferred inflows consist of the following on the Statement of Net Position as of June 30, 2024:

Grant funds received but not yet spent	\$	780,712
Actuarial assumptions and investment return	l	
On the State retirement plan		526,674
Total Deferred inflows	<u>\$1</u>	,307,386

Deferred inflows consist of the following on the Balance Sheet – Governmental Funds as of June 30, 2024:

Grant funds received but not yet spent	\$ 780,712
Property taxes	 96,094
Total Deferred inflows	\$ 876,806

Exhibit A-6 Page 21 of 21

Town of Bladensburg, Maryland Notes to Financial Statements June 30, 2024

Note 7 – Subsequent Events

Management has evaluated subsequent events through January xx, 2025, the date that the financial statements were available to be issued. There were no significant events to report.



REQUIRED SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

DRAFT AUDIT

Page 1 of 4

Town of Bladensburg, Maryland Required Supplementary Information Budgetary Comparison Schedule General Fund For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

	Budgeted	Variance with Final Budget Positive			
	<u>Original</u>	<u>Final</u>	Amounts	(Negative)	
Revenues					
Property Taxes					
Real Estate tax	\$ 4,179,813	\$ 4,179,813	\$ 4,189,678	\$ 9,865	
Personal property tax	1,045,000	1,045,000	908,454	(136,546)	
State Shared					
Income tax	600,000	600,000	663,911	63,911	
Admissions and amusement tax	40,000	40,000	9,833	(30,167)	
Total Taxes	5,864,813	5,864,813	5,771,876	(92,937)	
Licenses and Permits					
County traders license	15,000	15,000	9,944	(5,056)	
Local business license	80,000	80,000	90,962	10,962	
Total Licenses and Permits	95,000	95,000	100,906	5,906	
Intergovernmental - state					
Highway user revenue	285,200	285,200	283,033	(2,167)	
Bond bill	150,000	150,000	45,474	(104,526)	
State grant for police	300,000	300,000	331,389	31,389	
Total Intergovernmental - State	735,200	735,200	659,896	(75,304)	
Intergovernmental - county					
County disposal fee rebate	22,484	22,484	22,486	2	
Financial - bank stock tax	2,372	2,372	2,372	<u>-</u>	
Total Intergovernmental - County	24,856	24,856	24,858	2	
Total Intergovernmental	760,056	760,056	684,754	(75,302)	
Grant Revenue					
American Rescue Plan Act revenue	2,288,134	2,288,134	1,495,352	(792,782)	
Federal earmark	150,000	150,000	-	(150,000)	
Other grants	10,000	10,000	4,500	(5,500)	
Community legacy	165,000	290,000	7,450	(282,550)	
Total Grant Revenue	\$ 2,613,134	\$ 2,738,134	\$ 1,507,302	\$ (1,230,832)	

Page 2 of 4

Town of Bladensburg, Maryland Required Supplementary Information Budgetary Comparison Schedule General Fund For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

		d Amounts	Actual	Variance with Final Budget Positive
	<u>Original</u>	<u>Final</u>	Amounts	(Negative)
Service Charges				
Local fines	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 31,057	\$ 16,057
Copier fees	3,000	3,000	290	(2,710)
Automated traffic enforcement	1,000,000	1,293,418	1,227,903	(65,515)
Fingerprinting	1,000	1,000		(1,000)
Total Service Charges	1,019,000	1,312,418	1,259,250	(53,168)
Franchise Fees				
Cable franchise fees	110,000	110,000	121,529	11,529
Total Franchise Fees	110,000	110,000	121,529	11,529
Other Revenues				
Interest	80,000	80,000	442,193	362,193
Miscellaneous revenues	2,000	2,000	9,527	7,527
Insurance reimbursements	60,000	60,000	139,824	79,824
Bus shelter advertising	2,000	2,000	-	(2,000)
Vehicle deployment	7,000	7,000	7,225	225
Property rental	42,000	42,000	39,500	(2,500)
Total Other Revenues	193,000	193,000	638,269	445,269
Total Revenues	\$ 10,655,003	\$ 11,073,421	\$ 10,083,886	\$ (989,535)

Page 3 of 4

Town of Bladensburg, Maryland Required Supplementary Information Budgetary Comparison Schedule General Fund For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

	Budgeted	l Amounts	Actual	Variance with Final Budget Positive
	<u>Original</u>	<u>Final</u>	Amounts	(Negative)
General Government				
Mayor, Council and Town Clerk				
Compensation	\$ 384,051	\$ 384,051	\$ 284,558	\$ 99,493
General administration	229,122	229,122	250,474	(21,352)
Total Mayor, Council and				
Town Clerk	613,173	613,173	535,032	78,141
Town Administration				
Compensation	193,783	193,783	190,155	3,628
General administration	243,960	243,960	163,076	80,884
Capital outlay			25,000	(25,000)
Total Town Administration	437,743	437,743	378,231	59,512
Finance				
Compensation	250,164	250,164	260,572	(10,408)
General administration	52,460	52,460	61,049	(8,589)
Total Finance	302,624	302,624	321,621	(18,997)
Total General Government	1,353,540	1,353,540	1,234,884	118,656
Public Safety				
Police Department				
Compensation	4,489,320	4,781,319	5,163,380	(382,061)
General administration	864,500	879,500	1,143,338	(263,838)
Capital Outlay	308,000	979,418	1,200,554	(221,136)
Total Police Department	5,661,820	6,640,237	7,507,272	(867,035)
Total Public Safety	\$ 5,661,820	\$ 6,640,237	\$ 7,507,272	\$ (867,035)

Continued 42

Page 4 of 4

Town of Bladensburg, Maryland Required Supplementary Information Budgetary Comparison Schedule General Fund For the Year Ended June 30, 2024

	<u>Budgeted</u>	Variance with Final Budget Positive			
	<u>Original</u>	<u>Final</u>	Amounts	(Negative)	
Public Works				·	
Compensation	\$ 496,768	\$ 496,768	\$ 472,434	\$ 24,334	
General administration	579,000	579,000	605,180	(26,180)	
Capital outlay	208,000	208,000	289,117	(81,117)	
Total Public Works	1,283,768	1,283,768	1,366,731	(82,963)	
American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)					
Compensation	642,134	742,134	668,291	73,843	
Program expenses	1,146,000	971,000	733,189	237,811	
Capital outlay	500,000	575,000	93,873	481,127	
Total American Rescue Plan Act	2,288,134	2,288,134	1,495,353	792,781	
Debt Service					
Interest	-		4,867	(4,867)	
Principal	87,000	87,000	96,276	(9,276)	
Total Debt Service	87,000	87,000	101,143	(14,143)	
Grants - Restricted	175,000	300,000	14,443	285,557	
Capital Projects - Federal/State funds	300,000	300,000		300,000	
Total Expenditures	\$ 11,149,262	\$ 12,252,679	\$ 11,719,826	\$ 532,853	

Exhibit B-2

Town of Bladensburg, Maryland Notes to Required Supplementary Information June 30, 2024

Note 1 - Summary of Significant Budget Policies

The Town Council annually adopts a budget for the General Fund of the primary government. All appropriations are legally controlled at the departmental level for the General Fund. On June 12, 2023 the Town Council approved the original adopted budget for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024. On February 12, 2024, the Town Council approved the revised budget reflected in the financial statements for fiscal year ended June 30, 2024.

The budget is integrated into the accounting system, and the budgetary data, as presented in the financial statements for all funds with annual budgets, compare the expenditures with the amended budgets. All budgets are presented on the modified accrual basis of accounting. Accordingly, the accompanying Budgetary Comparison Schedule for the General Fund presents actual expenditures in accordance with the accounting principles generally accepted in the United States on a basis consistent with the legally adopted budgets as amended. Unexpended appropriations on annual budgets lapse at the end of each fiscal year.

Note 2 – Material Violations

There were no material violations of the annual appropriated budgets for the General Fund for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2024. In addition, there were no excesses of budgetary expenditures for the period.

Exhibit B-3

TOWN OF BLADENSBURG, MARYLAND Schedule of Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability and Related Ratios For the Years Ended June 30,

Town's portion of the net pension liability	2024 0.0126%	2023 0.0123%	2022 0.0112%	2021 0.0112%	2020 0.0097%	2019 0.0090%	2018 0.0086%	2017 0.0090%	2016 0.0093%
Town's proportionate share of the net pension liability	\$ 2,892,736	\$ 2,463,599	\$ 1,701,734	\$ 2,537,553	\$ 2,008,956	\$ 1,882,379	\$ 1,860,574	\$ 2,123,363	\$ 1,940,687
Town's covered-employee payroll	\$ 4,429,393	\$ 3,842,323	\$ 3,087,871	\$ 2,571,758	\$ 2,324,182	\$ 2,579,516	\$ 2,222,369	\$ 2,089,953	\$ 2,143,542
Town's proportionate share of the net pension liability as a percentage of its covered-employee payroll	65.31%	64.12%	55.11%	98.67%	86.44%	72.97%	83.72%	101.60%	90.54%
Plan fiduciary net position as a percentage of the total pension liability	73.81%	76.27%	81.84%	70.72%	72.34%	71.18%	69.38%	65.79%	68.78%

^{*} This schedule is presented to illustrate the requirement to present information for 10 years. However, until a full 10 year trend is compiled, pension plans should present information for those years for which the information is available.

Exhibit B-4

TOWN OF BLADENSBURG, MARYLAND

Required Supplementary Information Schedule of Required Contributions For the Years Ended June 30,

Contractually required contribution	_	2024 425,141	\$	2023 306,342	\$	2022 281,014	\$	2021 249,949	\$	2020 240,723	\$	2019 206,712	\$	2018 187,712	\$	2017 181,209	\$	2016 181,553
Contribution in relation to the contractually required contribution	(425,141)		(306,342)		(281,014)		(249,949)		(240,723)		(206,712)		(187,712)		(181,209)		(181,553)
Contribution deficiency (excess)	\$		\$		<u>\$</u>		<u>\$</u>		<u>\$</u>		\$		<u>\$</u>		\$		<u>\$</u>	
Town's covered-employee payroll	\$ 4,4	429,393	\$ 3	3,842,323	\$ 3	3,087,871	\$:	2,571,758	\$ 2	2,324,182	\$ 2	2,579,516	\$ 2	2,222,369	\$ 2	2,089,953	\$ 2	2,143,542
Contribution as a percentage of covered employee payroll		9.60%		7.97%		9.10%		9.72%		10.36%		8.01%		8.45%		8.67%		8.47%

^{*} This schedule is presented to illustrate the requirement to present information for 10 years. However, until a full 10 year trend is compiled, pension plans should present information for those years for which the information is available.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS BASED ON AN AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS

To the Mayor and Council of the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland

We have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of the governmental activities, each major fund and the aggregate remaining information of the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland, as of and for the year ended June 30, 2024, and the related notes to the financial statements, which collectively comprise the Town's basic financial statements and have issued our report thereon dated January xx, 2025.

Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinions on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland's internal control.

A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements, on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or, significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies may exist that were not identified.

Report on Compliance and Other Matters

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about Town of Bladensburg, Maryland's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the financial statements. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions

was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Purpose of This Report

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the entity's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

LSWG, P.A.

Rockville, Maryland January xx, 2025





Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date:

February 10, 2025

Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator Vito Tinelli, Treasurer

Item Title: 10-2025 | AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 TO CLOSE OUT THE ARPA FUNDS.

First Reading and only Reading for Emergency Ordinance 10-2025: AN EMERGENCY

ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 BUDGET

Work Session Item [X]	Documentation Attached:
Council Meeting Item [X]	Ordinance 10-2025 and ARPA FY25 financials
	before and after reflective of budget changes

Recommended Action:

Amend the FY25 ARPA budget to match actuals as of the December 31, 2024 spending/obligation deadline.

Summary: The Town Administrator and Treasurer is proposing the adoption of this Emergency Ordinance to coincide with actual spending from July through the December 31, 2024 spending and obligation deadline as follows:

Proposed Budget Amendments

- 1. Decrease ARPA Business/Non-Profit Assistance by (\$75,000) for unused benefit funds;
- 2. Increase ARPA Food Assistance \$20,000 for additional holiday meal distribution:
- 3. Increase ARPA Monitoring **\$891** for residential camera program;
- 4. Decrease ARPA Community Initiatives by (\$84,000) for unfunded projects;
- 5. Increase ARPA Contractual Services \$5,600 for Bostwick consulting;
- 6. Increase ARPA Long-Term Capital Projects **\$11,000** for Low Impact Development for planning and engineering;
- 7. Increase ARPA Capital Outlay \$10,456 for (2) Police Radios previously purchased with Speed Camera Funds;
- 8. Increase ARPA Capital Outlay **\$138,947** to reclass purchases of (1) 2023 Dodge Ram, (1) 2024 Dodge Ram, and (1) 2025 Police SUV previously with Speed Camera Funds:
- 9. Increase ARPA Capital Projects **\$500,000** to obligate remaining funds for Flood Project to be spent by December 2026; and
- 10. Speed Camera Decrease Speed Camera Capital Outlay (\$149,403) to reclass purchases of vehicles and police radios above to ARPA Capital Outlay.

This will close out the ARPA program other than the \$500,000 obligation for the Flood Project which has to be spent/completed by December 31, 2026 to be eligible for this funding.

This is will be the first and only reading of this ordinance.

Budgeted Item: Yes [] No [X]	Continued Date:
Budgeted Amount:\$ TBD	
One-Time Cost: Yes	
Ongoing Cost:	
Council Priority: Yes [] No []	Approved Date:

TOWN OF BLADENSBURG 4229 Edmonston Road Bladensburg, Maryland

ORDINANCE NO. <u>10-2025</u>: FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET AMENDMENT

AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE OPERATING BUDGET OF THE TOWN OF BLADENSBURG, MARYLAND FOR THE 2025 FISCAL YEAR (JULY 1, 2024, THROUGH JUNE 30, 2025).

WHEREAS, the Town Administrator of the Town of Bladensburg has made a recommendation to the Mayor and Town Council to amend the FY 2025 Budget to reallocate funds as part of this Fiscal Year; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Bladensburg have determined that it is in the best interest of the Town to pass this as Budget Amendment Ordinance at the February 10th Town Council meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED AND ORDAINED by the Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Bladensburg that the following amendments are made to the general operating budget for Fiscal Year 2025 for the purpose of closing out the ARPA funds for purchases and allocations **prior to December 31, 2024,** for the following:

- 1. Decrease ARPA Business/Non-Profit Assistance by <u>\$75,000</u> for unused benefit funds;
- 2. Increase ARPA Food Assistance \$20,000 for additional holiday meal distribution;
- 3. Increase ARPA Monitoring \$891 for residential camera program;
- 4. Decrease ARPA Community Initiatives by \$84,000 for unfunded projects;
- 5. Increase ARPA Contractual Services \$5,600 for Bostwick consulting;
- 6. Increase ARPA Long-Term Capital Projects \$11,000 for Low Impact Development for planning and engineering;
- 7. Increase ARPA Capital Outlay \$10,456 for (2) Police Radios previously purchased with Speed Camera Funds;
- 8. Increase ARPA Capital Outlay \$138,947 to reclass purchases of (1) 2023 Dodge Ram, (1) 2024 Dodge Ram, and (1) 2025 Police SUV previously with Speed Camera Funds;
- 9. Increase ARPA Capital Projects \$500,000 to obligate remaining funds for Flood Project to be spent by December 2026; and

10. Decrease Speed Camera Capital Outlay <u>\$149,403</u> to reclass purchases of vehicles and police radios above to ARPA.

AND BE FURTHER ENACTED AND ORDAINED that upon passage this Ordinance shall be authenticated by the signature of the Mayor and Town Clerk and shall be recorded in a book kept for that purpose. In addition, this Ordinance shall be published by posting a certified copy of it in the Town Hall for ten (10) days following its adoption pursuant to Article II, Section 209 of the Charter of Town of Bladensburg, Maryland and will be effective on the 10th day of February 2025.

ATTEST:		By Order of the Mayor and Town Council
Regine Watson, Tov	vn Clerk	Takisha James, Mayor
First Reading: Second Reading: Adopted: Effective:	February 10, 2025 - February 10, 2025 February 10, 2025	

Town of Bladensburg ARPA FY25

Section 4, Item B.

July through August 2025 Current to be Amended

	FY25	Budget	\$ Over Budget
Expense			
6220 · Community Initiatives			
6222 · Business/Non-Profit Assistance		75,000	(75,000)
6223 · Food Assistance	50,522	30,000	20,522
6224 · Monitoring	1,439		
6220 · Community Initiatives - Other	10,863	95,000	(84,137)
Total 6220 · Community Initiatives	62,824	200,000	(137,176)
6580 · Contractual Services	5 <i>,</i> 575		
Total Expense	68,399	200,000	(131,601)
Other Expense			
6972 · Long Term Capital Projects	11,247		11,247
Total Expense	(79,646)	(200,000)	120,354

Town of Bladensburg ARPA FY25

July through August 2025

Section 4, Item B.

After Amendment

	FY25 Amended	Budget
Expense		
6220 · Community Initiatives		
6222 · Business/Non-Profit Assistance		-
6223 · Food Assistance	50,522	50,000
6224 · Monitoring	1,439	891
6220 · Community Initiatives - Other	10,863	11,000
Total 6220 · Community Initiatives	62,824	61,891
6580 · Contractual Services	5,575	5,600
Total Expense	68,399	67,491
Other Expense		
6972 · Long Term Capital Projects	160,650	660,403
Total Expense	(229,049)	(727,894)

11:24 AM 01/30/25 Accrual Basis

Town of Bladensburg ARPA FY25

July through Augy 1005

Section 4, Item B.

	\$ Over Budget	Ame	ndment Line # and change
Expense			
6220 · Community Initiatives			
6222 · Business/Non-Profit Assistance	-	1	Decrease (\$75,000)
6223 · Food Assistance	522	2	Increase \$20,000
6224 · Monitoring	548	3	Add \$891
6220 · Community Initiatives - Other	(137)	4	Decrease (\$84,000)
Total 6220 · Community Initiatives	933		
6580 · Contractual Services	(25)	5	Add \$5,600
Total Expense	908		
Other Expense			
6972 · Long Term Capital Projects	(499,753)		
Total Expense	498,845	6	Add \$11,000 for ULI
		7	Add \$10,456 and reclass
		8	Add \$138,947 and reclas
		9	Add \$500,000 to obligate

11:24 AM 01/30/25 Accrual Basis

Town of Bladensburg ARPA FY25

July through August 2025

Section 4, Item B.

Expense

6220 · Community Initiatives

6222 · Business/Non-Profit Assistance

6223 · Food Assistance

6224 · Monitoring

6220 · Community Initiatives - Other

Total 6220 · Community Initiatives

6580 · Contractual Services

Total Expense

Other Expense

6972 · Long Term Capital Projects

Total Expense

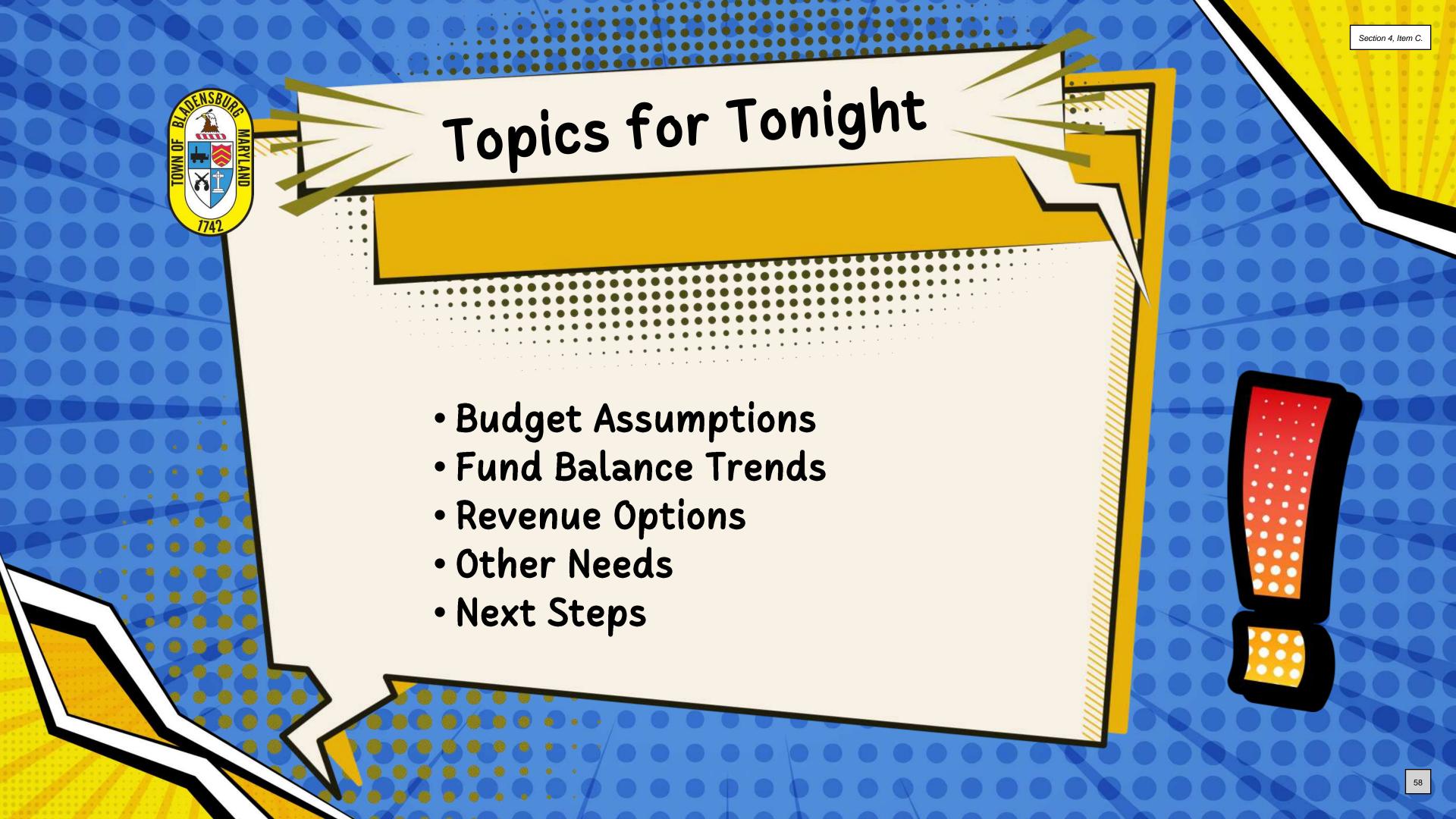
radios from Speed s vehicles from Speed ≥ Flood Project



Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date:	Submitted by:		
February 10, 2025	Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth		
	Vito Tinelli, Treasurer		
Item Title: FY 2026 Budget Overview FY 2025 Bud	get Update		
An update on the FY 2026 Budget preparations and F	Y 2025 Budget Update		
Work Session Item [X]	Documentation Attached:		
Council Meeting Item [X]	Treasurer's Report – Feb 2025		
g comment meeting comments	PowerPoint FY 2026 Budget Session 1		
	1 GWOIT GIRLT I 2020 Budget Geodien I		
Recommended Action:			
This is a report for the Council and residents on the To	own Budget update for February 2024.		
Budget Overview Summary:			
The Town of Bladensburg has officially begun the pro	ocess of preparing for the FY 2026 Budget. As		
part of this initial phase, Town Treasurer Mr. Vito Tir			
·			
through Jan 2025. This report is intended to serve as	a preliminary overview and the first step in the		
overall budget process.			
Key Highlights:			
Current Review Period: Budget actuals are place.	resented up to November 2024		
	•		
Next Update: February 18, 2025, Town Coun			
 Purpose of the Overview: This initial report p 	provides a foundational understanding of the		
Town's financial standing and key considerati	ions as planning for FY 2026 advances.		
The Town is committed to a transparent and inclusive budget process, ensuring that all stakeholders			
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·			
are informed and engaged as we work toward fiscal priorities for the upcoming year.			
2. 66			
Staff will be available to answer any questions.			
Budgeted Item: Yes [] No []	Continued Date:		
Budgeted Amount:			
One-Time Cost:			
Ongoing Cost:			
Council Priority: Yes [] No []	Approved Date:		







Budget Assumptions



Compensation Increases

• COLA and Merit of anticipated, a number to be determined shortly.

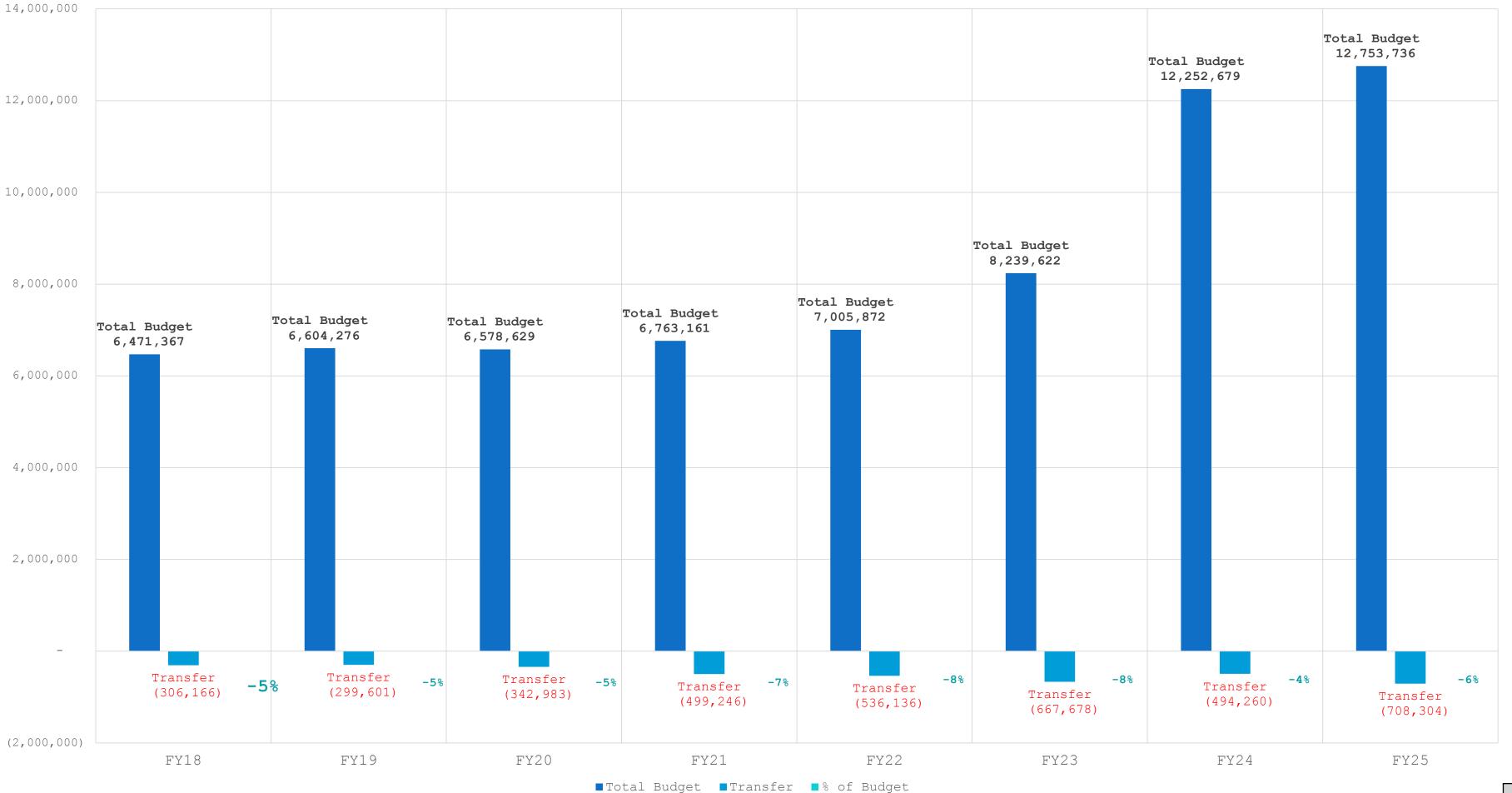
Capital Projects

- The Town is working on various infrastructure
 - \$1M of Federal Earmark towards Trade School
 - \$800K State Bond Bill Usage for Construction of New Town Hall
 - CDBG Funding PY 50 Streets and Sidewalks \$250,000

Transfer from Fund Balance

- (\$708,304) transfer from Fund Balance or 6% needed to balance budget
- Have previously utilized between 4% and 8% of Fund Balance transfers to balance budget.
- This year we may require a larger transfer due to potential short fall in Public Safety related revenues.

Budgeted Fund Balance Transfers



Section 4, Item C.



Revenue Options

- Town Staff is developing estimates that take into account the changes in assessed evaluations and previous income tax estimates
- We are looking at all available sources of new revenues from services



Other Needs





Public Safety Vehicles and Recurring Leases | \$200,000



LEOPS Funding for FY 2027 | Study Fees \$35,000



Public Safety Rental Space | \$ 50,000 (recurring \$35,000)



Town Hall Bonding and Construction | TBD



Expansion of Community Programming | \$ 30,000





Next Steps



Budget Sessions:

Throughout March – May 2025

Next Session | February 18, 2025

Budget Ordinance: First Reading: Regular Meeting – April 14, 2025

If there are changes to the Real Estate Tax Rate:

- Need at least one week to advertise for a hearing
- The earliest advertisement date would be April 7, 2025, or May 5, 2025

Tax Rate Hearing (Tentative)

- Week of April 14, 2025, or
- May 12, 2025, Budget Session

Final Budget Session #5
Monday, April 29, 2025 (if needed)

Final Budget Adoption

Monday, May 12, 2025. Alternative Budget Adoption date, Monday, June 9, 205.

• Budget Ordinance Adoption







Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date: February 10, 2025 Submitted by:

Regine Watson, Town Clerk

Item Title: Appointments | BOSOE and Ethics Commission

Appointments | BOSOE and Ethics Commission

Work Session Item [X] Council Meeting Item [X]

Documentation Attached:

BOSOE Attachments Ethics Attachments New Appointee Process

Recommended Action:

Information Only: Update on Activities: Appointment and Re-appointment to the Boards.

Summary: The Board of Supervisors of Elections (BOSOE) has met online over the past several months to address concerns raised regarding the 2023 Election Process. In these meetings, the BOSOE has thoughtfully discussed and developed new processes and guidelines to clarify these issues and establish a framework that can be used in future elections.

As we approach the upcoming election, I am presenting to the Council the first set of appointments for the BOSOE and Ethics Commission. The attached list includes residents who have expressed interest in serving on these committees.

For the BOSOE, we are reappointing three dedicated individuals who have previously served on the board and are long-standing residents of the community.

Regarding the Ethics Commission, I conducted interviews with all new appointees on January 27, 2025, following the recommendation made at the Council's January 13, 2025, meeting. I have implemented a new process for interviewing all new appointees to both the Ethics Commission and the BOSOE, which included an initial review followed by a post-interview assessment.

I recommend three options for the Council's consideration regarding the appointments to the Board of Supervisors of Elections (BOSOE) and the Ethics Commission:

- 1. **Appoint All New Appointees:** The Council may choose to appoint all of the proposed new appointees.
- 2. **Odd Number of Appointees:** To ensure balanced decision-making, the Council could select a commission with an odd number of members. Options include a 3-person commission with an alternate or a 5-person commission.
- 3. **No Appointment:** The Council may choose not to make any appointments from the proposed list of new appointees.

These options are flexible depending on the Council's preference. I look forward to discussing these appointments with you and am happy to provide further details or answer any questions you may have.

Budgeted Item: Yes [] No [X]	Continued Date:
Budgeted Amount:\$ NA	
One-Time Cost: NA	
Ongoing Cost:	
Council Priority: Yes [] No []	Approved Date:



Town of Bladensburg, Maryland RESOLUTION NO. 14-2025

Date Introduced: <u>February 10, 2025</u> Date Adopted: <u>February 10, 2025</u> Date Effective: February 10, 2025

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF BLADENSBURG APPOINTING MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF ELECTION FOR A TERM BEGINNING MARCH 1, 2025, AND ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2027

WHEREAS, the Town of Bladensburg is committed to maintaining free and fair elections to ensure the integrity of the electoral process; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of Election (BOSOE) serves as the official election body for the Town, offering their time and talents to oversee the administration of municipal elections; and

WHEREAS, the BOSOE is responsible for evaluating and developing election-related materials, meeting monthly as needed, and working collaboratively with the Town Clerk and Town staff to ensure the proper administration of elections; and

WHEREAS, the BOSOE will oversee the next municipal election, scheduled to occur on Tuesday, October 7, 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council recognizes the dedication and contributions of the Town's residents who serve on this important board.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of Bladensburg that the following residents are hereby appointed to serve on the Board of Supervisors of Election for a term beginning March 1, 2025, and ending February 28, 2027:

- 1. Elizabeth Saunders
- 2. Carletta L. Lundy
- 3. Judy Sojourner

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Council expresses its gratitude to these individuals for their commitment to ensuring the integrity and transparency of the electoral process in the Town of Bladensburg.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution be and is hereby adopted this 10th Day of February 2025 and shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

Attest:	
Regine Watson, Town Clerk	Takisha D. James, Mayor



Town of Bladensburg, Maryland RESOLUTION NO. 15-2025

Date Introduced: <u>February 10, 2025</u> Date Adopted: <u>February 10, 2025</u> Date Effective: February 10, 2025

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF BLADENSBURG APPOINTING MEMBERS TO THE TOWN ETHICS COMMISSION FOR A TERM BEGINNING MARCH 1, 2025, AND ENDING FEBRUARY 28, 2027

WHEREAS, the Town of Bladensburg is committed to upholding ethical standards and ensuring transparency and accountability in Town governance; and

WHEREAS, the Town Ethics Commission serves as the body responsible for reviewing and maintaining the ethical conduct and standards for Town staff, officials, and volunteers; and

WHEREAS, the Ethics Commission reviews annual submissions and reports, offers general ethical guidance, and supports the Town's commitment to integrity, and fairness; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council recognizes this Commission's importance and appreciates its members' dedication.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of Bladensburg that the following individuals are hereby appointed to serve as members of the Town Ethics Commission for a term beginning March 1, 2025, and ending February 28, 2027:

1. Appointments will be named following the approval of Council motions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Council expresses its gratitude to these appointees for their willingness to serve and contribute to maintaining the ethical standards of the Town of Bladensburg.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution be and is hereby adopted this 10th Day of February 2025 and shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

Attest:	
Regine Watson, Town Clerk	Takisha D. James, Mayor

New Candidate Process for the Town of Bladensburg Ethics Commission

- 1. **Responsibilities of the Ethics Commission:** The Ethics Commission is responsible for:
 - Issuing advisory opinions on Ethics Law-related questions.
 - Granting exemptions from certain provisions of the Ethics Law, when appropriate.
 - Investigating alleged violations of the Ethics Law.
 - Enforcing compliance with the Ethics Law.
 - Completing and submitting required ethics forms to the state by October 1st each year.

2. Eligibility Criteria:

- Commission members must demonstrate personal integrity and have recognized knowledge of and interest in government and civics.
- Candidates must not be lobbyists, government officials, or employees (except those working at a college, university, or similar institutions), nor can they be candidates for elected office.

3. Initial Interview:

- A brief interview will be conducted with all new appointees to the Ethics Commission.
- The goal of the interview is to ensure candidates understand the responsibilities of the position they are volunteering for.

4. Post-Interview Meeting:

- After the interview with the Clerk and potential appointees, a separate meeting should be scheduled with the Town Council and Clerk to discuss the interview findings.
- The Town Council will review the gathered information before formally considering the candidate for the appointment.

Example Interview Questions for Ethics Commission Candidates:

- 1. How long have you lived in Bladensburg?
- 2. Why are you interested in serving on the Ethics Commission?
- 3. Do you have any relevant experience in ethics, governance, or law?

- 4. Are you comfortable making tough ethical decisions when necessary?
- 5. Can you share any volunteer experiences that may relate to this role?
- 6. Are you able to commit the required time for this role, especially during the six months leading up to election time?
- 7. How would you handle conflicts of interest or personal biases in decision-making?
- 8. How would you ensure your personal views do not influence your decisions as a member of the Ethics Commission?



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and Council

From: Regine Watson, Town Clerk

Date: February 4, 2025

Subject: Summary of Interview Responses and Recommendations for Ethics Commission

Appointments

Purpose:

This memorandum presents the responses to the interview questions posed to each appointee and my corresponding recommendations for each candidate to serve on the Ethics Commission.

Interview Questions:

- 1. How long have you been a resident of Bladensburg?
- 2. Why are you interested in serving on the Ethics Commission?
- 3. Do you have any relevant experience or background in ethics, governance, or law?
- 4. Are you comfortable making tough decisions or intervening in ethical matters when necessary?
- 5. Can you describe your volunteer experiences and how they relate to this role?
- 6. Are you able to commit the required time for this role, particularly during the six months leading up to election time?
- 7. How do you handle situations involving conflicts of interest or personal biases in decision-making?

Appointee Recommendations:

1. Brandon Newsom:

- Residency: 4 years in Bladensburg
- Interest in Ethics Commission: Mr. Newsom's background as a psychiatrist and his leadership roles in school systems and student government demonstrate his understanding of ethics and governance.
- **Experience:** His experience with the Courageous Conversations initiative shows his commitment to community engagement.
- **Commitment:** Mr. Newsom is confident in his ability to make sound ethical decisions and is available to serve when needed.

Recommendation: Based on his diverse experience and dedication, I recommend Mr. Newsom for appointment to the Ethics Commission.

2. Michael Wildheart:

- Residency: 7 years in Bladensburg
- Interest in Ethics Commission: Mr. Wildheart's desire to serve stems from his experiences with unethical practices within his Homeowners Association, motivating him to contribute to his community.
- **Experience:** He is currently an editor for the Parkway newsletter and his church's newsletter, as well as serving as a minister, highlighting his leadership and communication skills.
- Commitment: He has assured us of his ability to commit the necessary time and energy.

Recommendation: Given his community involvement and leadership experience, I recommend Mr. Wildheart for appointment to the Ethics Commission.

3. Daryl Davis:

- Residency: 6 years in Bladensburg
- Interest in Ethics Commission: Mr. Davis has a proven track record in advocating for ethical practices, notably in addressing unethical practices within his condominium.

- **Experience:** He works at Johns Hopkins, where he is involved in governmental policies and enforcement.
- **Commitment:** Mr. Davis is available to serve when needed and is committed to transparency and impartiality.

Recommendation: Based on his experience with ethical decision-making and professional background, I recommend Mr. Davis for appointment to the Ethics Commission.

4. Jackson Marshall:

- Residency: 26 years in Bladensburg
- Interest in Ethics Commission: Inspired by his grandfather, Mr. Marshall has a long history of volunteering and community service. He is eager to continue his community involvement.
- **Experience:** Mr. Marshall has expressed his commitment to transparency and is comfortable intervening in ethical matters when necessary.
- **Commitment:** He is willing to dedicate the necessary time and is prepared to recuse himself in cases of conflict of interest.

Recommendation: Given his extensive community involvement and commitment, I recommend Mr. Marshall for appointment to the Ethics Commission.

Conclusion:

Each of the candidates—Brandon Newsom, Michael Wildheart, Daryl Davis, and Jackson Marshall—has demonstrated a strong commitment to ethics, transparency, and community service. Based on their experiences and dedication, I believe each would be an asset to the Ethics Commission.



Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date:

February 10, 2025

Submitted by:

Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator

Item Title: Resolution 16-2025 | A Resolution of Support for the Town of Bladensburg's Application to the Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns (G3) Grant Program

A Resolution of Support for the Town of Bladensburg's Application to the Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns (G3) Grant Program.

Work Session Item [X] Council Meeting Item [X]

Documentation Attached:

Resolution 16-2025

Recommended Action:

Approval of the resolution of support to apply for grant funds and approval for the Town Administrator to work with EcoSite and Low Impact Design

Overview: The Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns (G3) Grant Program is a regional initiative aimed at supporting the planning, design, and implementation of green infrastructure projects. This program focuses on creating green streets, enhancing urban tree canopies, and promoting community greening projects. Additionally, it funds the development of white papers and tools addressing green infrastructure topics to support sustainability in urban and suburban communities.

Purpose: The Town of Bladensburg seeks Council support to apply for the G3 Grant Program. This funding will enable the Town to advance projects that enhance environmental sustainability, improve stormwater management, and increase the overall livability of the community.

Grant Application Details:

- **Deadline:** March 10, 2025
- **Partners:** The Town will collaborate with EcoSite and Low Impact Design to prepare and submit the application and implement the proposed projects.
- **Proposed Use of Funds:** The grant will support planning, designing, and implementing green infrastructure projects, such as:
 - Greening streets to reduce stormwater runoff.
 - Creating community greening spaces to enhance public areas.

Benefits to the Town:

- Improved environmental quality and reduced stormwater pollution.
- Enhanced aesthetic and recreational value of public spaces.
- Support for economic opportunities through green jobs.
- Strengthened community resilience against climate impacts.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends the Town Council adopt a resolution supporting the submission of the G3 Grant

Program application. This endorsement will demonstrate the Town's commitment to sustainability and improve its chances of securing funding.

Action Required:

- Review and discuss the proposed resolution.
- Approve the resolution authorizing the Town Administrator to collaborate with EcoSite and Low Impact Design to prepare and submit the application by the March 10, 2025, deadline.

Attachments:

• Resolution 16-2025

Budgeted Item: Yes [] No [X]	Continued Date:	
Budgeted Amount:\$ TBD		
One-Time Cost: Yes		
Ongoing Cost:		
Council Priority: Yes [] No []	Approved Date:	



Town of Bladensburg, Maryland RESOLUTION NO. 16 - 2025

Date Introduced: February 10, 2025

Date Adopted: February 10, 2025

Date Effective: February 10, 2025

Resolution of Support for the Town of Bladensburg's Application to the Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns (G3) Grant Program

WHEREAS, the Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns (G3) Grant Program is designed to support the planning, design, and implementation of green streets, community greening projects, and urban tree canopy initiatives that enhance livability in cities and communities; and

WHEREAS, the G3 Program also promotes the development of white papers and tools addressing green infrastructure topics to provide resources for sustainable practices; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Bladensburg is committed to advancing environmental sustainability, improving community livability, and promoting green infrastructure solutions that benefit its residents and the broader region; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Bladensburg plans to partner with EcoSite and Low Impact Design to prepare and submit a competitive application to the G3 Grant Program for planning, designing, and implementing green infrastructure projects within the Town; and

WHEREAS, the Town acknowledges the application deadline of March 10, 2025, and recognizes the importance of securing funding to support these vital environmental initiatives;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of Bladensburg, Maryland, that:

- 1. The Town Council fully supports the submission of an application to the Green Streets, Green Jobs, and Green Towns Grant Program to advance green infrastructure projects in the community.
- 2. The Town Administrator and staff are authorized to work collaboratively with EcoSite and Low Impact Design in developing and submitting the grant application.

3. Upon award of the grant, the Town of Bladensburg is committed to implementing the proposed projects in accordance with the program's guidelines and requirements, ensuring transparency and accountability throughout the process.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Council recognizes the importance of this opportunity to promote environmental stewardship and enhance the quality of life for its residents.

SIGNED this 10th day of February 2025.

Attest:

Regine Watson
Town Clerk

Takisha D. James, Mayor

Section 5. Item B.



Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns Grant Program

FY25 Request for Proposals









Chesapeake Bay Trust | 108 Severn Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21403 (410) 974 - 2941 | <u>www.cbtrust.org</u>

Introduction and Program Goals

The <u>Chesapeake Bay Trust</u> (Trust) is a nonprofit, grant-making organization dedicated to improving the bays, streams, rivers, forests, parks, and other natural resources of our local systems, from the Chesapeake to the Coastal Bays to the Youghiogheny River. The Trust, supported in large part by Maryland's Chesapeake Bay License Plate, and partnerships with other regional funders, engages and empowers diverse groups to take actions that enrich natural resources and local communities of the Chesapeake Bay region. Since 1985, the Trust has awarded over 190 million in grants to municipalities, nonprofit organizations, schools, and public agencies throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

The Chesapeake Bay Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns (G3) Grant Program (https://cbtrust.org/g3), funded by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region III, the Chesapeake Bay Program, the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WV DEP), and the Chesapeake Bay Trust, welcomes requests for urban green infrastructure proposals.

The goal of the Chesapeake Bay G3 Grant Program is to help communities develop and implement plans that reduce stormwater runoff, increase the number and amount of green spaces in urban areas, improve the health of local waters and the Chesapeake Bay, and enhance quality of life and community livability. This work is intended to facilitate and encourage communities' integration of green techniques into traditional gray infrastructure projects.

The Trust recognizes that application processes can be complicated and time-consuming; the Trust continues to work to simplify our application processes where possible. New applicants, new organizations, small organizations, or any group that is experiencing capacity challenges or other barriers to applying, is eligible to receive guidance on the application process. Please contact the Program Manager, Megan Diehl, for assistance.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact Trust staff to discuss applications *at least* two weeks prior to the deadline. The Trust cannot guarantee availability of site visits or project development assistance within two weeks of the deadline.

At A Glance

Program Summary:

The Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns Grant Program is designed to support the planning, design, and implementation of green streets; community greening projects; and urban tree canopy projects that enhance livability in cities and communities, in addition to white papers and tools that address green infrastructure topics.

Deadline:

Monday, March 10, 2025, at 4:00 PM ET

Eligible Project Locations:

This program funds projects within the Chesapeake Bay watershed portions of Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., West Virginia, and Virginia.

Request Amounts:

- Track 1: Conceptual Plans (up to \$20,000)
- Track 2: Engineered Designs (up to \$35,000)
- Track 3: Construction/Implementation (up to \$175,000)
- Track 4: Community Greening (up to \$50,000)
- Track 5: White Papers and Tool Development (up to \$20,000)
- Track 6: Charrettes/Technical Assistance (no direct funding)

Submit Your Application:

Follow the instructions online at https://cbtrust.org/g3

Contact:

Megan Diehl, Senior Program Officer at 410-974-2941 ext. 139, mdiehl@cbtrust.org

This Request for Proposals was released on 12/9/2024

Section 5, Item B.

This program supports the Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration Executive Order (https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2009/05/15/E9-11547/chesapeake-bay-protection-and-restoration and is a key part of EPA's Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns (G3) Partnership. Since 2011, this partnership has funded local projects that reduce stormwater runoff in urban areas. The program now integrates climate adaptation, focusing on environmental justice for historically marginalized communities impacted by climate change (https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/02/01/2021-02177/tackling-the-climate-crisis-at-home-and-abroad).

The G3 program promotes **green stormwater infrastructure** as standard practice, fostering green infrastructure through market incentives and building local capacity. Expanding green spaces reduces pollutants (like sediment, nitrogen, and phosphorus) in waterways. Green infrastructure practices—including rain gardens, tree canopies, pervious pavements, and bioswales—improve stormwater absorption, air quality, and urban livability, with benefits like reduced urban heat, improved walkability, and public health.

A "green street" minimizes environmental impact by integrating water quality and energy-efficient practices, reducing water discharge to rivers, and enhancing community aesthetics. Funded projects increase resilience to flooding and contamination while creating local green jobs. **Funding partners prioritize sustainable, long-term projects** with flood and hazard mitigation elements.

If your community needs support for flood resilience and climate adaptation, explore EPA's **Climate Change Adaptation Resource Center** at https://www.epa.gov/arc-x for technical assistance opportunities.

The Trust is committed to the advancement of diversity and inclusion in its award-making and environmental work. As a result, the Trust strongly encourages applications directly from underrepresented groups, and for projects that increase awareness and participation of communities that are traditionally underrepresented, such as communities of color. For a full description of the Trust's efforts to engage under-engaged groups, see our strategic plan at www.cbtrust.org/strategic-plan and https://cbtrust.org/diversity-inclusion/.

Eligible Applicants

Funding Partners and the Trust welcome requests from the following organizations:

- ♦ Local government agencies
- ♦ Nonprofit organizations
- ♦ Community and Homeowner Associations
- ♦ Faith-based Organizations
- Eligible applicants will have and maintain in full force and effect during the term of the proposed project liability insurance coverage in connection with the performance or failure to perform services proposed.

Eligible Project Locations and Funding Availability

Project Locations: This program funds projects within the Chesapeake Bay watershed portions of Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., West Virginia, and Virginia. To determine if a project site is in the Chesapeake Bay watershed see the online map at https://cbtrust.org/g3.

Funding Availability: The funding partners anticipate approximately \$1.3 million in funding is available in FY25.

Eligible Project Types

Applicants can request funds from one of the following project tracks detailed below. The general request amount for each project track is provided as guidance, though projects can exceed the request level with proper justification. This grant program prioritizes the planning, design, and/or implementation of green street projects (tracks 1, 2, and 3).

Applications for the green street concept plans, green street engineered designs, green street implementation, and community greening project types <u>must not</u> be required for new or re-development, regulatory mitigation, or regulatory offset.

Track 1: Conceptual Plans for Green Streets/Green Infrastructure Projects (up to \$20,000)

This project track supports the development of a conceptual plan for green streets/green infrastructure projects. A concept plan is the first step in the planning process. The conceptual green street should be part of a broader, integrated community watershed plan. Conceptual plans for large-scale, high-performing green street/green stormwater infrastructure projects as defined above must treat over one inch of runoff. One of the most important criteria used to evaluate conceptual design proposals is the likelihood of ultimate implementation.

Track 2: Engineered Designs for Green Street/Green Infrastructure Projects (up to \$35,000)

This project track supports the development of engineered designs for green streets/green infrastructure projects. Proposals for engineered designs should include all the design elements that would result in a final design that is implementable. Engineered plans for large-scale, high-performing green street/green stormwater infrastructure projects as defined above must treat over one inch of runoff. Such projects should be connected to a larger vision for a Green Town (e.g., comprehensive green streets, community resiliency programs, greening of school grounds, etc.). Cost projections shall be a part of the final design product and will include costs associated with implementation, operation, and maintenance. One of the most important criteria used to evaluate engineered design proposals is the likelihood of ultimate implementation.

The output of the award (i.e., the design) must be permittable by the appropriate state environmental agency and all other appropriate local, state, and federal entities. Generally, applicants have a conceptual design in hand when they apply for engineered design funding, and we recommend that you have a permit preapplication meeting based on that conceptual design before applying. State permit pre-application meetings are coordinated through Maryland's Department of the Environment (MDE), Virginia's Department of Environmental Quality (VADEQ), the District of Columbia's Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE), Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP), West Virginia's Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP), or Delaware's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC).

At the completion of an engineered design project, the proposed designs and specification deliverables should be at least 90% complete. At a minimum, the output of a design project must include:

- Site map that includes:
 - Property boundaries;
 - Project boundary;
 - Field-run topographic survey of existing conditions;
 - Drainage area to the practice and impervious cover in the drainage area;
 - Mapped utilities and roads;
 - Proposed design (grade changes, drainage structures, rock placement, etc.); and
 - Landowner signature on the plan, which indicates project endorsement.

Section 5. Item B.

- Copy of soil survey mapping and <u>field confirmation of soil drainage class</u>;
 - Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) web soil survey can be found at http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm
- Site details (e.g., topographic lines, land uses, and soils) are available at the Water Resources Registry where you can create an output with the desired metrics requested here and upload with your application: http://watershedresourcesregistry.com/;
- Planting plan (plant locations and plant types);
 - The Trust has resources to help you get started with using native plants:
 https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/External_Final-Trust-Draft-Plant-Species-Selection-Guide May2021.pdf
- Site photos; and
- Calculations of the 1) total drainage area treated; 2) impervious acres treated; and 3) estimated cost per acre treated (at a one-inch runoff level).

Track 3: Implementation/Construction of Green Streets/Green Infrastructure Projects (up to \$175,000)

This project track supports the construction of green streets and large-scale green infrastructure projects (e.g., rain gardens, bioretention cells, permeable surfaces, green roofs, etc.).

The most competitive implementation/construction proposals will result in a complete green street that leverages funding from other sources for the gray infrastructure components (streets, sidewalks, utility upgrades, etc.), and/or repaving of a street or road realignment. Applicants are also encouraged to leverage funds from hazard mitigation (e.g., Federal Emergency Management Act (FEMA)) or other water quality programs (e.g., https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-319.a). Local communities interested in pursuing a green streets initiative may consider their local government's road construction and maintenance schedule to infuse new green street elements into existing construction plans. This is a smart, cost-effective strategy because bioretention cells, permeable pavement, street trees, and other green street elements can be incorporated into already planned street construction projects at minimal additional cost. Completed engineered designs are strongly preferred.

All requests must include: 1) a calculation of total drainage area treated; 2) calculation of impervious acre treated; and 3) estimated cost per acre treated (at a one-inch runoff level). It is also preferred that the estimated nutrient and sediment load reduction calculations for nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediments are provided (Applicants may use the Green SIMPLE calculator at https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Green_SIMPLE.xlsx). When calculating the cost of green infrastructure or cost per acre treated, proposals should separate these costs from traditional gray infrastructure costs that would have been incurred whether or not green elements were included (e.g., traditional paving, repair, standard mobilization, utilities, etc.). Proposals must also clearly list which costs were included in the cost per acre treated, as well as the formulas used to calculate/establish treatment area.

The majority of projects funded through this program have a per impervious acre treated cost of \$100,000 to \$200,000 in total project cost (excluding any gray infrastructure elements such as paving, sidewalks, etc.) and \$70,000 to \$150,000 in requested amount (not including match proposed). *Funders consider a cost-effective project as one that costs less than \$100,000 per impervious drainage acre treated (at a one-inch runoff level), not including costs of gray infrastructure elements.* The strongest proposals will incorporate innovative green infrastructure best management practices (BMPs) and demonstrate cost-effectiveness of such practices. Therefore, you should consider reducing costs by working together, even in your own community, to reduce the cost per impervious acre treated. Consider using free or discounted resources listed in Appendix A. Provide justification if your requested amount per impervious acre treated is more than \$200,000.

WV DEP funding partners welcome requests for stream restoration design and implementation projects from West Virginia Chesapeake Bay communities. These applications must demonstrate project need, landowner

Section 5, Item B.

permission, use of the field's best practices and latest research (e.g., Pooled Monitoring Initiative research that is available at https://cbtrust.org/grants/restoration-research/), assessment of alternatives demonstrating the proposed restoration was appropriate for the site, minimization and avoidance of natural resources impacts like tree canopy, ability to proceed through the permit and construction process, and cost-effectiveness. See Appendix B for details on this project type. By supporting stream restoration projects, the WV DEP's objective is to support another aspect of the G3 grant program's goal of improving the health of local streams and the Chesapeake Bay. This objective also concurs with a key component of the WV Watershed Implementation Plan (http://www.wvchesapeakebay.us/WIP/WIP3.cfm) to implement stream restoration as a co-benefit best management practice for attainment of state water quality standards.

Leveraging ongoing planning, design, and construction activities and private capital is important; the strongest proposals will describe projects pursued in concert with existing street and other gray infrastructure re-design and/or repair projects. The strongest proposals will also consider sustainability in terms of building and strengthening community coalitions that will continue to carry urban greening programs forward beyond the life of the award; address climate change adaptations; have clear maintenance plans and responsible parties for maintenance committed to the work; and support hazard mitigation planning efforts.

Track 4: Community Greening (up to \$50,000)

This project track supports small to medium-scale community greening projects (e.g., tree plantings, community gardens and urban farms, pollinator gardens, conservation landscaping, reclaiming vacant lots to install site appropriate practices, etc.).

Trash-strewn, overgrown vacant lots and communities barren of trees and other green elements afflict urban neighborhoods. As envisioned in strategies such as the Baltimore Green Network Plan, vacant lots and barren streets can offer an opportunity to strengthen communities by bringing community members together to create and maintain community green space and walkable neighborhoods.

For projects in Maryland whose main element is tree planting, we encourage applicants to apply to the Urban Trees Grant Program (https://cbtrust.org/urbantrees/). The Urban Trees Program aims to support trees planted that will green communities; enhance quality of life, human health, and community livability by improving air quality; reducing urban heat island effect; and mitigate the effects of climate change.

To help determine if a community is eligible, view the online map at

https://cbforg.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3bce1e558f5a46cd86287ee5929cf079. This map was produced by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and can be used as a guide; the applicant has the ultimate responsibility for site eligibility.

Applicants may request funds for tree plantings, reclaiming vacant lots, installing community gardens and urban farms, implementing pollinator gardens, implementing other green infrastructure stormwater BMPs, and routine maintenance as identified through an approved maintenance plan. Funds may be requested for design, plant material, rental of equipment, up to two years of maintenance, and payment of maintenance staff.

Community greening projects will be evaluated on several criteria including the number of trees planted and total project cost (urban tree planting projects are generally in the range of \$150 to \$450 per tree planted, which includes the trees themselves, supplies, labor, one to two year maintenance costs, and tree pit work when necessary), community partnerships demonstrated, outreach and education to the community, and the amount of surface area being replanted or impervious area being treated (if a stormwater BMP is proposed), strength of the maintenance plan, budget for maintenance, inventory of maintenance equipment owned or available to the awardee, maintenance schedule, and ultimate community benefit for the project.

Track 5: White Papers and Tool Development (up to \$20,000)

This project track supports white papers that summarize the analysis of one or more aspects of green infrastructure or tools that promote green infrastructure efforts. White papers may be proposed that summarize research of a priority subject to further green infrastructure use. Tools may be proposed that will bridge a gap or move applications forward to further green infrastructure use.

Examples of white paper topics and tools include, but are not limited to:

- innovative strategies and techniques for improving long-term project maintenance through new
 design considerations, development of regional best management practices or pilots that can be
 replicated across the Chesapeake Bay if successful, and/or creative ways to fund and sustain
 maintenance to ensure projects are aesthetically pleasing (beautiful to the passerby/owner) and
 continue to function properly to benefit the communities where they are installed;
- how to **incentivize maintenance operations, reduce maintenance costs**, and innovative techniques that contribute to the overall long-term success and treatment of green infrastructure projects;
- how green streets and green infrastructure help drive local economic development by creating green jobs;
- provide tools and/or increase our understanding of the potential impacts of climate change through
 the interactions between green infrastructure, community resilience to flooding, hazard mitigation,
 and other ways green streets can help make communities more resilient (e.g., methods to increase
 green infrastructure in local hazard mitigation planning, designing/siting green infrastructure to meet
 current and future rain events);
- how to increase incorporation of green infrastructure in municipality public works and planning operations (e.g., reduce communication barriers, integrated planning, etc.);
- **job training** for existing professionals and green job workforce development for those interested in environmental careers, to increase overall knowledge of green infrastructure maintenance techniques, inspection frequencies, and how to address common issues to help improve overall project success and sustainability;
- aim to increase green career opportunities in underserved communities to address environmental
 justice through green job training and workforce development programs (for more on environmental
 justice, visit EPA's Environmental Justice information page at
 https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice);
- how to increase the understanding and measure additional benefits of green streets/community greening (e.g., litter reduction, crime reduction, quality of life for residents);
- better understand health and health economics of green space installation in hospitals and other care facilities;
- how to use green schools as an anchor for a community green street;
- projects that find and/or fix illicit discharges (often part or in support of Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE) programs) to ultimately raise awareness around this issue and reduce illicit discharges (e.g., sewer, pollutants of emerging concern, toxins, and other pollutants) entering waterways and the environment; an example project could be to educate a target audience on this topic and provide actions they can take when they see a potential illicit discharge community organizations or perform field assessments to find and fix illicit discharges; and
- some Chesapeake Bay states and local municipalities report obstacles during the permitting process with voluntary stormwater retrofit projects and, therefore, applications that address this and can be replicated in other areas are needed, e.g., conducting a training or workshop, showcasing success stories through case studies, and/or creating tools.

Clearly outline how the white paper product or tool will lead to better implementation of green streets and how the information will be shared with priority audiences. Due to limited funding, we anticipate funding no more than one or two projects under this track per year.

Track 6: Green Street Charrette/Technical Planning Assistance (no direct funding)

A charrette is a planning or visioning session where community members, planners, developers, and other key stakeholders collaborate on the development of a green plan, vision, or design for a project. Funding partners anticipate providing technical assistance and financial support for a green street charrette and technical assistance to develop a concept plan and/or engineered design for applicants that:

- Demonstrate a need for additional support to successfully develop robust plans (i.e., with additional support through a charette and technical assistance targeted to the project will realize a product/outcome);
- Propose designs that support G3 objectives and address community need, hazard mitigation, and economic uplift to improve local quality of life and resilience to climate change;
- Demonstrate a willingness and ability to participate in a charette; and
- Demonstrate a willingness and ability to participate in additional technical assistance (i.e., the funding partners will provide contractual support to develop the concept plan and/or engineered design).

In addition, the following criteria will also be considered during the selection process:

- Applicants or jurisdictions that have not been awarded a grant through the Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns Grant Program will be prioritized;
- Applications should provide information about other related activities (e.g., planned road projects, redevelopment, etc.), planned greening efforts, community and/or regional projects, and activities which may be relevant to a potential charrette; and
- Applications that can provide match funding and involve a variety of public and private partners are encouraged.

The funding partners for this program will provide support through technical assistance, if approved. Charrette awardees will not receive direct funding through this grant program and instead will work directly with the funding partners who will provide direct contractual support for the technical assistance as determined through the charrette planning process. Funding partners anticipate funding one to three projects under this track per year. View this one pager to learn more about previously awarded projects from this project track at https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Green-Streets-Charrette-One-Pager Final 11.28.23.pdf

Project Timeline

Project Timeline: Projects must be completed within 12 months upon receipt of the award. Requests to extend project completion period will be reviewed and considered on a case-by-case basis.

Online Application Submission Instructions

The Trust uses an online system for the application process, and if awarded, project management. To apply for an award, go to https://cbtrust.org/grants/green-streets-green-jobs-green-towns/ and click on "Get Started" to begin a new application. This will open a new window asking you to log in or create an account on our online system. If you have applied in the past, use your existing username and password (if you have forgotten

Important Note for Track 6 Applicants: Track 6 provides technical assistance and planning support, not direct funding from the Trust. Therefore, applications for this track should request \$0. If selected, applicants will then work with the Trust and program partners directly to develop a future scope of work and budget requested for the future awardee conducing the effort. Typically, the Trust then releases an RFP to find a contractor to complete the proposed project and work directly with your organization!

either of these use the 'forgot password' feature). If you have not used our online system before, click on "New Applicant" and follow the instructions.

Applicants must submit applications in the **Chesapeake Bay Trust Online System** by **4:00 pm on March 10, 2025.** Late applications <u>will not</u> be accepted, and the online funding opportunity will close promptly at 4:00 pm.

By submitting an application to this program, applicants acknowledge that: 1) they are compliant with federal employment and non-discrimination laws and 2) they have not been debarred, convicted, charged or had a civil judgment rendered against them for fraud or related offense by any government agency (federal, state or local) or been terminated for cause or default by any government agency (federal, state, or local). In addition, all final products will be provided to the funding partners for use and distribution at the sole discretion of the funding partners.

Deadline

Applicants must submit applications in the **Chesapeake Bay Trust Online System** by **4:00 PM EST on March 10, 2025**. Late applications will not be accepted, and the online funding opportunity will close automatically and promptly at 4 PM EST. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit at least a few days prior to the deadline given the potential for high website traffic on the due date. The Trust cannot guarantee the availability of technical assistance for our online system on the deadline date.

Online Application Form

You will be asked to provide the following information on the online application form. Some items are required in order to submit your application. Refer to the online application for details.

Eligibility Quiz: This three-question quiz is meant to assist you in determining if your project meets the requirements of this award program and that your staff/organizational structure best supports a successful application.

Applicant Information Tab: Provide the organization's name, mailing address, phone number, organization type, mission, EIN number, and SAM UEI number. If a MBE/WBE add certification number and state(s). Provide the Executive Officer and Project Leader's name, title, address, phone, and email address.

- Both an Executive Officer and a Project Leader, two separate individuals, must be identified for all applications.
- The Executive Officer and Project Leader must both be able to make decisions on behalf of the organization either as a board member, an employee, or other approved position recognized by the organization but not a contractor of the application.

Watch our video on how to apply and how to submit an application using our online system at https://cbtrust.org/grants/.

Definitions

The Executive Officer is the individual that oversees the organization (e.g., Executive Director, Chief Executive Officer, Mayor, President or Vice President, Principal (for schools), etc.) and has the authority to sign/execute award agreements on behalf of the organization. The Executive Officer information is tied directly to all the organization's applications and should not vary from application to application. If the Executive Officer could be listed as the Project Leader in a future proposal, we recommend listing a Board Member or other higher-ranking position of the organization as the Executive Officer in order to reduce the variation in the Executive Officer across applications.

The Program Leader will be responsible for all project coordination and correspondence with the Trust for the duration of the project. The email address entered here MUST be the same as the email address you used to log in to the online system. The Project Leader is the primary point of contact for the application, and the email address used to submit the application via the online system must be that of the Project Leader. Applications in which the email address associated with the Project Leader in the applicant information tab of the online opportunity does not match the email address used to submit the application will not be considered for funding. The Trust cannot conduct any official correspondence with contractors or other project partners. If at any time the Project Leader cannot continue in the position, the organization must contact the Trust and assign a new qualified Project Leader.

• To avoid conflict of interest issues, individuals associated with for-profit entities to be engaged in the project cannot serve in either role.

Project Information Tab: Provide a project title; project abstract; the watershed, county, and legislative district in which the project is located; and the latitude and longitude coordinates of the project location.

Timeline Tab: Add the project start and end date. Provide a project timeline that includes major tasks and their associated start and end dates.

Deliverables Tab: Provide estimated metrics for your proposed project such as project participants and outreach and restoration outcomes. Disregard deliverables that do not apply to your project.

Volunteers Tab: Provide a description of volunteer activities, the number of volunteers, and total number of volunteer hours.

Project Partnerships: Provide a list of project partner organizations or contractors, individuals, their areas of expertise, and their role(s) in your project.

Applicants are encouraged to upload a Letter of Commitment for the project from each partner describing in detail the partner's role or contribution to the project. Applications including strong Letter(s) of Commitment often receive higher scores. If not submitted with the application, Letter(s) of Commitment may be required prior to the release of any awarded funding. To better understand the Trust's definition of and policy on Letter(s) of Commitment, visit our Forms and Policies webpage: https://cbtrust.org/grants/applicant-resources-forms-policies/.

Narrative & Supporting Documents Tab: Use the link below to download the *required* narrative questions template for the track you are applying to. Complete all questions and upload the completed document as a Microsoft Word or PDF file:

REQUIRED NARRATIVE QUESTIONS TO ANSWER WITH YOUR APPLICATION SUBMISSION: FY25-Green-Streets-Grant-Program-Narrative-Questions 112823

Budget Tab:

- Financial Management Spreadsheet Application Budget Upload You will be asked to upload your budget using the "Application Budget" worksheet of the Chesapeake Bay Trust's Financial Management Spreadsheet (FMS), an excel file template. The template can be found by visiting https://cbtrust.org/grants/applicant-resources-forms-policies/ where you can watch a video with instructions on how to complete the FMS.
- Financial Management Spreadsheet Application Budget Information This online application
 component will ask you to enter budget category and request totals. These totals will be automatically
 calculated in the FMS Application Budget, so you will only need to copy and paste the values from the
 FMS to the Online Application.
- 3. **Additional Budget Justification** This online application component will ask you to provide a descriptive budget narrative to justify and explain costs. If the success of the work is contingent upon award of other funds, make this clear in your budget justification section.
 - a. Allowable costs and indirect: For grants awarded with federal funding costs are allowable, reasonable, and budgeted in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Guidance (https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200) as applicable. Federally funded awards must comply with the OMB Uniform Guidance (2 CFR 200), including the most recent guidance (available at https://www.epa.gov/grants/whats-new-uniform-grants-guidance-2024-revision-2-cfr-200) for indirect and the Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) allowed.

Section 5, Item B.

b. Assistance for your budget: See also the EPA Indirect Cost Rates Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) at https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-01/epa-grants-indirect-cost-rates-webinar-faq-12.6.2023.pdf and if you need additional assistance with your budget, reach out to the Trust staff.

Terms and Conditions Tab: Agree to the specified terms and conditions for the program for which you are applying.

Demographics Tab and Survey Tab (optional): Provide voluntary demographic information. Provide information about your organization's current diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) efforts and future goals. Additionally, provide voluntary feedback on the application process.

Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will be used by technical expert reviewers to evaluate your proposal. For Track 5: White Papers and Tool Development projects, the "Infrastructure Plan Integration" and "Climate and Resiliency" criteria may not apply.

Criterion	Criterion Description and Guidance	Scale
Justification	 Is the need for the project clearly identified? Can the reviewers understand what you are proposing to do and where you are proposing to do it? Is the project proposed consistent with the intent of the project type selected? Are the budgeted line items justified in the project narrative? Is the project cost-effective (\$150,000 or less per impervious acre treated)? 	0 to 20 points
Likelihood of Project Success	 What is the likelihood of success if this project were to be funded? Are methodologies and/or designs sound and consistent with best practices? Has the applicant procured landowner permission, if necessary? Has a permit pre-application meeting been conducted, if applicable? Will the project be properly inspected during/after construction to ensure it is functioning as intended? Does the project have an appropriate timeline and scale of budget to reflect the intended scope of work? Are the selected partnerships appropriate (e.g., for green street projects, has right of way been resolved)? Will the project be completed in one year or less? 	0 to 15 points
Cost- effectiveness/ Budget	 Is the budget appropriate and cost-effective? For green street implementation projects, costs of proposals will be compared to the standard of \$150,000 per impervious acre treated. For urban tree canopy projects, costs will be compared to the standard of \$150 to \$450 per tree planted, which includes the trees themselves, supplies, labor, two-years of maintenance costs, and tree pit work when necessary. For work involving subcontractors: Were estimates from at least three consultants or contractors considered? or 	0 to 15 points

		Section 5, Item E
Criterion	Criterion Description and Guidance	Scare
	 Was a competitive bid process used? In-kind and cash match is not required but will be viewed favorably as it 	
	will increase cost-effectiveness from the perspective of the funders.	
Sustainability	Has the applicant addressed future project sustainability?	0 to 15
·	 For implementation projects, will the project persist and be well- maintained and not be threatened by various types of disturbance? 	points
	Has the applicant proposed a relevant and robust maintenance plan?	
	 Has the applicant addressed the need for ongoing resources to maintain the value of the project even after the award period has ended? 	
	 Does the project use local materials to make projects more sustainable and cost-effective? 	
Infrastructure Plan Integration	 Does the proposal demonstrate an effort to coordinate green infrastructure planning with other infrastructure planning? Are the appropriate municipal agencies and partners involved? 	0 to 15 points
Climate and	Does the project consider climate resiliency and flood hazard mitigation?	0 to 10
Resiliency	 Does the project siting consider future water inundation areas projected by climate change? 	points
	Does the project incorporate innovative and sustainable solutions to	
	preserve and enhance greenspace?	
	 Are the native plants and trees selected for the project appropriate to the project location? 	
Audience Need	Based on applicant provided information, is the audience being engaged in the project identified as historically under-engaged or under-served through indicators such as, but not limited to, communities that were at any point historically redlined or graded as "hazardous" by the Home	0 to 5 points
	Owners' loan corporation, socioeconomic status (communities in which median household income is equal to or less than 75% of state-wide median household income or have high poverty and unemployment rates (https://www.census.gov)), or other relevant characteristics as identified in the EPA EJScreen Tool (https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/)?	
Demonstration Value	 Will this project further the understanding of stormwater management in local communities? Will others be able to take lessons from this project and replicate a similar project in their own communities? 	0 to 5 points
	 How can this project be used as a model or pilot for future efforts of green infrastructure? 	

Application Review Process

Each application is reviewed by a Technical Review Committee (TRC), composed of individuals who are experts in the fields supported by this RFP and represent communities served by projects funded by this RFP. The TRC ranks and scores all applications based on the criteria listed in the "Evaluation Criteria" section above, then meets to discuss the application merits. The TRC then recommends a suite of applications to the Trust's Board of Trustees.

The funding partners reserve the right to fund projects and budget items that advance their missions and meet specific funding priorities and criteria.

Total Score Possible 100

To allow applicants to set expectations prior to investing time in application, the Trust provides histohicar application approval rates for the same or similar programs. The average approval rate from the last three rounds in this grant program is 45%, including both fully and partially funded applications.

Awards and Notifications

The FY25 Green Streets grant program awards will be announced June 2025.

All applicants will receive a letter stating the funding partnership's decision. An application may be declined, partially awarded, or fully awarded. If approved, the Trust will send an award agreement with award conditions and due dates of status, progress, and final reports. The Trust will mail the first award payment to the requesting organization following: satisfaction of any phase one payment award contingencies, including upload of the signed award agreement. Ten percent of the total award will be held until the final report is submitted and approved. In cases where the awardee fails to submit a status report, progress report, final report, or other requirement by the due date, the Trust reserves the right to terminate the award agreement and require a refund of funds already transferred to the awardee.

When the project is complete, awardees are required to complete final reports that may include but are not limited to submission of all receipts for supplies, invoices for subcontractors/contractors, and copies of timesheets for personnel time used (timesheets must include date, name, time worked per day, and coding to tie the time worked to the award).

All financial back-up documentation will be grouped and numbered to correspond to the budget line item reported as spent. Organizations with outstanding final, progress, or status reports will not be awarded additional grants.

Appendix A: Project Resource Pool

As an incentive to encourage and support applications, resources, supplies, and services are available free of charge. This project resource pool offers supplies and materials that may be necessary to complete implementation projects and can reduce project costs being requested in the original budget request. These resources should be included in your application as match and are only available to those receiving an award. The list is not extensive and may change based on product availability. If you know of services or resources that may be added to this list, email Megan Diehl at mdiehl@cbtrust.org.

Currently we have the following resources available for awardees in:

Washington Metro Area

DC Water produces EPA-certified 'Exceptional Quality' biosolids to be used for increasing the organic matter in soils. These biosolids are the product of an intensive and technologically advanced process that uses high heat, pressure, and biological processes to remove pathogens found in wastewater and convert carbon to digester gas. DC Water's soil amendment products meet all US EPA standards for use in home and garden projects. Class A biosolids contain no pathogens and very low levels of metals. DC Water goes beyond these standards to produce EPA-certified Exceptional Quality biosolids. The process that produces Bloom is just accelerated nature, producing clean, green, sustainable energy and a soil amendment. DC Water is offering up to 15 cubic yards of Bloom Soil (https://bloomsoil.com/) Amendment to Green Streets awardees. There is a delivery charge of \$150 for up to 15 yards for the DC metro area. Free pickup can also be arranged directly with Bloom.

Community ToolBanks

Awardees receiving an award through the G3 Program will have access to tools and equipment for a hornman fee (three cents on the dollar) allowing the Green Streets Grant Program funds to go to more project-based items.

The Baltimore Community ToolBank (https://www.baltimoretoolbank.org/) offers an impressive inventory of tools and other supplies for cents to the dollar to complete community-based projects in Baltimore City. The Baltimore Community ToolBank tools are only available to organizations whose work benefits the community.

The Richmond, VA Community ToolBank (https://richmondtoolbank.org/) provides year-round access to tools and equipment to not-for-profit organizations for a nominal fee, maximizing agencies' financial and human resources and empowering them to improve community engagement and to achieve greater impact for those they serve.

Appendix B: West Virginia Stream Restoration Applicant Information

The Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns Award Program welcomes funding partners across the Chesapeake Bay watershed. New this year the program's West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection requests applications for green street stormwater practices including stream restoration practices. The Trust and US EPA Region III support stream restoration through other funding opportunities.

Stream health is impacted by landscape and in-stream conditions emphasizing the benefits of coordinating green street efforts with stream restoration. By funding stream restoration project designs and implementation, the funding partners aim to provide local governments and non-profit organizations the ability to quickly progress through each phase of work. The funding partners envision the products of grants funded under this opportunity will enable grantees to:

- Move designs to future implementation through the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, grant programs at the Chesapeake Bay Trust, or other sources of support and
- Accomplish on-the-ground restoration that will result in improvements to the health of West Virginia streams, through water quality improvement and habitat enhancement.

If your application includes stream restoration design and/or implementation in West Virginia, ensure that your application includes the following elements for consideration by reviewers:

- 1. Demonstrate project need, e.g., stream banks experiencing erosion, stormwater practices implemented/considered higher in the watershed draining to this site, etc.).
- 2. Present the alternative analysis (detail the alternative practices and/or practice types were considered at the site leading to the recommendation for the proposed practice and practice type).
- 3. Describe the practice type and the goals of the project to clearly link the goals to that practice type. Funding partners will consider stream restoration designs and/or implementation projects that aim reduce erosion and provide enhancements to the hydrology, habitat, vegetation, etc. while reducing impacts to existing natural resources.
- 4. Describe the existing conditions of the site and how the project will avoid natural resource impacts; avoidance of natural resources is required, including avoidance of trees and existing wetlands, to the maximum extent practicable.
- 5. Describe existing utilities at the site and detail how you determined that the project will not adversely affect public safety, infrastructure, and/or properties.
- 6. Describe the assessment that has or will be done for the drainage above ground and through underground pipes (if present) and avoiding utilities.
- 7. Use of the field's best practices per the US EPA Chesapeake Bay Program Office, WV DEP, and the Trust. Refer to the US EPA's Expert Panel reports and budget for any required additional calculations, sampling, and modeling that will be completed during the design phase that are available at:

http://chesapeakestormwater.net/bmp-resources/urban-stream-restoration/. The Trust highy recommends applicants interested in stream restoration practices review and be familiar with the most recent science to make informed decisions on site selection and technique. Research gathered through the Pooled Monitoring Initiative's Restoration Research Program focused on stream restoration has been shared on the Trust's website (https://cbtrust.org/grants/restoration-research/ - found under the "Additional Information", "Awarded Projects and Final Products" tab). Particularly, applicants may find final products from the following projects of relevance:

- Evaluating the Effectiveness and Sustainability of Novel Stream Restoration Designs for Coastal Plain Streams in Maryland: Integrating Existing and New Data from Stream Restoration Monitoring, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Dr. Solange Filoso
- b. Tree Trade-Offs in Stream Restoration Projects: Impact on Riparian Groundwater Quality, University of Maryland College Park, Dr. Sujay Kaushal
- c. Quantifying the ecological uplift and effectiveness of differing stream restoration approaches in Maryland, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Dr. Robert Hilderbrand
- d. Determining realistic expectations for ecological uplift in urban stream restorations, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Dr. Robert Hilderbrand
- e. Evaluating the Performance of Regenerative Stormwater Conveyances in Urban Versus Rural Watersheds, Smithsonian Institution, Dr. Thomas Jordan
- f. Improving Success of Stream Restoration Practices Revised and Expanded, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Dr. Theresa Thompson
- g. Determining the effects of legacy sediment removal and floodplain reconnection on ecosystem function and nutrient export, Towson University, Dr. Vanessa Beauchamp
- Quantifying the cumulative effects of stream restoration and environmental site design on nitrate loads in nested urban watersheds using a high-frequency sensor network, University of Maryland Baltimore County, Dr. Claire Welty
- i. Climate Impacts to Restoration Practices, Tetra Tech, Inc., Dr. Jon Butcher
- j. Impacts of Regenerative Stormwater Conveyance on Iron in Restored Streams and Potential Effects on Aquatic Organisms, EA Engineering, Science, and Technology, Inc., PBC, Dr. Jamie Suski
- k. Vertebrate Community Response to Regenerative Stream Conveyance (RSC) Restoration as a Resource Trade-Off, Tetra Tech, Inc., Dr. Mark Southerland
- 8. Describe the experience with similar projects for the team proposing to do this work. Designs shall be done by licensed/registered professionals.
- 9. Detail how materials will be delivered to the site, where materials will be stored, and how construction equipment will be safely managed during the project.
- 10. Describe your ability to proceed through the permit and construction process:
 - a. The output of a design award must be permittable by the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, and all other appropriate local, state, and federal entities.
 - b. Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the appropriate department at WVDEP during the conceptual design phase and make an appointment to discuss their project with the permit reviewers. Appropriate departments can be identified through WVDEP permitting webpages:
 - i. https://dep.wv.gov/Permits/Pages/default.aspx and
 - ii. https://dep.wv.gov/WWE/Programs/nonptsource/streamdisturbance/Pages/default.a spx
- 11. Describe proposed maintenance and long-term sustainability of the project. Designs will be evaluated to ensure that completed projects are self-sustaining and will not require continuous manipulation for future project sustainability. If stream restoration implementation is being proposed, describe how the

- project will persist and be well-maintained in the future (and not threatened by various types or disturbance), including addressing any ongoing resources needed to maintain the value of the project.
- 12. Provide the following metrics for your project: linear feet to be designed, drainage area treated/planned (acres), impervious acre treated, estimated load reductions (lbs. of N, P, and S reduced), and estimated cost of design (\$).
- 13. Justify the cost-effectiveness of the project. Provide assurances that the best price was provided (e.g., were multiple estimates/quotes obtained for contractors) and is reflective of current, market prices/values. The table below provides dollar ranges in which approximately 75% of proposals in the past two rounds of the Trust's Watershed Assistance Grant Program were funded.

71	Linear Feet to be Designed	Impervious acre treated	Lb N Reduced	Lb P Reduced	Lb S Reduced
Stream	\$26 to \$80	\$4 to \$4,700	\$37 to	\$85 to	\$4.50 to
Restoration	per ft	per acre	\$550 per Lb	\$800 per Lb	\$2,000 per Lb

Appendix C: Additional Resources

These additional resources can support your application and project.

- Avoiding and Minimizing Risk of Flood Damage to State Assets: https://documents.dnrec.delaware.gov/energy/Documents/DE%20Flood%20Avoidance%20Guide%20For%20State%20Agencies.pdf
- 2. Baltimore City Green Network Plan (preferred areas for Baltimore City projects): http://www.baltimoresustainability.org/projects/green-network/
- 3. Chesapeake Bay Trust Additional Resources Page, specifically the "Restoration," Signage," and Maintenance" categories: https://cbtrust.org/additional-resources/
- 4. Chesapeake Bay Trust Green Streets Grants page and example Green Streets Grant projects: https://cbtrust.org/grants/green-streets-green-jobs-green-towns
- 5. Chesapeake Bay Resources for Native Plants: https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/External Final-Trust-Draft-Plant-Species-Selection-Guide-Oct2021.pdf
- 6. Climate Impacts to Restoration Practices (supported through the <u>Pooled Monitoring Program</u>): https://cbtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/Grant16928-Deliverable11-FinalProjectReport 120820.pdf
- Example Green Street Charrette and Concept Design Report for Huntington, West Virginia: https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2020-09/documents/resilient-by-design-huntington-charrette-report-final-12-26-19-pdf
- 8. Minority and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (MBE/DBEs) for each state:
 - MD https://marylandmdbe.mdbecert.com/
 - PA https://www.dgs.internet.state.pa.us/suppliersearch
 - DC https://dcdslbd.my.salesforce-sites.com/public/
 - DE https://deldotcivilrights.dbesystem.com/FrontEnd/searchcertifieddirectory.asp
 - VA https://sbsd.virginia.gov/directory/
 - NY https://ny.newnycontracts.com/frontend/searchcertifieddirectory.asp
 - WV https://apps.sos.wv.gov/business/corporations/searchadvanced.aspx
- 9. NOAA Sea Level Rise Viewer: https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/slr.html
- 10. NRCS Web Soil Survey: http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm
- 11. Piloting the Development of Probabilistic Intensity Duration Frequency (IDF) Curves for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed (supported through the <u>US EPA Goal Implementation Team program</u>): https://www.rand.org/pubs/tools/TLA1365-1.html

Section 5, Item B.

- 12. Presentations and handouts from the Green Streets Forum held November 6, 2019: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Tr9uxWVGx3AZukHmZu0ZurDuHzGP -PS
- 13. US EPA Climate Change Adaptation Resource Center: https://www.epa.gov/arc-x#:~:text=EPA%27s%20Adaptation%20Resource%20Center%20(ARC,tailored%20specifically%20to%20their%20needs
- 14. US EPA Community Based Public Private Partnership Guide: https://www.epa.gov/waterfinancecenter/community-based-public-private-partnerships
- 15. US EPA Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool: https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen
- 16. US EPA Green Street, Green Jobs, Green Towns website: https://www.epa.gov/G3/green-streets-green-jobs-green-towns-g3-grant-program
- 17. US EPA Storm Smart Cities: Integrating Green Infrastructure into Local Hazard Mitigation Plans: https://www.epa.gov/G3/storm-smart-cities-integrating-green-infrastructure-local-hazard-mitigation-plans
- 18. US EPA Storm Smart Schools Guide: https://www.epa.gov/G3/storm-smart-schools-guide-integrate-green-stormwater-infrastructure-meet-regulatory-compliance



Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date: February 10, 2025 Submitted by:

Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator

Item Title: Resolution 17-2025 | A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE PORT TOWNS APPLICATION FOR THE FY 2026 TRANSPORTATION LAND-USE CONNECTIONS (TLC) PROGRAM AND THE REGIONAL ROADWAY SAFETY PROGRAM (RRSP)

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE PORT TOWNS APPLICATION FOR THE FY 2026 TRANSPORTATION LAND-USE CONNECTIONS (TLC) PROGRAM AND THE REGIONAL ROADWAY SAFETY PROGRAM (RRSP).

tion Attached: 7-2025 ation
allon
1

Recommended Action:

Approval of the resolution of support to apply for grant funds and approval for the Town Administrator to work with the County and Port Towns

Overview: The grant programs provide short-term consultant services to local jurisdictions for small planning projects that promote mixed-use, walkable communities and support a variety of transportation alternatives. Projects are eligible to receive up to \$80,000 in technical assistance for planning projects and up to \$100,000 for design projects. These projects typically last 6-8 months

Purpose: The Town of Bladensburg seeks Council support to apply for the funding will enable the Port Town to advance projects that enhance environmental sustainability, improve stormwater management, and increase the overall livability of the community.

Grant Application Details:

- **Deadline:** March 7, 2025
- Partners: The Town will collaborate with the County and the Port Town.
- Proposed Use of Funds: The grant provides short-term consultant services to local
 jurisdictions for small planning projects that promote mixed-use, walkable communities and
 support a variety of transportation alternatives.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Town Council adopt a resolution supporting the submission of the Grant Program application. This endorsement will demonstrate the Town's commitment to collaboration with the Port Towns.

Budgeted Item: Yes [] No [X]	Continued Date:
Budgeted Amount:\$ TBD	
One-Time Cost: Yes	
Ongoing Cost:	
Council Priority: Yes [] No []	Approved Date:



Town of Bladensburg, Maryland RESOLUTION NO. 17 - 2025

Date Introduced: February 10, 2025

Date Adopted: February 10, 2025

Date Effective: February 10, 2025

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE PORT TOWNS APPLICATION FOR THE FY 2026 TRANSPORTATION LAND-USE CONNECTIONS (TLC) PROGRAM AND THE REGIONAL ROADWAY SAFETY PROGRAM (RRSP)

WHEREAS, the Towns of Bladensburg, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, and Edmonston (collectively known as the "Port Towns") recognize the importance of coordinated transportation and land-use planning to enhance connectivity, safety, and sustainability within the region; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) administers the Transportation Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program and the Regional Roadway Safety Program (RRSP) to support planning and design projects that improve transportation infrastructure and promote multimodal accessibility; and

WHEREAS, eligible projects under these programs may receive up to \$80,000 in assistance for planning projects and up to \$100,000 for design projects, with recipients receiving short-term consultant services rather than direct financial assistance; and

WHEREAS, a unified and collaborative application between the Port Towns will strengthen regional transportation planning efforts, enhance roadway safety, and foster sustainable development for the benefit of all participating municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Bladensburg is committed to supporting initiatives that improve local and regional transportation infrastructure, advance pedestrian and bicycle safety, and contribute to a more connected and resilient community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Town Council of Bladensburg hereby express their full support for the Port Towns' joint application for the FY 2026 Transportation Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program and the Regional Roadway Safety Program (RRSP); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town of Bladensburg will actively collaborate with its neighboring municipalities to ensure a successful application and implementation of the proposed projects; and

- 1. The Town Administrator and staff are authorized to work collaboratively with the other Port Towns in developing and submitting the grant application.
- 2. The Town Administrator is authorized to work with Prince George's County in our submission since it required by the grant.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution shall be forwarded to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) and the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) as part of the Port Towns' application submission.

SIGNED this 10th day of February 2025.

Attest:

Regine Watson

Takisha D. James, Mayor

Town Clerk



Application Period Opens on January 6 for TLC and Roadway Safety Programs

The application period will open soon for the TPB's two flagship technical assistance programs — the Transportation Land-Use Connections (TLC) Program and the Regional Roadway Safety Program (RRSP). As in the past, applicants will be able to fill out one joint application to apply for either or both programs.

The deadline for applications is March 7, 2025. The deadline for submitting abstracts for proposed projects, which is an optional step, is January 22, 2025.

For more information, and to submit an online application, go to:

TLC: <u>www.mwcog.org/tlc</u>RRSP: www.mwcog.org/rrsp

Anticipated Solicitation Schedule for FY 2026

Application period opens: January 6, 2025

Abstracts due: January 22, 2025Applications due: March 7, 2025

Panel recommendations: March-April, 2025
 TRP approves projects: April May, 2025

TPB approves projects: April-May, 2025
Consultant selection: June-July, 2025
Contracting process: August 2025
Project kick-off meetings: Fall 2025

Application Process

Any local jurisdiction in the National Capital Region that is a member of the Transportation Planning Board is eligible to apply for either or both programs. Projects are eligible to receive up to \$80,000 in assistance for planning projects and up to \$100,000 for design. Recipients will receive short-term consultant services. They will not receive direct financial assistance.

The FY 2026 application period is open between January 6 and March 7, 2025. Potential applicants may also submit an optional abstract by January 22, 2025. TPB staff will provide preliminary feedback on the abstracts approximately one week after their submittal.

For each program, a panel of industry experts and COG/TPB staff will review the application submissions and recommend projects to the TPB for funding. The panels' recommendations will represent a cross-section of jurisdictions throughout the region. The TPB is scheduled to approve the applications for the two programs in April and/or May.

FY 2026 projects will begin in fall 2025 and must be completed by June 30, 2026.

TLC Program

The Transportation Land Use Connections (TLC) Program provides short-term consultant services to local jurisdictions for small planning projects that promote mixed-use, walkable communities and support a variety of transportation alternatives. Any local jurisdiction in the National Capital Region that is a member of the TPB is eligible to apply. Non-profits and non-member jurisdictions in the region may apply as secondary recipients to a TPB member jurisdiction. Recipients receive short-term consultant services and no direct financial assistance. Projects are eligible to receive up to \$80,000 in technical assistance for planning projects and up to \$100,000 for design projects. TLC projects typically last 6-8 months.

As in past years, TLC projects may provide a range of services for community-oriented planning activities, such as:

- Small area & transit station area planning
- Bicycle and pedestrian safety & access
- Transit-oriented development studies
- Housing studies
- Economic development studies
- Roadway design guidelines & standards
- Streetscape improvement plans
- Safe Routes to School planning
- Trail planning and design
- Transit demand and feasibility analysis

The TPB encourages applications that address long-standing TPB priorities, including support for multimodal transportation options and land use enhancements in Activity Centers. The TPB is particularly interested in applications that support walking and biking improvements in high-capacity transit areas, especially Transit Access Focus Areas (TAFAs); projects to plan and design missing links in the National Capital Trail Network (NCTN); and projects that support access in Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs).

Regional Roadway Safety Program

The Regional Roadway Safety Program (RRSP) provides short-term consultant services to local jurisdictions for small planning and preliminary engineering projects that focus on roadway safety in the National Capital Region. Any local jurisdiction in the region that is a member of the TPB is eligible to apply. Non-profits and non-member jurisdictions may apply as secondary recipients to a TPB member jurisdiction. Recipients receive short-term consultant services and no direct financial assistance. Similar to the TLC Program, all projects are eligible to receive up to \$80,000 in technical assistance for planning and up to \$100,000 for design projects.

Proposed projects may provide a range of services to support roadway safety efforts, including.

- Support of local roadway safety plans
- Bicycle and pedestrian safety & access studies
- Roadway safety audits
- Crash data analysis
- Jurisdictional efforts to leverage the "Street Smart" program



98

- Identification of jurisdictional "high injury networks"
- Road diet design
- Lighting and signage improvements
- Intersection improvements
- Enhanced pedestrian infrastructure
- Safety guides or toolkits
- Safety guidelines and standards

The TPB encourages applications that address five TPB priorities: safety improvements for Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs), improvements to road user behavior, identifying and designing safety countermeasures, understanding safety data, and cross-jurisdictional collaboration.

About the TPB

The TPB is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization for the metropolitan Washington region. It is responsible for developing and carrying out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process in the metropolitan area. The TPB is staffed by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG).

Questions?

For more information:

- John Swanson (jswanson@mwcog.org)
- Janie Nham (jnham@mwcog.org)

Or visit our website at www.mwcog.org.



Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date:Submitted by:January 13, 2025Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator

Item Title: Approval for a Contract with Ramos HR Consulting Inc for Human Resources Services

Approval for a Contract with Ramos HR Consulting for Human Resources Services

Work Session Item [X] Council Meeting Item [X]

Documentation Attached:

Proposal

Recommended Action:

Staff recommends the passage of this contract and asks that the Council approve the Town Administrator's signing of an agreement with Ramos HR Consulting Inc

Summary of Human Resources Consultant RFQ Process

As part of the FY 2025 Budget, the Town Council approved funds for a Human Resources Consultant for the Town to help augment staffing since it has grown significantly over the last several years. Many of the human resources functions have been distributed through the departments, and many of the town policies and procedures are outdated, so outside expertise is needed.

The Town of Bladensburg initiated a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process for selecting a Human Resources Consultant in August 2024. The RFQ outlined specific requirements, submission instructions, and evaluation criteria, attracting seven firms. Interviews were conducted throughout the fall of 2024, focusing on firms with the necessary expertise and capacity to support the Town's HR needs.

Key RFQ Requirements:

1. Proposal Submittal:

- Submission deadline: August 30, 2024, by 3:00 PM EST.
- o Proposals submitted electronically to designated Town officials.

2. Required Content of Submissions:

- Letter of Interest: Addressing relevant abilities and experience in:
 - Auditing HR practices, employee benefits, and payroll.
 - Reviewing and updating personnel files, job descriptions, and classifications.
 - Developing recruitment and onboarding strategies.
 - Coordinating benefits with health insurance brokers, insurance policies, and supplemental retirement programs.
 - Demonstrating local and Maryland-specific experience.

Experience:

- Employing certified HR personnel.
- Managing issues under tight deadlines.
- Working with growing entities and local governments.
- Biographies or Resumes: For principals or key personnel involved.
- References: For similar projects, detailing the scope, timing, and type of work, along with contact information.

3. Contract Term:

Three years with two optional one-year renewals upon mutual agreement.

Selection Process:

Evaluation Criteria: Submissions were assessed on relevant HR experience, qualifications, and references.

Firm Name	Services Offered		
Finalist Firms		Ranking	
HR Strong	Full-Service HR Services – Online and In-Person (local)	2	
Ramos Consulting	Full-Service HR Services - Online (Out of State)	1	
Spectrum	Full-Service HR Services – Mostly Online and In Person (local)	3	
Other Applicants			
HR in Motions LLC	Full-Service HR Services – Mostly Online and In Person (local)	N/A	
Navigator HR Services	Full-Service HR Services - Online (Out of State)	N/A	
Talented Tenth DC	Full-Service HR Services – Mostly Online and In Person (local)	N/A	

- Town Leadership: Reviewed material, interviewed firms, and evaluated the pros and cons of each firm.
- Outcome: Seven proposals were received, and shortlisted firms were interviewed throughout the fall of 2024. Three final firms were interviewed 2 -3 times to determine the nuances of the proposals and best use of Town resources.

The Town remains committed to best practices in Human Resources, and staff believes that the appointment of Ramos HR Consulting will help to improve the quality of the work environment for Town employees.

Budgeted Item: Yes [X] No [] NA	Continued Date:
Budgeted Amount: \$35,000 annually	
One-Time Cost: NA	
Ongoing Cost: NA	
Council Priority: Yes [] No []	Approved Date:

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSULTANT AGREEMENT

Ramos HR Consulting Inc and Town of Bladensburg - 2025

THIS CONSULT ANT AGREEMENT (the "Agreement") is effective this 1st day of March 2025, by and between the TOWN OF BLADENSBURG (the "Town"), a municipal corporation of the State of Maryland, whose address is 4229 Edmonston Road, Bladensburg, Maryland 20710 and Ramos HR Consulting a California corporation, hereinafter referred to as "Consultant," whose address is 12647 Hubbard Street, Sylmar, CA 91342 each individually a party and, collectively, the parties.

WHEREAS Consultant desires to provide Human Resource consulting services on a contractual basis for the Town; and

WHEREAS the Town desires a Human Resource consultant to provide such services described in Exhibit A. and Exhibit B.; and

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the forgoing the premises and mutual promises herein contained and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the parties agree as follows:

- 1. Appointment. The Town hereby engages the Consultant, as an independent professional contractor and not as an agent or employee of the Town, to provide services as requested by the Town, and the Consultant hereby accepts such work, subject to the terms and provisions of this Agreement.
- 2. Scope of Services. Pursuant to the Agreement, the Consultant agrees to furnish all the material and perform all the work in compliance with the requirements and standards contained in the Contract Documents, as defined herein. All work shall be performed in accordance with industry standards. The consultant services included as part of this Agreement will include management and consultation on matters of human resources. The consultant will provide reports on activities to the town and must present the town administrator with at least a monthly report. The Consultant will attend any and all meetings the Town requests regarding human resources. The Consultant serves as the Human Resources Manager for the Town.
- **3.** Term. The term of this Agreement is two years from the effective date, with one additional, consecutive one-year option if approved by the Town. All work shall be

performed at the town's request. The parties hereto understand that time is of the essence in completing the approved services under this Agreement.

4. <u>Contract Price.</u> The Town agrees to pay the Consultant a monthly fee of \$2,750.00 for the satisfactory performance of specific tasks approved by the Town, as outlined in the Consultant's proposal dated March 1,2025, attached hereto as Exhibit A. This fee covers up to 40 hours of work per month. In addition, the Town will reimburse the Consultant for travel expenses at a rate of \$1,200.00 per visit, with any additional travel costs requiring prior approval from the project manager and billed separately.

All out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the Consultant- such as postage, reproduction, diagrams, photographs, blueprinting, and courier services-are included in the monthly fee. The Town will pay the Consultant for approved tasks each month, or as needed, upon receipt and approval of an invoice. All services provided under this agreement will be rendered on an as requested basis, with billing occurring monthly as specified herein.

5. <u>Contract Documents.</u> This Agreement and the following enumerated documents, which are incorporated by reference as if fully set forth herein, form the Agreement and are termed the Contract Documents:

Exhibit A | Scope of Service and Company/ Consultant Overview
Exhibit B | Additional Scope of Service/ Proposed outline for first year priorities
Certificate(s) of Insurance and additional insured endorsement

6. Other Payments: Expenses: Taxes. The Town will not be responsible for any cost or expenses of operation of any kind associated with the Consultant's provision of services pursuant to this Agreement, except as set out herein. Consultant shall be entitled to no fees, bonuses, contingent payments, or any other amount in connection with the services to be rendered hereunder except as set out herein. The parties hereto further agree that the Town

shall have no obligation to reimburse, pay directly or otherwise satisfy any expenses of the Consultant in connection with the performance of obligations under this Agreement except as set out herein.

It is expressly understood and acknowledged by the parties hereto that the fees payable hereunder shall be paid in the gross amount, without reduction for any Federal or State withholding or other payroll taxes or any other governmental taxes or charges. The parties hereto further recognize that the Consultant, as an independent contractor of the Town, is responsible for directly assuming and remitting any applicable Federal or State withholding taxes, estimated tax payments, Social Security payments, unemployment compensation payments, and any other fees, taxes, and expenses whatsoever. In the event that Consultant is deemed not to be an independent contractor by any local, state, or federal governmental agency, Consultant agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Town for any and all fees, costs, and expenses, including, but not limited to, attorneys fees incurred thereby.

7. Insurance. The consultant will purchase and maintain during the entire term of this Agreement general liability insurance, professional errors and omissions insurance, automobile, and workers' compensation insurance, if applicable, with limits of not less than those set forth below. On each policy, with the exception of errors and omissions and Worker's Compensation, the Consultant will name the Town of Bladensburg as an additional insured and will provide an additional insured endorsement for all coverages except workers' compensation and professional errors and omissions.

A. Comprehensive General Liability Insurance

- (1) Personal injury liability insurance with a limit of \$2,000,000 for each occurrence/aggregate.
- (2) Property damage liability insurance with limits of \$500,000.00 for each occurrence/aggregate.

All insurance shall include completed operations and contractual liability coverage.

B. <u>Automobile Liability Coverage.</u> Automobile insurance for personal injury and property damage \$1,000.000 for each occurrence/ aggregate

- C. <u>Workers' Compensation Insurance.</u> Consultant shall comply with the requirements and benefits established by the State of Marylan for the provision of Workers' Compensation insurance, if applicable. All Corporations are required to provide Workers' Compensation Certificates of Insurance.
- D. <u>Professional errors and omissions.</u> \$2,000.000 for each occurrence/ aggregate. The Consultant covenants to maintain insurance, in these amounts, which will insure all activities undertaken by the Consultant on behalf of the Town under this Agreement. The Town shall be provided with thirty days' prior notice of changes that would reduce the coverage available. Copies of certificates of insurance and additional insured endorsements for all required coverage shall be furnished to the Town prior to beginning work.

Each subcontractor proposed by the Consultant shall provide the same coverage with limits as required herein and shall provide proof of said coverage. Provision of any insurance required herein does not relieve the Consultant of any of the responsibilities or obligations assumed by the Consultant in the contract awarded or for which the Consultant may be liable by law or otherwise. The provision of such insurance is not intended in any way to waive the Town's immunities or any damage limits applicable to municipal government as provided by law.

- **8.** <u>Indemnification</u>. The Consultant shall indemnify and save harmless the Town, its officers, employees, and agents from all suits, actions, and damages or costs of every kind and description, including attorneys' fees, arising directly or indirectly out of the performance of the Agreement, whether caused by the negligent or intentional act or omission on the part of the Consultant, its agents, servants, employees and subcontractors.
- **9.** Permits. Licenses. Applicable Laws. The consultant will be responsible for obtaining any and all licenses pertaining to the performance of work under the Agreement. All services and materials provided by Consultant shall conform to all applicable laws and regulations. Requirements for obtaining permits shall be determined in each task order.
- **10.** <u>Materials and Standard of Work.</u> All work performed and material provided pursuant to this Agreement shall be in conformance with standards and specifications applicable in the industry.
- **11. Accurate Information.** The Consultant certifies that all information provided in response to requests for information is true and correct. Any false or misleading information is grounds for the Town to terminate this Agreement.

- **12.** Construction and Legal Effect. This Agreement, including all Contract Documents constitute the entire understanding between the parties. No modification or addition to this Agreement shall have any effect unless made in writing and signed by both parties hereto.
- 13. <u>No Assignment.</u> This Agreement shall not be assigned or transferred by consultant, whether by operation of law or in any other manner, without prior consent in writing from the Town. In the event of insolvency of either party, this Agreement shall terminate immediately at the election of the other party.
- **14.** Relief. The Consultant recognizes the substantial and immediate harm that a breach or threatened breach of this Agreement will impose upon the Town and further recognizes that in such event, monetary damages may be available to the Town. Accordingly, in the event of a breach or threatened breach of this Agreement, Consultant consents to the Town's entitlement to seek ex parte, preliminary, interlocutory, temporary or permanent injunctive, or any other equitable relief, protecting and fully enforcing the Town's rights hereunder and preventing the Consultant from further breaching any of its obligations set forth herein. Nothing herein shall be construed as prohibiting the Town from pursuing any other remedies available to the Town at law or in equity for such breach or threatened breach, including the recovery of damages from consultant.
- 15. <u>Termination for Default.</u> Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, this Agreement may be terminated upon the failure of the Consultant to deliver work, supplies, materials or services in a timely manner, to correct defective work or materials, to act in good faith, or to carry out the work in accordance with contract documents, each of which shall constitute a breach of this Agreement. In such an event, the Town may give notice to the Consultant to cease work until the cause of such order has been eliminated. Should the Consultant fail to correct such a default within 24 hours after receipt of notification, the Town may terminate this Agreement. This provision shall not limit the Town in exercising any other rights or remedies it may have.
- **Termination for Convenience.** The performance of work or delivery of services under this Agreement may be terminated in whole or in part at any time upon written notice when the Town determines that such termination is in its best interest. The Town will be liable only for labor, materials, goods, and services furnished prior to the effective date of such termination.
- **17.** <u>Notices.</u> All notices shall be sufficient if delivered in person or sent by certified mail to the parties at the following addresses:

To the Town:

Michelle Bailey Hedgpeth
Town Administrator
Town of Bladensburg
4229 Edmonston Road
Bladensburg, MD 20710
mbaileyhedgepeth@bladensburgmd.gov or clerk@bladensburgmd.gov

To the Consultant:

Ramos HR Consulting, Inc 12647 Hubbard Street Sylmar, CA 91342 Attn: Jennifer Ramos, Founder and CEO jennifer@ramoshrconsulting.com (562) 231-7301

18. Attorneys' Fees and Costs.

The prevailing party, as determined by a court of competent jurisdiction, shall be entitled to attorney's fees and costs incurred in any actions or claims brought to enforce this Agreement or for damages hereunder.

- 19. Enforcement Provisions. The failure of the Town or Consultant, at any time, to enforce any of the provisions of this Agreement, or any right with respect thereto, will in no way be construed to be a waiver of such provisions or right, or in any way to affect the validity of this Agreement. The exercise by either party of any rights under this Agreement shall not preclude or prejudice the subsequent exercise of the same or any other rights under this Agreement.
- **20.** Governing Law. This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Maryland, excluding its conflict of law rules, as if this Agreement were made and to be performed entirely within the State of Maryland.
- **21. Severability.** If any term or provision of this Agreement shall be held invalid or unenforceable to any extent, the remainder of this Agreement shall not be affected thereby, and each term and provision of this Agreement shall be enforced to the fullest extent permitted by law.

22. <u>Materials.</u>

- A. Materials produced under or by reason of this Agreement shall be considered Official Products of Work owned by the Town of Bladensburg.
- B. Materials independently developed and owned by the Consultant or by other authors and third parties, and which may be used by the Consultant in the fulfillment of this

Agreement, remain the property of their authors or owners. Subsequent use of such materials by the Town shall require written permission of the Consultant or other author(s) thereof.

- C. Information contained in records that may be given to the Consultant for review remains the property of the Town and may not be duplicated or distributed or otherwise published without its express consent. Material provided to the Consultant for review shall be returned to the Town upon completion of the task.
- D. The Consultant understands that information and records provided to or made available about participants and clients or services during the performance of this Agreement are considered confidential and shall not be used for any purpose other than to perform the required services. Regardless of the data format, the Consultant agrees that it, and any of its employees and subcontractors, shall not disclose or allow disclosure of any such data or derivatives of it to any third party without the written permission of the Town. Any copies of such records made during the performance of this Agreement shall be returned to the Town upon the expiration of the Agreement.
- **Counterparts.** The parties may execute this Agreement in counterparts, which each such document shall, in the aggregate and when signed by both parties, constitute one and the same instrument; and, thereafter, each counterpart shall be deemed an original instrument as against any party who has signed it. The parties may sign in writing or by electronic signature. This Agreement shall not be valid or enforceable unless and until duly executed by a duly authorized officer of each party.
- 24. <u>Interpretation.</u> Any questions concerning conditions and specifications shall be directed to the Project Manager in writing. No interpretation shall be considered binding unless provided in writing to the Consultant by the Project Manager. By execution of this Agreement, the Consultant certifies that it understands the terms and specifications as set forth in the Contract Documents.
- 25. <u>Successors and Assigns.</u> This Agreement shall inure to the benefit of and be binding upon the successors and assigns of the parties hereto. In any event, the Consultant shall not assign any right or obligation under this Agreement without the Town's express written consent, which may be withheld in the Town's sole discretion.

26. THIRD PARTY BENEFICIARIES. This Agreement is entered into solely for the benefit of the Town and Consultant. No third party will be deemed a beneficiary of this Agreement, and no third party will have the right to make any claim or assert any right under this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this Agreement under seal the day and year first above written.

ATTECT.	TOWN OF BLADENSBURG			
ATTEST:	By:			
	Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator			
WITNESS:	Ramos HR Consulting			
	Ву:			
	Name: Jennifer Ramos			
	Title: Founder and CEO, Ramos HR Consulting			



COPYRIGHT ©2024 RAMOS HR CONSULTING



BUSINESS PROPOSAL

Prepared For

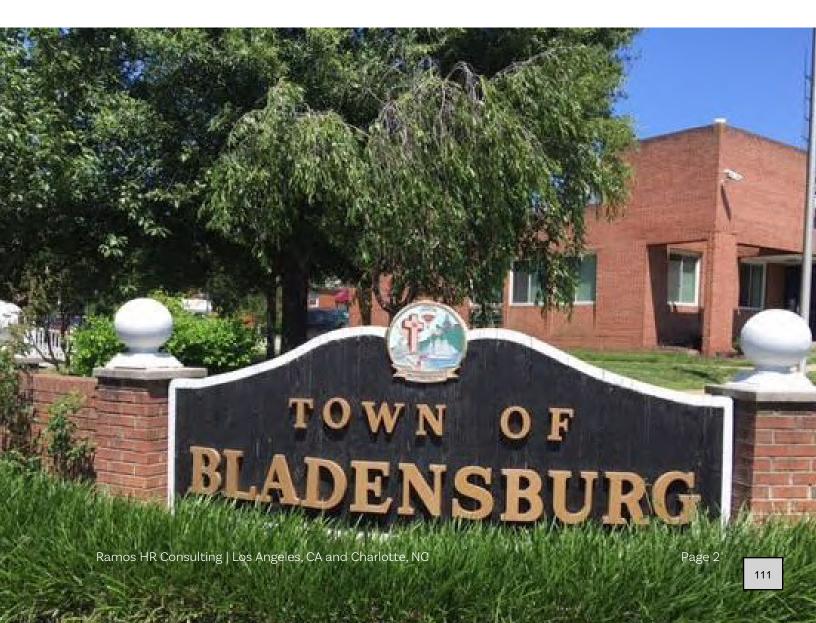
The Town of Bladensburg, Maryland

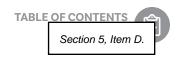
Request for Qualifications (RFQ): 003-2025 - Human Resources Consultant Due Date and Time: August 30, 2024, at 3:00 PM EST



TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER OF INTEREST	3
BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE WITH SIMILAR PROJECTS	∠
MEET THE EXPERTS: BIOGRAPHIES/RESUME	5
SCOPE OF WORK	8
3 STEP METHODOLOGY PER AUTHORIZED PROJECT	1
ON-CALL RAMOS HR SERVICES	12
COST PROPOSAL	14





August 29, 2024

The Town of Bladensburg

Attn: Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator Email: mbaileyhedgepeth@bladensburgmd.gov

Cc: clerk@bladensburgmd.gov

Dear Evaluation Committee,

Ramos HR Consulting ("Ramos HR") has diverse experience and expertise in the field of human resources ("HR"), which allows us to support a wide variety of unique client needs. We are a minority and womanowned business with over 50 years of combined HR experience and expertise specific to the public sector. We are pleased to submit this proposal to the Town of Bladensburg ("The Town") to serve as a qualified Human Resources Consulting Firm with government agency experience.

Our team of experts at Ramos HR have provided remote and onsite professional and technical HR services to clients in multiple states. We have provided a breadth of HR services including customizing government agency policies and procedures, employee benefits administration, and overall employee engagement and wellness programs. We have conducted successful agency-wide HR studies or helped administer HR functions in California, Texas, Arizona, and Florida. We recently expanded to Charlotte, North Carolina making it easier to travel to clients throughout the United States.

Our firm offers customized HR guidance, solutions, and modernization in the areas below.

- Remote and onsite HR leadership support
- Classification and Compensation
- · Recruitment and Selection
- Training and Development

- Performance Management
- Benefit and Leave of Absence Administration
- · HR Auditing and Compliance
- · Customized policy, practices, and procedures

Our team will leverage our expertise in public sector HR to serve and help the Town move into the future by modernizing their HR infrastructure, specifically Ramos HR will establish a competitive, equitable, and sustainable compensation structure that aligns with the strategic vision of the Town.

Ramos HR presently is not aware of any conflicts of interest, and agrees that it will not acquire any interest, which would present a conflict of interest. This proposal is valid for a minimum period of 120 days after the RFP closing date.

We look forward to the potential of partnering with the Town. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

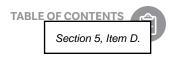
Founder and CEO, Ramos HR Consulting

ennifer Ramos

EIN: 88-2301809

jennifer@ramoshrconsulting.com

Mobile: 562-231-7301



BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE WITH SIMILAR PROJECTS

Ramos HR was established in Los Angeles County, California as an S-Corporation in May 2022. We service client accounts remotely throughout the United States and can perform work onsite upon request. We have two full-time and two part-time employees with government agency HR expertise, and an in-house graphic designer who performs specialized marketing and design work to deliver high-quality client products.

We are a minority and woman-owned business with over 50 years of combined HR generalist experience specific to the public sector, with expertise in classification and compensation studies. Our firm has a proven record of accomplishment in similar public sector HR projects.

Ramos HR enjoys helping organizations like the Town achieve HR success. Our experience includes leading small (one position, one classification, or one series) to large agency-wide classification and compensation studies for over 500 budgeted positions and nearly 2,000 employees. We have worked with government agencies at all levels (state, county, city, community college, k-12 school districts, specialty districts, and more) on a wide range of HR needs and customized solutions to their organization

We understand how the fundamental principles of HR apply differently to each unique agency yet align with industry standards and best practices. Ramos HR is committed to helping organizations modernize their HR practices.

Staff have been retained, screened, trained, and monitored through hands on mentorship, and quality control measures such as joint review before delivering work products to clients.



Interim Leadership
Support



Onboarding and Employee Retention



Classification and Compensation



Training and Development



Employee Relations



HR Auditing and Compliance



Customized Policies, and Procedures



Recruitment and Selection



Workplace Investigations

MEET THE EXPERTS: BIOGRAPHIES/RESUME



Jennifer Ramos is the Founder and CEO of Ramos HR Consulting. She began her career in Human Resources over 20 years ago. She has a successful history of working in the public sector and has held various HR roles at all levels. She served as Principal Consultant and was promoted to Division Manager in the Classification and Compensation Unit for a prior consulting firm based out of Sacramento, California for a total of five years before moving into recent HR leadership roles.

Ramos earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in History and Business Administration from the University of California, Berkeley, and a Master of Public Administration from California State University, Northridge. Ramos is committed to

ensuring quality results and customizing solutions to organizational needs. Ramos's practical and creative approach have enabled her to help clients modernize public sector HR.

Karen Barocio is a Principal Consultant with over 15 years of experience in private and public sector HR. She has served in management roles for various organizations throughout California where she helped build their HR infrastructures and left a positive impact. She has provided leadership and guidance to all organizational levels in municipalities throughout California, Texas, and Florida. She brings this breadth of experience and expertise to all human resources functions. Barocio is committed to continuous learning. She obtained her Master of Arts degree in Administration and Human Resources Management and holds the Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) and International Public Management Association- Certified Professional (IPMA-CP) designations, which further demonstrates her commitment and knowledge in the HR field.

Together, Ramos and Barocio share the mission of providing the highest level of HR consulting services and a dedication to public sector HR excellence. As a small firm, we can fully dedicate two experts to your projects. We are interested in and committed to the proposed services.



PROJECT MANAGER

CO-PROJECT MANAGER

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

PART-TIME HR CONSULTANTS

Jennifer Ramos

Oversees business operations, business development, and contract execution. Serves as Project Manager on contracted services with 20 years of related HR experience, leadership and oversight of staff, technical work, and client deliverables. Led city wide studies in Arizona, California, and Texas.

Karen Barocio

Principal Consultant with 15 years of related HR experience, serves as Co-Project Manager on contracted services. She performs technical work, and conducts quality control of consultant work. Expertise in multiple HR functions, and public safety studies in California, Texas, and Florida.

Joshua Castellanos

Graphic Designer
with over 20 years of
experience in marketing
and communications,
creates innovative reports,
templates, and user-friendly
forms using technology
and specialized software
programs to produce quality
client deliverables.

The team has over 15 years of combined HR experience and perform administrative and technical work such as writing job descriptions and collecting labor market salary data. Each consultant has extensive experience working with government agencies.

CLIENT REFERENCES

Ramos HR has worked with all levels of the public sector (state, county, city, community college, k-12 school districts, specialty districts, and more) on various Human Resources functions. Below are five (5) professional references.

AGENCY: Los Angeles County Employee Retirement Association (LACERA)

300 N. Lake Ave. Pasadena, CA

CONTACT: Carly Ntoya, Director of Human Resources Phone: (626) 422-8233 | Email: cntoya@lacera.com

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES PROVIDED: Awarded Master Services Contract \$150,000 per year (2022-2027) to provide on-call HR services. Jennifer Ramos serves as project manager. Created, recommended, and rolled out a Hiring Manager Playbook and separate Classification and Compensation Manual is underway. Ramos HR supports ongoing recruitment efforts and has audited series examinations. Quality controls include Ramos HR internal review against the civil service code and existing practices. Client deliverables are reviewed by LACERA'S HR Director, HR staff, and the executive team prior to agency wide roll out.

SERVICE DATES: January 2023 - Present

AGENCY: City of Pasadena, Human Resources Department 100 N. Garfield Avenue, Room 135, Pasadena, CA 91101

CONTACT: Alex Souto, Deputy City Manager (former Human Resources Manager promoted to City Manager's Office)

Phone: (626) 744-4333 | Email: asouto@cityofpasadena.net

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES PROVIDED: Ramos, served as Principal HR Analyst, and led a citywide study for over 500 classifications with 2,000 employees. Revised class specifications and met with multiple bargaining groups to negotiate changes and salary impacts. Most recently, serving as a Consultant, Ramos HR has conducted on-going classification and compensation services including desk audits, salary surveys, interviewing managers, and recommending outcomes such as new classifications, reclassifications, no changes, or retitles to modernize the City's structure.

SERVICE DATES: February 2024-Present (Subcontractor); August 2013 - May 2016 (City Employee)

AGENCY: City of Selma 1710 Tucker Street, Selma, CA

CONTACT: Janie Venegas, Administrative Services Director Phone: (559) 508-7401 | Email: janiev@cityofselma.com

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES PROVIDED: Awarded contract to perform citywide classification and total compensation study. The study includes 175 employees in over 88 classifications. Ramos and Barocio serve as co-project managers working directly with the City Manager, Administrative Services Director, and the executive leadership team to achieve study objectives. The study recommended ways to modernize the City's classification and compensation structure to help attract, retain, develop, and reward employees, and maintain a competitive position with other comparable government entities. This study involved extensive involvement with Fire and Police, additional research, and tailored recommendations for public safety.

SERVICE DATES: December 2023 - September 2024

REFERENCE 1

REFERENCE 2

REFERENCE

AGENCY: Long Beach City College, Personnel Commission

4901 East Carson Street, Long Beach, CA 90808

CONTACT: Juliet Hernandez, Assistant to the Vice President of Human Resources

Phone: (562) 308-0844 | Email: jhernandez@lbcc.edu

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES PROVIDED: Ramos, served as Interim Executive Director, Classified Human Resources and led a classification and compensation study for 545 employees. Ramos met with stakeholder groups (VPs, Union, Employees) to revise over 200 class specs and make compensation recommendations. Ramos investigated complaints, grievances or appeals and developed recommendations for HR resolutions.

SERVICE DATES: January 2020 - December 2022

AGENCY: City of San Luis

1090 East Union Street, San Luis, Arizona 85349

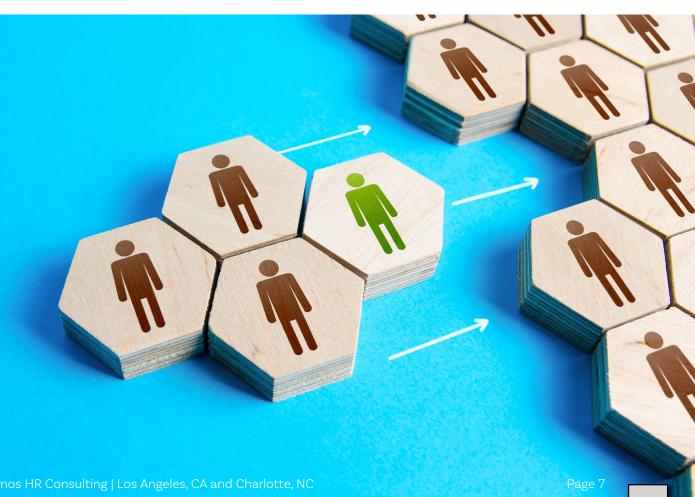
CONTACT: Tadeo Azael De La Hoya, former City Manager during duration of study

Executive Director/CEO, Cocopah Indian Housing & Development

Mobile: (928) 920-6428 or Office: (928) 627-8863 | Email: tdelahoya@cocopahcihad.org

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES PROVIDED: Ramos served as Project Manager for a citywide classification and total compensation study. The study included over 250 employees in approximately 75 classifications. Ramos worked directly with the City Manager and the executive leadership team to achieve study objectives.

SERVICE DATES: July 2017 - December 2019



SCOPE OF WORK

Ramos HR will make professional recommendations and present innovative solutions based on our firm's previous experience in the following categories. The goal of these contract services will be to achieve effective HR management and establish an organizational structure that can remain dynamic and relevant with industry standards, best practices, and the strategic vision of the Town to enable the workforce to provide the highest levels of service to its customers.

Ramos HR will consider the Town's background and organizational culture:

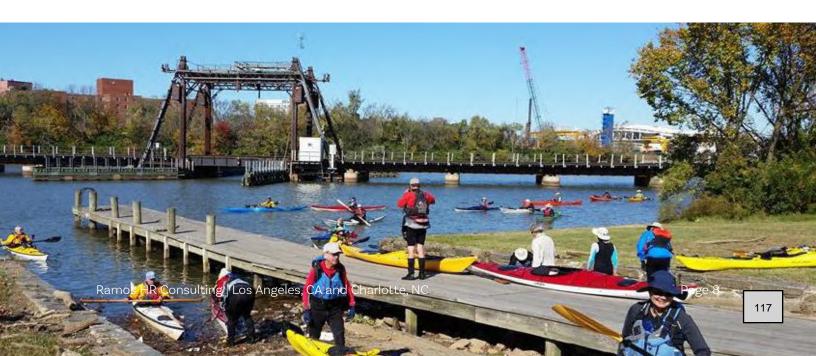
With a population of 9,657, the Town of Bladensburg is located along the Anacostia River in Prince George's County, Maryland situated near Washington, DC. Our firm learned that Bladensburg has its roots reaching as far back as the 1720s with a history rooted in Colonial times and the United States. Per the RFQ and website, the City has five (5) departments, with approximately 52 full-time staff. The Town currently outsources and handles its own payroll, and this position assists the Town Administrator and Treasurer on policy projects such as reviewing policies and procedures, employee benefits administration, and overall engagement/wellness.

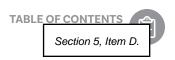
Shared Mission of High-Quality Customer Service

Ramos HR acknowledges that the Town's mission is to deliver excellent public service that enhances the quality of life for residents and businesses amongst other goals to foster results through collaborative partnerships and promoting redevelopment, investment, and diversity. We hope to partner with you to achieve this mission through excellent HR consulting services.

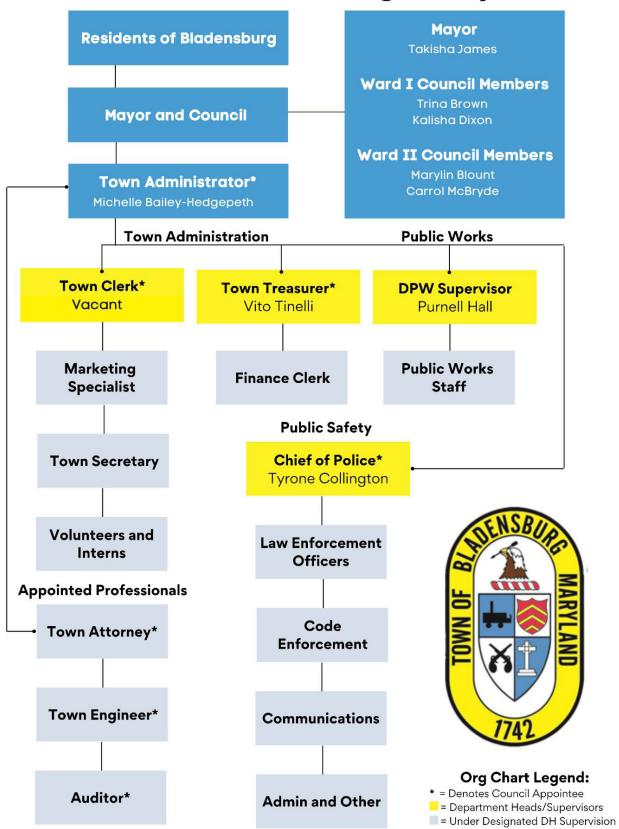
Town and Ramos HR Core Values Align:

- · Being dedicated to quality, timeliness and excellence in our service.
- · Having pride in our work, in our dedication to public service, and being the best we can be.
- · Honesty, integrity, and consistent discipline to maintain our credibility.
- The opportunity to provide fair, courteous, responsive and efficient service.
- Treating people with respect and dignity, regardless of their protected category, individual beliefs or lifestyle.
- · Sensitivity (and customized solutions) is the key quality in all interactions.





Town of Bladensburg, Maryland



Ramos HR understands that the Town is requesting:

Previous Experience:

a. Auditing: Auditing governmental agency HR practices, employee benefits, payroll, and benefits.

Ramos HR is currently contracted to audit and customize a City's personnel policies and procedures that date back to the 1990s. Ramos HR identified missing policies and necessary revisions to meet current HR laws and best practices. Project anticipated to be completed in December 2024.

b. Personnel Files and Job Descriptions: assist with reviewing and updating personnel files, job descriptions, and job classifications.

Ramos HR has performed agencywide classification and compensation studies ranging from fewer than a hundred to hundreds of employees. This is an HR area of expertise for our firm. We understand firsthand how current and accurate job descriptions inform the entire HR lifecycle, and the critical importance of personnel file management.

c. Recruitment and Onboarding: Developing recruitment and onboarding of new staff strategy.

Ramos HR created a comprehensive Hiring Manager Playbook with recruitment practices and strategies outlined for management and executive roles in a countywide retirement association. We have worked with clients to review applications and administer civil service examinations. In previous HR roles, we created an onboarding manual for hiring managers with detailed lists for key milestones in the hiring process (prior to arrival, first week, 30-60-90 days on the job).

d. Benefits Coordination: - Coordinating with the Town's Health Insurance Broker to ensure Town employees have uninterrupted and proper health insurance coverage. - Managing and overseeing the Town's Life Insurance Policy & any supplemental retirement programs.

Ramos HR consultants have performed or participated in benefits coordination for private and public sector agencies in multiple states. We bring a breadth of HR knowledge to this critical function.

e. Other Local and Maryland Experience:

Experience working with local government.

Ramos HR enjoys helping organizations like the Town achieve HR success. Our experience includes leading small (one position, one classification, or one series) to large agency-wide HR studies or projects for over

500 budgeted positions and nearly 2,000 employees. We have worked with government agencies at all levels (state, county, city, community college, k-12 school districts, specialty districts, and more) on a wide range of HR needs and customized solutions to their organization.

Experience working in Maryland and legal ability to work in the State.

We have conducted successful agency-wide HR studies or helped administer HR functions in California, Texas, Arizona, and Florida. We recently expanded to North Carolina and have a satellite office in the Charlotte area making it easier to travel to clients throughout the United States. We are very excited about the prospect of working in Maryland and will secure any authorization and insurance thresholds required to do so.

Level of Experience Interested applicant firms must have the following experience:

a. Ability to Employ certified and qualified HR personnel.

We have over 50 years of combined experience and expertise in government HR.

b. Provide short Biographies or resumes of principal(s)

Our qualifications and team roles are outlined extensively in the biographies and resume section of our proposal.

c. Experience working with a growing entity.

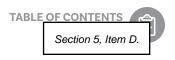
We have worked in fast paced private and public sector HR environments as noted throughout our proposal.

d. Ability to manage multiple issues and priorities on deadlines.

Our client references can attest to our ability to manage multiple issues and priorities on deadlines and produce quality results and customized solutions.

Our team of experts will meet with relevant stakeholders to carefully review, confirm, and complete the scope of work if selected. Ramos HR will submit deliverables and solicit feedback from the assigned project manager or designated team prior to submitting final work products.

Detailed steps for **our** methodology are outlined on the next page.



3 STEP METHODOLOGY PER AUTHORIZED PROJECT

To manage and complete the proposed scope of work, Ramos HR will follow a three (3) step approach for each assignment.

STEP 1: Formal Kickoff Meeting and Ongoing Communication

DESCRIPTION

The objective of this step is to meet with the assigned project team upon execution of a master service agreement or contract to review the scope of work in-depth, agree on the proposed timeline, and adjust the scope or timeline as needed.

All work will require ongoing email, phone, text message communication, and video conference meetings with the designated project managers or stakeholders for relevant history, questions, scheduling, and decision points.

Ramos HR will confirm the Town's vision and expectations related to the scope of work. We will also gather relevant documents and create a shared drive to organize files, review background materials, and share draft deliverables.

STEP 2: Review Background Materials & Perform Scope of Work

DESCRIPTION

The objective of this step is to review the Town's background materials to understand the context, organizational culture, and specific needs of the authorized work. Ramos HR will review information including, but not limited to, the Town's existing HR practices, rules, existing classification, compensation and recruiting practices; job descriptions; organizational charts; budget documents; bargaining unit agreements, rules and laws; and related HR function policies and procedures.

STEP 3: Finalize and Submit Deliverables

DESCRIPTION

The objective of this step is to review the Town's background materials to understand the context, The objective of this step is to create a high-level overview of the time, steps, and work required to produce a final deliverable. Ramos HR will be available to present the final work products to key stakeholders, if asked to join, via video or teleconference, or for onsite visits.

ON-CALL RAMOS HR SERVICES



ONSITE AND REMOTE LEADERSHIP SUPPORT

Our team can offer local support and be onsite based on a hybrid work schedule.

- Advise leaders on HR policies, compensation, staffing, MOU's, and compliance based on industry trends
- Mentor and coach employees in HR function and best practices
- Advise employees, supervisors, and managers on the application and interpretation of personnel policies and procedures



PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Ramos HR can provide coaching, strategic direction and guidance on progressive discipline and employee relations counseling.

- Develop customized performance improvement plans (PIPs)
- Provide leadership and guidance to managers and supervisors in the development and implementation of employee performance management and improvement activities



INVESTIGATIONS

Ramos HR can provide a wide variety of professional, objective, and thorough HR services in the critical and often highly confidential functions below:

- Harassment
- Discrimination
- Workplace Violence



HR AUDITING AND COMPLIANCE

Ramos HR will conduct audits to ensure compliance, reduce risk, identify challenges and growth opportunities.

- Conduct Cultural Assessment
- Review or develop customized Employee Handbook
- Audit interview, selection and onboarding process
- Audit Leave of Absence Process
- Audit terminations and separations
- Poser and notice review
- Audit employee files and I-9's



RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Our team will work closely with hiring managers and provide training/consultation regarding recruitment and selection practices.

- Train staff on legal interviewing and selection
- Guide hiring managers to ensure a diverse and robust applicant pool
- Develop customized recruitment and marketing materials
- Establish new and innovative sourcing strategies to attract qualified candidates



ONBOARDING AND EMPLOYEE RETENTION

With over 30 years of HR experience, we understand the importance of properly onboarding and retaining employees.

- Conduct onboarding experience surveys with a 30/60 day check -in
- · Conduct employee satisfaction surveys

RAMOS HR CONSULTING SERVICES



BENEFIT AND LEAVE ADMINISTRATION

Ramos HR supports our client's specific benefit and leave administration needs.

- Develop and present benefit information during open enrollment
- Develop customized "benefit at-a-glance" flyers, benefit communication and related materials
- Administer employee leave of absence request
- Conduct interactive process for medical accommodation requests
- Provide administration of benefit plans including responding to inquiries, processing enrollments and changes, managing leaves, and processing life insurance claims



CUSTOMIZED POLICY, PRACTICES, AND PROCEDURES

Ramos HR can customize and modernize policies, practices, and procedures based on applicable rules, laws, and Memorandum of Undertsanding (MOU) provisions.

- Develop customized "HR Playbook"
- Develop HR strategies and objectives aligned with the organizations initiatives



TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Our team can develop and facilitate trainings based on our clients' unique needs. Some of our most common trainings include:

- · Sexual harassment prevention training
- DE&I training
- Executive coaching
- 360 reviews
- New manager training
- · Dealing with Difficult Employees
- · Resolving and Managing conflict
- Unconscious Bias
- Classification and Compensation
- Competency Modeling
- Recruitment and Selection Techniques



CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION

Our team will support and ensure the Authority attracts and retains the right people in the right jobs. Together we will strategize to modernize and achieve the Authority's compensation philosophy and mission.

- Develop and maintain updated job descriptions
- Base or total compensation studies
- Establish labor market
- Internal pay equity analysis

COST PROPOSAL

The rate schedule includes time and materials, as well as incidental costs for performing remote work. All work will be performed at Ramos HR locations unless travel onsite to the Town is requested.

Cost for additional services not specified in this proposal and/or other incidental fees must be approved by the Town. Ramos HR has outlined this proposal based on our understanding of the scope listed in the RFQ as outlined below.

IMPORTANT: Ramos HR is open to negotiating the terms of contract based on any subsequent or further clarification on the specific project parameters.

CONTRACT TERM: The proposed contract is for three (3) years, with the option for two (2) one-year renewal terms subject to mutual agreement.

ITEMIZED BREAKDOWN	Cost
Project Manager Hourly Fee	^{\$} 120
Technician Hourly Fee	\$60
Travel Fees - Consultants to travel onsite upon request	\$2,500/ per contract term
Materials Fees	Included
Optional Additional Services	Not included in total - TBD
TOTAL - NOT TO EXCEED	\$33,000 per contract year

EACH SCOPE AUTHORIZED BY THE TOWN WILL FOLLOW 3-STEPS	Estimate Overview
STEP 1: Kickoff & Communication - agree on project parameters	
STEP 2: Perform Scope of Work - produce deliverables in draft the final format	52 FT Staff
STEP 3: Finalize & Debrief Study - finalize each assignment to Town's satisfaction	
TOTAL - NOT TO EXCEED	\$33,000 per contract year

NOTE: Ramos HR submits a monthly invoice to our clients. Billing terms are typically Net 30-day, unless otherwise requested by the Town. Consultants will track project work. Only hours utilized will be billed at the hourly rate. All hours are noted above as a "not to exceed" total contract value.

Should the scope of work evolve, Ramos HR will seek approval from the Town before adding to or commencing any work outside the original scope of work outlined in this proposal.



for your time and consideration.



ERTIFICATE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE

Section 5, Item D. DATE (07

THIS CERTIFICATE IS ISSUED AS A MATTER OF INFORMATION ONLY AND CONFERS NO RIGHTS UPON THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER. THIS CERTIFICATE DOES NOT AFFIRMATIVELY OR NEGATIVELY AMEND, EXTEND OR ALTER THE COVERAGE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES BELOW. THIS CERTIFICATE OF INSURANCE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A CONTRACT BETWEEN THE ISSUING INSURER(S), AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE OR PRODUCER, AND THE CERTIFICATE HOLDER. IMPORTANT: If the certificate holder is an ADDITIONAL INSURED, the policy(ies) must have ADDITIONAL INSURED provisions or be endorsed. If SUBROGATION IS WAIVED, subject to the terms and conditions of the policy, certain policies may require an endorsement. A statement on this certificate does not confer rights to the certificate holder in lieu of such endorsement(s). PRODUCER CONTACT NAME Michael Segura(29583EK) PHONE 2725 Candlewood St Ste A (A/C, NO, EXT): 562-531-4980 (A/C, NO): 562-513-6848 E-MAIL ADDRESS: msegura1@farmersagent.com Lakewood CA 90712-2122 INSURER(S) AFFORDING COVERAGE NAIC# INSURED INSURER A: Truck Insurance Exchange 21709 INSURER B: Farmers Insurance Exchange 21652 RAMOS HR CONSULTING INC INSURER C: Mid Century Insurance Company 21687 12647 HUBBARD ST INSURER D: Hiscox Insurance Company Inc 10200 INSURER E SYLMAR CA 91342 INSURER F:

COVERAGES

CERTIFICATE NUMBER:

REVISION NUMBER:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE POLICIES OF INSURANCE LISTED BELOW HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO THE INSURED NAME ABOVE FOR THE POLICY PERIOD INDICATED. NOTWITHSTANDING ANY REQUIREMENT, TERM OR CONDITION OF ANY CONTRACT OR OTHER DOCUMENT WITH RESPECT TO WHICH THIS CERTIFICATE MAY BE ISSUED OR MAY PERTAIN, THE INSURANCE AFFORDED BY THE POLICIES DESCRIBED HEREIN IS SUBJECT TO ALL THE TERMS, EXCLUSIONS AND CONDITIONS OF SUCH POLICIES. LIMITS SHOWN MAY HAVE BEEN REDUCED BY PAID CLAIMS.

INSR LTR		TYPE OF INSURAI	NCE	ADDTL INSD	SUBR WVD	POLICY NUMBER	POLICY EFF (MM/DD/YYYY)	POLICY EXP (MM/DD/YYYY)	IIMITS				
	×	COMMERCIAL GENERAL	LIABILITY					EACH		EACH OCCURRENCE		\$ 1,000,000	
		CLAIMS-MADE	X OCCUR							MAGE TO I			\$ 75,000
									MED EXP (Any one person)				\$ 5,000
В				Υ	N	607010508	10/03/2023	10/03/2024	PER	SONAL &	ADV I	NJURY	\$ 1,000,000
	GE	N'L AGGREGATE LIMIT APP	PLIES PER:						GEI	NERAL AG	GREG	ATE	\$ 2,000,000
	POLICY PROJECT LOC								PRO	DUCTS -	COMP	P/OP AGG	\$ 1,000,000
		OTHER:											\$
	AU	TOMOBILE LIABILITY								MBINED S accident)	INGLE	ELIMIT	\$
		ANY AUTO							ВО	DILY INJUR	Y (Per	r person)	\$
		OWNED AUTOS ONLY	SCHEDULED AUTOS		N	,			BODILY INJURY (Per accident)				\$
		HIRED AUTOS NON-OWNED AUTOS ONLY								OPERTY D raccident)		SE	\$
													\$
	UMBRELLA LIAB OCCUR EXCESS LIAB CLAIMS-MADE							EAC	CHOCCUR	RENC	CE	\$	
								AG	GREGATE			\$	
		DED RETENTIO	DN\$										\$
		DRKERS COMPENSATION D EMPLOYERS ' LIABILITY							×	PER STATUTE		OTHER	\$
		ANY PROPRIETOR/PARTNER/ Y/N			.,				E.L.	EACH AC	CIDEN	VT	\$ 1,000,000
С	EXC	EXECUTIVE OFFICER/MEMBER EXCLUDED? (Mandatory in NH)		N/A	Υ	A09514985	10/18/2023	10/18/2024	E.L.	DISEASE	EAE	MPLOYEE	\$ 1,000,000
		If yes, describe under DESCRIPTION OF OPERATIONS below							E.L.	DISEASE -	POLI	CY LIMIT	\$ 1,000,000
D	D Professional Liability			Υ		P101.917.323.2	10/03/2023	10/03/2024	-	ch Claim gregate	1		\$1,000,000 \$2,000,000
12647	HU	ON OF OPERATIONS/LOCA BBARD ST, SYLMAR	ATIONS/VEHICLE R, CA 91342	s (ACORD	101, Add	litional Remarks Schedule, may b		ice is required)					

SHOULD ANY OF THE ABOVE DESCRIBED POLICIES BE CANCELLED BEFORE THE EXPIRATION DATE THEREOF, NOTICE WILL BE DELIVERED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POLICY PROVISIONS.

AUTHORIZAD REPRESENTATIVE

ACORD 25 (2016/03)

31-1769 11-15

©1988-2015 ACORD CORPORATION. All Rights Reserved

The ACORD name and logo are registered marks of ACORD

HIRING MANAGER PLAYBOOK

INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE TO BUILD THE LACERA OF TOMORROW



TABLE OF CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE HR DIRECTOR	3
COUNTY CIVIL SERVICE RULES	4
CIVIL SERVICE MERIT BASED SYSTEM	4
EMPLOYMENT LAWS	5
UNIFORM GUIDELINES	5
ROLES	6
OVERVIEW OF HIRING PROCESS	7
MANAGER QUICK GUIDE	8
COMPONENTS OF THE PLAYBOOK	9
PHASE 1: APPROVAL OF HIRING PROCESS	10
PHASE 2: PRE-WORK TO INITIATE EXAM	11
PHASE 3: EXAMINATION DEVELOPMENT	14
PHASE 4: RECRUITMENT PERIOD	18
PHASE 5: ASSESSMENT	22
PHASE 6: PRODUCE ELIGIBLE LIST	27
PHASE 7: FINAL SELECTION INTERVIEW	34
PHASE 8: EXECUTIVE OFFICE APPROVAL	39
PHASE 9: JOB OFFER & PRE-EMPLOYMENT	42
PHASE 10: ONBOARDING NEW HIRE	45
DEFINITIONS	49
IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS	52



EMPLOYMENT LAWS

LACERA is committed to equal employment opportunity and compliance with all applicable laws, rules and guidelines that eliminate bias. LACERA hiring teams should aim for a well-planned, defensible, and discrimination-free hiring process.

The Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) applies to public and private employers, labor organizations and employment agencies. It is illegal for employers to discriminate against job applicants and employees because of a protected category, or retaliate against them because they have asserted their rights under the law.

UNIFORM GUIDELINES

The Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures were adopted on August 25, 1978, by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and apply to all selection procedures used to make employment decisions, such as the review of experience or education from application forms, work samples, physical requirements, interviews, and evaluations of performance.

The guidelines are designed to achieve equal employment opportunity without discrimination on the grounds of any of the protected classes under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

PROTECTED CLASSES

- Race
- Color
- Religion (includes religious dress and grooming practices)
- · Sex/gender (includes pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding and/ or related medical conditions)
- · Gender identity, gender expression
- Sexual orientation
- Marital status
- Medical Condition (genetic characteristics, cancer or a record or history of cancer)
- Military or veteran status
- National origin (includes language use and possession of a driver's license issued to persons unable to provide their presence in the United State is authorized under federal law)
- Ancestry
- Disability (mental and physical including HIV/AIDS, cancer, and genetic characteristics)
- · Genetic information
- Age (over 40)

PROTECTED ACTIVITIES

- · Request for family care leave
- Request for leave for an employee's own serious health condition
- Request for Pregnancy Disability Leave
- Retaliation for reporting patient abuse in tax-supported institutions

*Source: The Civil Rights Department ("CRD") is responsible for enforcing state laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or employee because of a protected characteristic

The guidelines incorporate a single set of principles, designed to eliminate discriminatory employment practices, and provide a framework for determining the proper use of tests and other selection tools.



ROLES **

One of the ways HR supports your division is by working together to fill vacancies. HR relies on collaboration from start to end to administer the hiring process, tailor the civil service examination, and establish eligible lists. Hiring teams at LACERA are composed of multiple stakeholders. Below is a summary of roles during the hiring process.

We all play an important role!

- ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, HUMAN RESOURCES Manages and directs daily operations of the Talent Acquisition and Management Division which administers the hiring process.
- DIVISION MANAGER ("DM") DM leads individual, team, and organizational goals. They are
 responsible for direct and indirect reports, manage daily operations, and account for filled and
 vacant positions allocated to the division budget. The DM prioritizes hiring needs and selects a
 final candidate, or delegates selection authority, for vacant positions in their division.
- EXECUTIVE OFFICE ("EO") Our executives are responsible for carrying out the strategic goals set by the Boards of Retirement and Investments, while our division managers lead the 15 divisions within LACERA and oversee day-to-day operations. The EO holds executive and administrative responsibility in the planning, organization and direction of all operations of LACERA.

The EO sets LACERA hiring priorities for the entire organization. An examination will commence once the EO authorizes the hiring process for a budgeted vacant position.

- HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR ("HRD") Manages and directs a comprehensive integrated
 human resources program for LACERA consisting of three units, including oversight of the Talent
 Acquisition and Management Division. Recognizes responsibility of HRA to collaborate with the
 DM, understand the needs underlying each recruitment, and assist the DM in meeting their needs
 through the hiring of qualified and diverse candidates.
- HUMAN RESOURCES ANALYST ("HRA") Representative of HR who interacts with all levels of staff and is responsible for communicating human resources decisions, policies, and procedures, and if necessary, advises management on legal requirements and risks. The HRA guides the hiring process from start to completion.
- RATER A person who determines a rating of candidate qualifications using a predetermined set
 of rating criteria or scoring rubric. Assigned to serve during the examination as rater for a test part,
 and typically, a designee of the division or representative from an external agency (if approved by
 the DM and HR).
- SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT ("SME") Professionals who have advanced knowledge in a specific field. As an authority in a particular area or topic, they are uniquely qualified to provide guidance and strategy during an examination. They may be a team member in your division or representative from an external agency approved by the DM and HRD, who has firsthand knowledge about the vacant position or relevant expertise in the profession.
- UNIT, SECTION, OR TEAMS May be assigned by the DM to lead an examination. The DM prioritizes hiring needs in their division.

As you can see, every role is key to success in hiring qualified candidates at LACERA. Our combined efforts allow us to effectively recruit talent into our organization and build a world-class workforce. Our goal is to invest in our people to build the LACERA of tomorrow.



OVERVIEW OF HIRING PROCESS

PHASE: 1

APPROVAL OF HIRING PROCESS

Verify a budgeted vacant position exists and obtain sign off at all levels before starting the pre-work phase.



KEY PLAYERS

Division Manager HR Director Executive Office HR Analyst

PHASE: 2

PRE-WORK TO INITIATE EXAM

Review class specification for accuracy and revise as needed before starting the examination.



KEY PLAYERS

Division Manager Subject Matter Expert HR Analyst

PHASE: 3

EXAM DEVELOPMENT

Conduct job analysis and link duties to knowledge, skills & abilities to determine appropriate test parts.



KEY PLAYERS

HR Analyst Subject Matter Expert Division Manager

PHASE: 4

RECRUITMENT PERIOD

Post job bulletin, accept applications, screen and qualify candidates based on the job qualifications.



KEY PLAYERS

Division Manager Subject Matter Expert HR Analyst

PHASE: 5

ASSESSMENTS (TEST PARTS)

Secure raters and administer the exam assessments or test parts based on the specific hiring needs.



KEY PLAYERS

Division Manager Subject Matter Expert Rater HR Analyst



PHASE: 6

PRODUCE ELIGIBLE LIST

Score exam and determine candidate rankings/scores to produce eligible list, and review appeals.



KEY PLAYERS

HR Analyst HR Director

PHASE: 7

FINAL SELECTION INTERVIEW

Conduct the final selection interviews by using the Rule of Five candidates starting in the top band.



KEY PLAYERS

HR Analyst Division Manager

PHASE: 8

EXECUTIVE OFFICEAPPROVAL

EO reviews the hiring packet. If approved, HR makes a conditional job offer and starts background check.



KEY PLAYERS

Division Manager HR Director Executive Office

PHASE: 9

JOB OFFER & PRE-EMPLOYMENT

Finalist accepts offer or negotiates salary. Background check is conducted before a formal job offer.



KEY PLAYERS

HR Analyst Division Manager

PHASE: 10

ONBOARDING NEW HIRE

HR and DM set a start date. HRD sends welcome email to the new hire and HR staff onboards on first day.



KEY PLAYERS

HR Analyst HR Director Division Manager

MANAGER QUICK GUIDE

Phase 1 - Approval of Hiring Process	Phase 5 - Assessment (Test Parts)
 Fill out the Exam Request Form and submit it to the HR Analyst assigned to the exam. Review and add information to the 	 Review the list of raters. Provide alternate or additional raters as needed.
Examination Agreement.	Phase 6 - Produce Eligible List
Phase 2 - Pre-Work to Initiate Exam Review and add information to the Examination Agreement. Review the most current version of the	 Review the eligible list/register once it's provided to you. Decide which candidate(s) you want to participate in a selection interview/ assessment.
 class specification to verify the accuracy of the duties. If the class specification is noticeably off track, consider whether the right classification is being used. If needed, work the HR to determine if there is a different existing classification that is a better fit for the job. 	Phase 7 - Final Selection Interview Create interview questions and get them approved by HR. Document candidate responses and performance during the interview. Select the most suitable candidate.
OR	Phase 8 - Executive Office Approval
☐ Delegate this step to an SME	Friase o - Executive Office Approval
Phase 3 - Exam Development Review and sign the Examination Agreement.	 Submit a personnel requisition via SmartSheet. Submit a hiring justification memo to Human Resources.
Review the existing job analysis and	Phase 9 – Job Offer & Pre-Employment
 determine whether it still applies or needs revisions. Participate in the job analysis by identifying duties and linking them to competencies. Strategize with HR about the applicant pool, 	 Send candidate questions to Human Resources. Follow up with HR as needed on the status of the pre-employment screening.
application window, and exam plan.	
 Decide what assessment types are appropriate and assist in creating assessment materials. OR	Phase 10 - Onboarding New Hire Submit required forms to Systems (i.e. SEAF, keycard access, parking, equipment requests) prior to the new staff member's
☐ Delegate this step to an SME Phase 4 - Recruitment Period	 arrival. Meet with the new staff member to review job duties, set expectations, review division-related policies, etc.
☐ Provide sources for posting the job bulletin.	OR
Review the examination timeline.	 Delegate this step to a manager or supervisor.

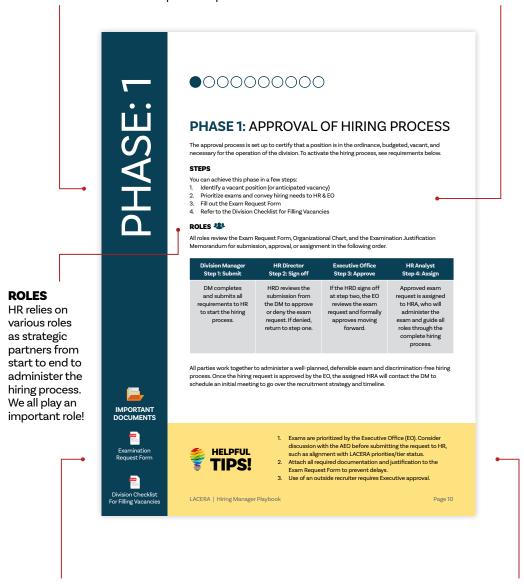
COMPONENTS OF THE PLAYBOOK

PHASE

LACERA's hiring process is outlined in 10 phases. Each phase is represented by a distinct color and column bar on the left side of pages. A header and brief introduction are listed at the top of each phase.

STEPS

An overview of steps is included under the header of each phase. The steps include key points to consider as you navigate that phase of the hiring process.



IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

This section includes important documents that correspond with each phase of the hiring process. The icons are titled and hyperlinked to forms in the appendix of the playbook for download and use.

HELPFULTIPS

This section is included on the cover page of each phase and highlights helpful tips from HR to help guide and streamline the hiring process.

Exhibit B

Human Resources Contract Outline

Ramos HR Consulting | Town of Bladensburg

Contract Date: February 10, 2025 (Pending Council Approval)

Terms of Agreement

- **Duration:** Two-year term with the option for a one-year renewal.
- **Scope Adjustments:** After two years, the Town reserves the right to reduce the scope of work if a full-time HR employee is hired.

Fees

- Monthly Fee: A fixed monthly rate of \$2,750.00, amounting to an annual total of \$33.000.00.
- **Terms for Visits:** The frequency and duration of on-site or remote visits will adhere to the terms outlined in the proposal.

Scope of Services

Ramos HR Consulting will provide comprehensive Human Resources support, including:

1. Benefit Management:

- Administration of employee benefits programs.
- Solicitation of vendors for benefits renewal and supplemental insurance coverages.

2. Policy Development:

- Reviewing and updating HR forms.
- Developing and revising policies and procedures.
- Offering guidance and advice on written communications for employees.

3. HR Consulting Services:

- Advising employees and management on HR-related matters.
- Recommending best practices in Human Resources to align with industry standards.

4. Payroll and Records Management:

Consulting on payroll processes and ensuring best practices for record-keeping.

5. Strategic Advisory Services:

 Providing advice and guidance to the Town Administrator and management team on key HR issues.

6. Generalist HR Support:

Delivering comprehensive HR services to support operational needs.

Proposed Schedule and Priorities

Timeline: March 2025 - December 2025

1. Personnel Manual and Practices Review

- o Review and update the Personnel Manual and current HR practices.
- Provide samples of policies and procedures for other similarly sized municipalities
- Recommend the development of new and needed policies
- Timeline: March September 2025

2. Employee Record Review:

- Review and update employee record reviews.
- Provide samples of best practices for file maintenance
- Onboarding Solution: Support on identifying a POC, obtaining all necessary forms, especially documentation for the I-9, and reviewing all benefit offerings and making sure they get enrolled.
- Timeline: March October 2025

3. Forms and File Format Review

- Assess and standardize existing forms and file formats for efficiency and compliance.
- o **Timeline:** May July 2025

4. Benefit Assistance (Ongoing):

- Renewal Process: Conduct annual benefits renewal between September and October (for December implementation).
- Administer supplemental insurance and benefits programs.
- Assist employees in scheduling online and in-person benefits sessions.
- Provide continuous support for employee benefit inquiries.

5. **Operational Evaluation:**

- Evaluate the Town's current HR operations and recommend best practices for improvement.
- Timeline: June November 2025

6. Employee Performance:

- Evaluate the Town's current Employee Performance Materials and Processes and recommend best practices for improvement.
- Pay scales: Review and update pay scales so we can collapse them into something simpler to avoid salary compression. I think we talked before about having pay scales in bands (ex. on A-Z), and all categories/positions fall within those bands rather than the individualized salary scales for each position.
- o **Timeline:** August June 2026

7. Advisory Support:

- Ongoing advisory services for employees, management, and leadership on HR matters.
- Online and in-person training and tracking and management
- Advising on professional development opportunities for Town Staff
- Mental Health and Supplemental removal
- Timeline: Continuous \ Ongoing

Additional Considerations for the Contract

1. Flexibility and Scalability:

 Include provisions for scaling services based on evolving needs, such as hiring a full-time HR employee or unexpected priorities.

2. Performance Metrics:

 Establish clear metrics to evaluate the success of HR initiatives, such as employee satisfaction surveys, policy compliance rates, and improved HR efficiency.

3. Feedback and Reporting:

 Define reporting intervals (e.g., quarterly) for updates on progress, challenges, and recommendations.

4. Compliance Assurance:

 Ensure all HR practices comply with local, state, and federal regulations, particularly regarding benefits, payroll, and employment policies.

5. Cost Transparency:

 Specify the cost structure, including additional charges for unforeseen or specialized services outside the scope.

6. Insurance Limits and Professional Liability

State the limits required by the Town and other requirements.



Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date: February 10, 2025

Submitted by:

Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator Jarryd Hawkins, Economic Development Consultant

Item Title: Trade School Update | February 2025

This is an update on the actions and activities related to the Trade School Earmark.

Work Session Item [X] Council Meeting Item [X]

Documentation Attached:

Recommended Action:

This has been provided to the Council and community informed of Council and staff actions. The Council is being asked to provide any input and direction on this matter.

Background: In 2021, Senator Cardin earmarked \$1 million for the Town to acquire property and operate a trade school. The initiative was aimed at supporting young adults graduating from local schools who may not have the necessary training to secure employment in industrial trades and related fields.

Progress Update: When I began working with the Town in Fall 2023, I collaborated with our Economic Development Consultant, Jarryd Hawkins, on the following key areas:

- **Identifying Potential Real Estate Sites:** Over the last year, we held some closed sessions to provide the Council with updates on particular parcels of interest
- Building a Partnership with Employ Prince George's (EMPLOY): This is key to having a
 long-term partnership for the operations after the Earmark is spent. EMPLOY serves as the
 Workforce Development Authority for Prince George's County.

2024, I met with the Chief of Staff for EMPLOY, Mr. Talley, and Senator Washington, who works with the agency. During this discussion, I mentioned the earmark funding and inquired how we could explore potential partnership opportunities. Over the past year, we have connected with Executive Director Walter Simmons to develop this initiative further.

Current Status

- Mr. Simmons has engaged with the Acting County Executive, Jackson, and reached out to the School District regarding the use of the International School facilities. The county has been positive about this project, and he believes that they will support a formal engagement.
- The International school's principal indicated that their construction timeline has been delayed, and they may continue occupying the current location for the next 3-4 years

Next Steps & Council Considerations

Short-Term Priorities:

 Mr. Hawkins is inquiring with HUD regarding any changes in funding requirements due to the change in the administration.

Long-Term Priorities:

- Staff will explore options for long-term ownership and potential sites within the Town.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be developed to formalize the Town's partnership with EMPLOY.

The town administrator or Mr. Hawkins can provide further insights if you have any questions or want additional details.

Budgeted Item: Yes [X] No [] NA Budgeted Amount: \$1 Millions One-Time Cost: NA Ongoing Cost: NA	Continued Date:
Council Priority: Yes [] No []	Approved Date:



Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date:	Submitted by:
February 10, 2025	Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator
•	Tyrone Collington, Police Chief
	Vito Tinelli, Town Treasurer
	,

Item Title: Fleet Replacement Update | February 2025

This is an update on the actions and activities related to the Fleet Replacement Process in preparation for the FY 2026 Budget.

Work Session Item [X] Council Meeting Item [X]	Documentation Attached:
---	-------------------------

Recommended Action:

This has been provided to the Council and community informed of Council and staff actions. The Council is being asked to provide any input and direction on this matter.

Overview: Staff has analyzed the Municipal Leasing Process, evaluating two potential approaches: **Enterprise Fleet Management** and **Ford Motor Credit**. This report provides an overview of both options, highlighting key considerations for the Council's review and discussion.

Key Considerations

- **Enterprise Fleet Management:** Offers a comprehensive leasing and fleet maintenance program, including vehicle acquisition, disposal, and lifecycle cost management.
- **Ford Motor Credit:** Provides a more traditional leasing structure, focusing on fixed-term vehicle financing with options for ownership at lease-end.

Next Steps

- Council discussion and feedback on both approaches.
- Staff will refine recommendations based on Council input.
- A final adoption item will be presented in **Spring 2025**.

This summary is intended to provide background information and facilitate Council questions. No formal action is required at this time.

Budgeted Item: Yes [X] No [] NA	Continued Date:
Budgeted Amount:	
One-Time Cost: TBD	
Ongoing Cost: NA	
Council Priority: Yes [] No []	Approved Date:

MEMORANDUM



To: Bladensburg Town Council

From: Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator

Date: December 6, 2024

Subject: Analysis of Fleet Vehicle Leasing Options and Long-Term Replacement

Strategies

Executive Summary

This memorandum provides the Town Council with an update and evaluates two potential fleet vehicle leasing programs: Enterprise Fleet Management and the Ford Municipal Lease Program (hybrid model). It also examines the long-term costs of leasing versus purchasing, replacing vehicles on a prescribed schedule versus deferring replacements, and the dependency on revenue from the General fund, Speed, and Redlight Cameras proceeds.

The Town has traditionally used pay-go funding (or other one-time funding sources) to buy and add vehicles as needed. This has limited the Town's ability to purchase more than a few vehicles yearly.

Public Safety has spearheaded this project because they are the largest Town vehicle user, and the current analysis has been focused on the following factors:

- Updating and replacing much of the current fleet within three (3) to five (5) years.
- Assuming that the same practices that have been used to assign vehicles and allow take-home will be continued
- Focusing new purchasing and replacement on public safety
- The replacement of specific types of vehicles
 - Ford Interceptor
 - Ford F-150
 - Command Vehicle replacement Tahoe and or like equivalent
 - Other Civilian vehicle Hybrid /Electric

Public Works purchased and replaced two (2) trucks in FY 2024 and FY 2023. Due to the town's size, our PW vehicles have a more extended replacement period but eventually need to be included in a vehicle replacement fund.

As part of the FY 2025 Budget process, the Town Administrator presented the Council with the concept of developing Vehicle Equipment Replacement Funds. This fund would use a

percentage of funds each year to plan and pay for repairs. This is called an internal service fund (ISF) in many organizations. ISFs charge departments for services and organize expenses across the entire organization. The council could determine seed funding from sources to start the fund. In some ways, this type of funding may need to be considered before embarking on the vendor's immediate acquisition and/ or selection. However, we started the process by looking at a vendor proposal because of the need.

Fleet replacement is unavoidable, and the town's lack of a proactive plan has hindered the replacement process. Over the last few months, I have looked at various studies and what others are doing, but the critical issue is that we staunch the spending of funds on vehicles past their useful service life.

Option 1: Enterprise Fleet Management

Enterprise Fleet Management offers a full-service leasing solution designed to optimize fleet management. Over the last several months, we have met with Enterprise to discuss and review a comprehensive leasing solution.

This is helpful information, but the long-term cost for the Town is at least 150,000 – 200,000 per year for replacement alone. The estimate is also based on the sales of vehicles more frequently and leasing at least six to eight vehicles in the first few years, replacing much of the fleet by year four. This figure is not off-target for the rate and replacement schedule; it is more of a culture shift and allocating significantly more resources to the Police Department. Below is a list of the pros and cons of the Enterprise Fleet Management Program

Pros:

- **Comprehensive Services:** This includes vehicle acquisition, maintenance, and resale services, reducing the administrative burden on Town staff.
- **Improved Predictability:** Provides fixed monthly payments, which improve budget predictability.
- **Fleet Modernization:** Regularly rotates vehicles, keeping the fleet updated and reducing maintenance costs.
- **Enhanced Resale Value:** Enterprise manages vehicle resale, often recovering higher residual values.
- **Fuel Efficiency and Safety:** Newer vehicles improve fuel efficiency and include advanced safety features, reducing liability risks.
- Partnership and Professional Analysis: Enterprise will provide staff and Council with a long-term funding model. The planned leases are new one-year terms, so if there are financial emergencies or changes in revenue, the Town could suspend and restart the yearly leasing program.

Cons:

- Higher Overall and Annual Costs: Leasing over extended periods may result in higher cumulative costs than outright purchasing. However, due to our needs and limited resources, we may not be able to address the gap in our inventory.
- **Dependency on Enterprise:** The town has less control over fleet management decisions such as resale timing. For the financial models to be accurate, the Town would need to follow the resale models.
- **Potential for Service Fees:** Additional costs include accident management or vehicle tracking costs.
- Long-Term Funding Concerns: Is the Town willing to prioritize the fleet project over other long-term capital needs? The Town will need to finance a Bond for the Town Hall, which has significant space needs.

Option 2: Ford Municipal Lease Program (Hybrid)

The Ford Municipal Lease Program offers lease-purchase agreements tailored to government entities, allowing for eventual vehicle ownership. Ford offers terms of 36 to 72+ months. Several municipalities use This financing mechanism to provide funding alternatives to Pay-go and allow for annual and semi-annual payments. Smaller municipalities have employed this to catch up with their fleet. The Town would work with a dealership that honored the state contract pricing and finance a group of vehicles each year.

This can be thought of as a hybrid model in which the Town would lease vehicles but manage the leasing process itself. For this to succeed, the Town would have to define the leasing terms and sales parameters. So, this would involve more staff work but it may be a good way to start the leasing process and lower the initial payments in the program's first few years. Many pros and cons are the same, but some are slightly different.

Pros:

- **Ownership Option:** The Town retains the vehicles after lease terms, reducing costs in the long term.
- Flexible Terms: Interest rates and lease terms can be negotiated, offering budgetary flexibility.
- **Municipal Discount Pricing:** Access to reduced pricing for government agencies, potentially lowering upfront costs.
- **Local Vendor Support:** Supports local dealerships and vendors, keeping economic activity closer to the Town.

Cons:

- **Higher Maintenance Costs Over Time:** As vehicles age, maintenance costs increase, particularly beyond the warranty period. The Town would be responsible as it currently manages the maintenance of its fleet with local repair shops.
- **Resale Coordination:** The Town would need to handle vehicle disposition, which can be time intensive.
- Less of a Comprehensive package and relationship: The Ford Municipal Lease would be a financial single transaction. There is no management package associated with the program. Staff is still working with the dealer and may be able to provide an update if there is a more comprehensive program.
- Budget Volatility: Lease-purchase payments may be less predictable due to varying maintenance costs as vehicles age.

Option 3: Continue Purchasing Vehicles on Pay-go Basis

Much of this memo discusses the current purchasing method, as it is always an option to continue without changing the model. Below is a chart that compares and contrasts Leasing vs. Purchasing as an option.

Comparison of Leasing vs. Purchasing

```
•Leasing Pros:
•Lower upfront costs.
•Consistent budget allocation.
•Access to newer vehicles with lower maintenance needs.

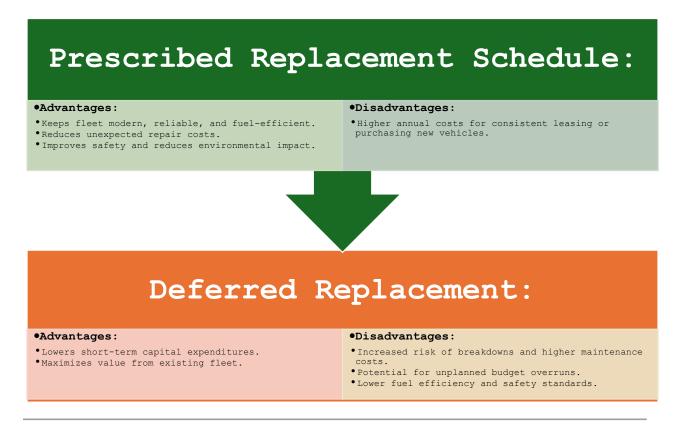
•Purchasing Pros:
•Lower overall cost over the vehicle's lifespan.
•Full ownership and flexibility in-vehicle use.
•Retained resale value.

•Leasing Cons:
•Higher cumulative costs if kept long-term.
•No asset ownership. Limited ownership because the Town will be seeking to refresh the inventory of the Town's Fleet to retain lower leasing fees constantly

•Purchasing Cons:
•High initial capital outlay.
•Greater financial risk in fluctuating maintenance costs for older vehicles.
```

Fleet Replacement Strategies

Municipalities often, either by planning or by default, have two methods of Fleet Replacement. This often is due to budget and the need for more staffing. The town currently operates on a deferred replacement model. When we make purchases, we buy and replace vehicles by need and age. With the ARPA funds, the Town has been able to purchase XX vehicles, and these funds have been used to expand our fleet to accommodate new positions and areas.



Revenue Dependency Risks | Need for Vehicle Equipment Replacement Fund and Fiscal Policies: The Town's sole reliance on the General fund, Speed, and Red-Light Camera revenue introduces fiscal risks:

- **Pressure on the General fund:** The town's needs are evolving, and our yearly expenses are rising. The Town has ambitions to build a new facility, and this will require debt service even when we secure additional funding from the state and other sources.
- Camera Fluctuating Revenue: Changes in driver behavior, regulations, or public attitudes may reduce revenue streams. This has not been seen yet, and the current projects show revenue similar to previous years. The Town has an RFP for Stop Sign enforcement as a possible new revenue source.
- Mitigation: Incorporate a conservative revenue estimate for fleet budgeting to prevent overreliance. As part of a mitigation strategy, we will provide the Council with more frequent updates on our capital equipment needs, which will be part of the FY 2026 Budget.

- Mutually Agreed upon Needs and Priorities: Staff needs clear Council direction on the Town's financial priorities, which may mean that other areas are not funded. With the current Fleet evaluation, staff have focused on public safety needs.
- Vehicle Assignments and Take-Home Vehicles: The current analysis maintains the current practices and assignments. Changes to the current policies and procedures have not been factored into the estimates and revenue models.

Next Steps | Recommendations: This memo was developed as information only so that the Council could consider this matter more over the holidays. The timeline for discussing it at the session is January/February 2025. Below are some summary recommendations that the staff is working through.

- 1. **Leasing Preference as a Financing Model:** The Town may opt for a leasing solution (Enterprise or Ford Municipal Lease) to ensure predictable costs and consistent fleet modernization. Mr. Tinelli will be seeking quotes from Ford Motor Credit so that we can provide the Council with actual numbers for the next step.
- 2. **Fleet Replacement Schedule:** Council will be asked to adopt a prescribed replacement strategy to reduce long-term maintenance and operational risks. We will engage with the departments, especially the Police, on their needs.
 - The Chief has provided a copy of the upfit requirements for his vehicles, which add 30-40% to the vehicle cost. These items are essential to officer safety. The upfit costs drive up our per-vehicle replacement because many initial replacements are patrol units. The other key issue is that upfitting does not reflect or enhance resale.
 - Enterprise has been provided with the upfitting information for their estimates. With Ford Motor Credit, we may have to pay for upfitting as a separate cost, and this may be better since the items are not permanent fixtures to the vehicle.
- 3. **Financial Safeguards:** Staff will develop and ask the Council to approve an internal service fund (ISF) model to allocate funds for this project. This may call for changes to the FY 2025 budget. However, this model helps develop the funding sources' capacity to mitigate dependency on fluctuating revenues. Financial policies will guide staff on when to halt or reduce funds to address shortfalls or windfalls.
- 4. **Vendor Selection:** Over the coming months, staff will provide detailed proposals from Enterprise and Ford Municipal Lease, considering service offerings, cost, and Town needs.
- 5. **Legal Review:** Staff asked the Town Attorney about the lease process and other towns' actions. She confirmed that leasing is the only financing method for municipalities since bonding is the only way to issue debt officially. So, the town can not finance cars like consumers and businesses can.
- 6. **Additional Council Input:** If a subject or matter has not been addressed in this memo, please let me know so that staff can provide further information.

Conclusion: Both leasing options present advantages and challenges. Given the Town's fiscal constraints and dependency on fluctuating camera revenues, the leasing strategy offers a balance of predictability and operational efficiency, provided financial safeguards are in place. This memo has been provided as an informational supplement to the Council. Town staff has reviewed and provided feedback on this memo.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth Town Administrator



Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date:

February 10, 2025

Submitted by:

Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator Tyrone Collington, Police Chief

Item Title: Law Enforcement Retirement Review (Information Only)

Follow up: Process for entering the LEOPS Program for the law enforcement personnel for the Town of Bladensburg.

Work Session Item [X]
Council Meeting Item [X]

Documentation Attached:

LEOPS Guide What is LEOPS?

Recommended Action:

Provide direction on budgeting funds for a re-evaluation in FY 2026 and explore possible options for law enforcement personnel for the FY 2027 Budget.

Overview: Chief Collington requested an update on the Council's position regarding entering Town officers into the LEOPS Program. This discussion revisits the evaluation conducted in 2022, during which the decision was made to defer entry into the program until a later date.

As budget planning for FY 2026 approaches, the Town Administrator has re-engaged with the State Pension Program to gather updated information. The move to LEOPS would allow law enforcement officers to have shorter service periods than they currently have with our existing plan. This would require that the Town transfer all existing law enforcement funds to LEOPS and make additional payments to the funds for a series of years, 15-20, and re-pay the difference at a low interest rate.

Key Updates:

• **Earliest Transfer Date:** The Town of Bladensburg could enter the LEOPS Program on July 1, 2026, if it submits updated application materials and required data in 2025.

Next Steps and Timeline:

- **By September 1, 2025:** Submit updated application(s), a written request for a preliminary valuation, and pay the preliminary valuation fee of \$7,450 (subject to adjustment).
- **September/October 2025:** Submit census data and job descriptions for all applicable positions.
- **2022 Preliminary Valuation**: The Town completed a preliminary valuation in April 2022. The State Pension Program has requested confirmation on whether the Town intends to request an updated valuation for the July 1, 2026, transfer date.

Possible Recommendations:

- The council could direct the Town Administrator to seek a new preliminary estimate in FY 2026 and develop a budget in FY 2027 to consider this matter.
- The council would review this estimate to confirm its intent to proceed with the LEOPS application for the FY 2026 transfer in September 2025.
- If approved, the Town Administrator will coordinate submitting updated application materials and preliminary valuation requests within the outlined timeline.

Optimistic Outlook: The LEOPS Program remains a significant opportunity to enhance the Town's ability to attract and retain skilled officers while providing competitive retirement benefits. Moving forward with this timeline ensures the Town has ample time for accurate data collection and thoughtful financial planning.

Next Steps:

- Provide direction to staff on proceeding with the LEOPS application and updated valuation for FY 2026 entry.
- Include preliminary valuation costs and LEOPS transition considerations in the FY 2026 budget planning process.

Budgeted Item: Yes [] No []NA Budgeted Amount: TBD One-Time Cost: Ongoing Cost: YES	Continued Date:
Council Priority: Yes [X] No []	Approved Date:

What is LEOPS?

The Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System (LEOPS) in Maryland is a specialized retirement system designed to provide enhanced pension benefits for eligible law enforcement officers employed by the state, participating counties, and municipalities. LEOPS is part of the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System (MSRPS) and offers retirement, disability, and death benefits tailored to the unique needs and risks associated with law enforcement work.

Key Features of LEOPS:

1. Eligibility:

- Typically available to sworn law enforcement officers and certain civilian employees in police departments or sheriff's offices that have opted into the system.
- Participation is determined by the employer's decision to adopt the program.

2. Retirement Benefits:

- Provides a 20-year retirement option, meaning officers can retire after
 20 years of eligible service, regardless of age.
- The retirement benefit is calculated as 2% of the average final compensation (AFC) multiplied by years of service, up to a maximum of 60% (30 years).

3. Disability Benefits:

 Offers service-related and non-service-related disability retirement benefits to members who become disabled while actively employed.

4. Death Benefits:

 Provides survivor benefits to the family or designated beneficiaries of members who pass away while actively employed or retired.

5. Employee Contributions:

 Members contribute a percentage of their salary (currently 7%) to the system to fund their future pension benefits.

6. Employer Contributions:

 Participating municipalities or agencies must also make contributions, which are determined based on actuarial calculations.

Benefits of LEOPS for Employers:

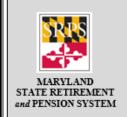
- **Recruitment and Retention**: The enhanced retirement benefits make it easier for agencies to attract and retain skilled officers.
- **Early Retirement Option**: The 20-year retirement plan allows officers to retire earlier than in standard pension systems, recognizing the physical and mental demands of the job.
- **Competitive Benefits**: Participation in LEOPS ensures parity with other jurisdictions offering similar benefits.

Process for Joining LEOPS:

A municipality or agency must:

- 1. Conduct a **preliminary valuation** to assess the financial impact of joining the program.
- 2. Submit an application to the Maryland State Retirement Agency.
- 3. Provide census data, job descriptions, and required documents for all eligible employees.
- 4. Work with the State Retirement Agency to finalize the transition and comply with program requirements.

LEOPS is considered a significant investment for municipalities and agencies, but it offers long-term benefits for both law enforcement personnel and the communities they serve.



Employer Guide for Retirement Coordinators

A Resource for Employers Helping Members

410-625-5555 1-800-492-5909

www.sra.maryland.gov

Maryland State Retirement Agency

120 E. Baltimore Street Baltimore, Maryland 21202-6700 sra@sra.state.md.us

Dear Retirement Coordinator:

Thank you for your commitment to the members of the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System.

I am pleased to present the revised edition of the Employer Guide for Retirement Coordinators.

Whether you're a seasoned coordinator or a newcomer, this reference guide was designed to equip you for your important role as a retirement coordinator. It provides information to help you answer basic member questions, comply with agency procedures and file required forms.

We appreciate your service on behalf of the Maryland State Retirement Agency (MSRA). We understand you have numerous duties beyond retirement support.

You are not alone! We are here to support you. Please call our staff if you need clarification of the material covered in this book or any other retirement matter.

I admire your dedication and appreciate your commitment. I hope this guide makes your job easier.

Respectfully,

Karen P. Simpson, M.A., CPLP Education and Training Manager

If there are questions of interpretation, the provisions of Division II and III of the State Personnel and Pension Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland and Code of Maryland Annotated Regulations (COMAR) takes precedence in resolving questions regarding the policies and benefits of the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System.

How to Use this Resource Guide

When an employer wants a brief overview of the State Retirement System and their role as a retirement coordinator...

Turn to the first section, "I. Employer Overview." Employers will also find important Maryland State Retirement Agency (MSRA) phone numbers, what assistance our Member Services Division can provide; instructions on dealing with member inquiries, and information about confidentiality of member information.

When an employee needs a brief answer to a question or, an employer needs general instructions on how to guide an employee through enrollment, purchasing service or applying for disability...

Go to section, "II. Retirement Benefit Guide" for checklists, filing deadlines and a description of the proper forms and procedures to follow for enrolling new members, making beneficiary changes, claiming credit, purchasing service, refunds, applying for disability allowance, contributions, service retirement, death benefits, and DROP participation. In this section coordinators will find plan summaries of major retirement benefits by system.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

HOV	V TO USE THIS RESOURCE GUIDE	II
TABI	LE OF CONTENTS	
I. EN	1PLOYER OVERVIEW	1
A.	THE MARYLAND STATE RETIREMENT AGENCY	1
	System Administration	1
	The Member Services Unit	
R	MSRPS EMPLOYERS	
υ.	Employer Portal	
_	RETIREMENT COORDINATOR AND MSRPS	
C.	Retirement Coordinator	
	Retirement Coordinator Responsibilities	
	Retirement Coordinator Meetings	
	Retirement Coordinator Meetings	
	Retirement Coordinator Training Webinars	
	Employer Verification	
	Member Support	
	Retirement Coordinator Limitations	
	Coordinator Support	
D	Policies to Guide Coordinators.	
_	Member Queries	
	Employer Portal	
	Important Agency Contact Information	
	MSRA Resource Center	
	https://training.sra.maryland.gov/	
	Member Privileges	
	Confidentiality	
II. RI	TIREMENT BENEFIT GUIDE	5
	REMENT FORMS	
	JMENT FILING CHECKLIST	
	DLLMENT PACKET	
	DLLING NEW MEMBERS	
	DLLMENT EXCEPTION REPORTS	
	FICIARY DESIGNATION	
	ONAL RETIREMENT PLANONAL MEMBERSHIP – Appointed and Elected Officials	
	VINATING EMPLOYMENT CHECKLIST	
	ED RETIREMENT BENEFIT	
	ATING MEMBER INFORMATION	
-	TIVE MEMBERS	_
	NDS	
SERV	ICE CREDIT PACKET	. 15
SERV	ICE CREDIT TYPES	. 15
PAYR	OLL ADJUSTMENT	. 16
	TRIBUTION DEFICIENCIES	
-	PS TRANSFER CREDIT	
-	ICIPAL TRANSFER CREDIT	
	FARY CREDIT	
	MAL COST SERVICE PURCHASE	_
-	COST SERVICE PURCHASEOVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE OF MILITARY NOTIFICATION	_
	CHASING CREDIT - QUALIFIED APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE	
	BILITY RETIREMENT PACKET	
	BILITY RETIREMENT – TERMINAL ILLNESS	
	BILITY RETIREMENT- FILING DEADLINE	
DISA	BILITY RETIRMENT-EMPLOYER FILED	. 22
DISA	BILITY RETIRMENT- SURVIVING BENEFICIARY	. 22

DISABILITY RETIREMENT CLAIM APPLICATION	22
DISABILITY RETIREMENT-ACCIDENTAL	23
DISABILITY - WORKERS' COMPENSATION	24
DISABILITY RETIREMENT- EMPLOYER NOTIFICATION	24
DISABILITY RETIREMENT-DATE	24
RETIREMENT PACKET	25
Retirement Allowance Options	26
RETIREMENT APPLICATION	26
SERVICE RETIREMENT	27
UNUSED SICK LEAVE CREDIT	28
UNUSED SICK LEAVE CREDIT CHART	29
DEFERRED RETIREMENT OPTION PROGRAM	29
DROP PARTICIPATION	30
DEFERRED RETIREMENT OPTION PROGRAM	30
DROP Withdrawal	30
ACTIVE DEATH BENEFITS	31
REEMPLOYMENT AFTER RETIREMENT	31
SYSTEMS	32
GLOSSARY OF TERMS	33
PLAN SUMMARIES	
System: TEACHERS & EMPLOYEES Reformed Contributory Pension Benefit (RCPB)	36
System: TEACHERS & EMPLOYEES ALTERNATE CONTRIBUTORY PENSION SYSTEM (ACPS)	37
System: TEACHERS & EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM (TRS/ERS)	38
System: EMPLOYEES NON-CONTRIBUTORY PENSION SYSTEM (NCPS)	39
System: EMPLOYEES CONTRIBUTORY PENSION SYSTEM (ECPS)	40
System: CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM (CORS)	
System: LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS PENSION SYSTEM (LEOPS)	
System: LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM	43
System: STATE POLICE RETIREMENT SYSTEM (SPRS)	44
System: JUDGES RETIREMENT SYSTEM (JRS)	45
System: LEGISLATIVE PENSION PLAN (LPP)	46

I. Employer Overview

A. The Maryland State Retirement Agency

The Maryland State Retirement System was created by the Maryland General Assembly in 1927 to provide retirement benefits to teachers employed by the State of Maryland. Today, the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System (MSRPS) administers retirement, disability, and survivor benefits to State employees, teachers, law enforcement officers, legislators, judges, as well as local government employees whose employers participate in the System. The System is an employer sponsored defined benefit plan defined by law and based on a formula using salary history and duration of employment. The System currently provides monthly allowances to more than 172,000 retirees and beneficiaries and is an essential element of the future financial security for over 194,000 active participating members and over 47.000 inactive deferred vested members.

System Administration

The Maryland State Retirement Agency (MSRA) administers the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System. The Board of Trustees oversees investments and formulates System policies.

The Member Services Unit

The Member Services Unit provides benefit counseling and member communications. Retirement benefit specialists assist members in understanding their retirement benefits via mySRPS, phones, one-on-one counseling, correspondence and seminars. Specialists are able to help our members understand their benefits and option selections for all retirement and pension systems, types of retirement and survivor benefits. Specialists provide mySRPS support, can confirm information on file such as enrollment date, address, service credit and retirement eligibility, and explain a recent estimate or service credit purchase invoice. Member Services handles disability claims.

The Member Services Unit is the main contact for member and retiree matters. Coordinators can reach us through the secure Employer Portal which is the preferred method of sending forms, secure messages and other documents.

B. MSRPS Employers

The Maryland State Retirement and Pension System is a Statewide network of nearly 700 State agency and participating employer partners.

Each employer designates liaisons between the employer and the Maryland State Retirement Agency to report payroll, pay invoices, execute forms and documents on behalf of their appointing authority, provide requested information related to the employment status of employees, and receive information from the retirement records of employees under the jurisdiction of the appointing authority, to the extent that such information is required by the appointing authority.

Employer Portal

The Employer Portal is our secure online application maintained by the Retirement Agency for employers to manage portal users, enroll members, report payroll information, make contributions, send secure message, and upload documents. Employer Portal Link: https://employerportal.sra.maryland.gov

Each employer has designated two administrators which are responsible for maintaining users.

More information on using our secure website is available to authorized users online and by request. If you need additional assistance, please contact SRA at the Employer Portal hotline number 410-625-5531.

1

C. Retirement Coordinator and MSRPS

Retirement Coordinator

A retirement coordinator is an employee designated by an employer portal administrator to serve as a liaison between the employer and the Maryland State Retirement Agency. They are not employees or agents of the Maryland State Retirement Agency, and therefore are not authorized to provide specific benefit information.

Designated retirement coordinators sign retirement forms verifying member information such as work history, salary and unused sick leave balances submitted to MSRA.

Retirement Coordinator Responsibilities

Coordinators have responsibilities to their employer, the retirement agency and our members.

Retirement Coordinator Meetings

Coordinators attend the MSRA annual retirement coordinators' meeting in June to keep up to date about legislation, retirement forms, policies, procedures and their role as a retirement coordinator. Meetings are held by webinar.

Retirement Coordinator Certification

The retirement agency requires all new retirement coordinators to become certified within the first three months of being designated by any participating agency; and designated coordinators previously certified to be recertified every three years. The purpose of certification is to ensure all members are receiving the same help and assistance regardless of where they work.

The online certification evaluation is an open-book certification assessment. Coordinators are registered for the evaluation by the retirement agency. Coordinators may use any MSRA materials including this Guide, our website, forms and system pamphlets.

Retirement Coordinator Training Webinars

The retirement agency hosts retirement coordinator training webinars about specific retirement coordinator responsibilities.

Employer Verification

Designated retirement coordinator's prime responsibility is to assist members in the completion and submission of retirement forms. Coordinators sign retirement forms verifying member information such as work history, salary and unused sick leave balances submitted to MSRA. Coordinators carefully review <u>all</u> forms and supporting documents before submitting them to MSRA; notarize forms when necessary; include the coordinator's contact information on all documents; and upload forms to MSRA Employer Portal in a timely manner.

Member Support

Retirement coordinators are an important link in the MSRPS communication chain. Coordinators provide members with MSRPS literature about retirement benefits and the proper retirement forms; and inform members of filing deadlines to enroll, purchase or transfer service credit, retire, or update a member's retirement account. Coordinators play an important role in disseminating information, such as our quarterly newsletter, to employees.

Retirement Coordinator Limitations

Retirement coordinators are <u>not</u> employees or agents of the Maryland State Retirement Agency. Coordinators are <u>not</u> authorized to counsel members or provide them with specific retirement benefit or account information. This guide is designed to help coordinators to know when to call or direct members to contact MSRA for assistance.

Coordinator Support

We regularly communicate with coordinators by e-mail, in writing, by phone, webinar and in person, to keep them informed and able to respond to member needs. Coordinators are also registered by MSRA for the online MSRA Resource Center. The Resource Center provides on-line registration, informational videos and is a communication resource for all employer designated retirement coordinators.

D. Policies to Guide Coordinators

Member Queries

Laws and procedures governing the pension plans are very complex. Retirement Coordinators are not employees or agents of the Maryland State Retirement Agency (MSRA); and are not authorized to provide specific benefit information. Please direct members and retirees to call the retirement agency when they have specific questions or need assistance with retirement benefit matters.

Employer Portal

The <u>secure Employer Portal</u> is the preferred method of sending forms, secure messages, and other documents.

Important Agency Contact Information

MSRA

Team/Forms	Phone	Email
Customer Service	410-625-5555 Toll-free 1-800-492-5909 TDD/TYY 410-625-5535	sra@sra.state.md.us
Disability-Terminal	410-625-5594	disability@sra.state.md.us
Death Benefits	410-659-8400	<u>DeathBenefits@sra.state.md.us</u>
DROP	410-625-5687	mhampton@sra.state.md.us
Enrollment/Transfers/ LOA / Beneficiary Forms	410-625-5697	Use Employer Portal
Payroll		payrollrecteam@sra.state.md.us
Purchases/Military/ Certification of Service/ Transfers		msrapurchasegroup@sra.state.md.us
Refunds	410-659-8400	refundsendbacks@sra.state.md.us
Retirement Applications/Estimates/ Unused Sick Leave		RetirementProcessing@sra.state.md.us

Resource Center

https://training.sra.maryland.gov/

Member Privileges

This book is a guide for retirement coordinators to assist members. It is not designed to answer every question. As noted above, members and coordinators should call the retirement agency when they have questions or need assistance with specific benefit matters.

If a member disagrees with information concerning his or her account or entitlement to benefits, they may submit a written request for reconsideration. If they are still dissatisfied after reconsideration, the Board of Trustees may grant the individual an administrative hearing.

Any request for an appeal must be filed in writing to the executive director of the Maryland State Retirement Agency. Time limits apply. Please contact a benefits specialist for additional information.

3

Confidentiality

Under Maryland's Public Information Act, all information in a member's retirement account is confidential. The retirement agency can only disclose information to the member who holds the account. Authorization to release information to a third party must be furnished in writing by the member. There are exceptions to this rule including (but not limited to):

- The member's employer.
- After the death of the member, the member's beneficiary, personal representative, or other person
 who has a valid claim to the member's benefits.
- If a court orders the release of information, the retirement agency must comply.

As an employer's designee, coordinators have the authority to release confidential information to the retirement agency, to execute retirement forms and other documents on behalf of their employer, provide the retirement agency with requested information regarding the employment status of employees, and to receive retirement account information necessary to assist members.

To protect member confidentiality, employers must remove coordinators no longer designated to receive information. Administrators remove coordinators by deleting their Employer Portal accounts and ending their access to the Employer Portal.

<u>Confidentiality Limitations</u>: The exceptions do <u>not</u> permit MSRA to release retirement allowance amount, estimates or medical diagnosis from medical files to retirement coordinators without the written consent of the employee.

If there are questions of interpretation, the provisions of Division II and III of the State Personnel and Pension Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland and Code of Maryland Annotated Regulations (COMAR) takes precedence in resolving questions regarding the policies and benefits of the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System.

II. Retirement Benefit Guide

RETIREMENT FORMS

MSRA Website Forms may be printed or downloaded from website sra.maryland.gov Forms are frequently updated. Print forms from the MSRA website for the most up-to-date form.

	DOCUMENT FILING C	HECKLIST
	nt coordinators assist members in the completion a nt office. Below are some general guidelines for filir	
	Carefully Review the Completed Form: Incomplete or inaccurate information will delay processing. It is essential that coordinators carefully review each form prior to submitting it to our office.	
	o Full legal name including middle initial o	Date of Birth
	 Social Security Number on all forms and documents 	Current address
	 Member signed and dated form 	Coordinator printed name on form
	 Complete beneficiary information- name, address, SSN 	Coordinator signed and dated form
		Coordinator <u>direct</u> phone number
Be Aware of Filing Deadlines: Forms must be received by the retirement agency to meet filing deadlines. Late forms could either delay processing, payment or disqualify a member from obtaining the benefit. If not sure about a deadline, confirm it with our office.		
Notarize When Necessary: A number of forms require notarization. Incomplete or improper notarization may STOP processing. Forms may be signed by Secretary of State approved remote notaries. Please refer members to the Secretary of State website for a lof approved remote notaries. A Notary Public acknowledges the identity of the person sign the form, not the accuracy of the document. The document is legally binding if		
 The notary acknowledges the complete and signed form; The notary seal is visible – lightly shade with pencil the raised seal to scan and uploat to portal; 		
	 There are <u>NO</u> cross-outs or changes. 	
	The notary and retirement coordinator may be the actually witness the person signing the form. The the same or <i>before</i> the date the notary signs the	e date the person signed the form must be
	☐ Supporting Documents: Supporting documents must be readable and include member's name and social security number	
	Send Related Forms Together	
	Immediately Upload Forms to MSRA En accordance with forms on file with the retirement the retirement agency. Do <u>not</u> delay submission preferred method of sending forms, secure n	t agency; not the employer. Send all forms to . The secure Employer Portal is the

ENROLLMENT PACKET

Coordir	nators provide the following forms and documents to new employees prior to or when employment nices:
	Welcome to theSystem Pamphlet
	Application for Membership Form 1 Employees, Teachers, Corrections, LEOPS, State Police Form 2 Legislative Form 3 Judges
	Designation of Beneficiary* (May use mySRPS to designate beneficiaries – No notary necessary) Form 4 Employees, Teachers, Corrections, LEOPS, State Police* Form 4.1 Judges* Form 55 Legislative*
	Members may designate or change a new beneficiary electronically through mySRPS secure portal. No notary needed.
	MSRA Verification of Birth date – see ENROLLING NEW MEMBERS for acceptable "Proof of Birth' documents
	Teacher's only - Signed Position Description
	nators at Higher Education institutions provide the following forms and documents to eligible Education Teachers and Employees to elect to participate in the Optional Retirement Plan(ORP):
	Form 60 Election Not to Participate in the Teachers/Employees System by Faculty or Administrative Officers of Institutions of Higher Learning
	Optional Retirement Plan Contract
	Community Colleges- Certification of Professional Position for Optional Retirement Program
	nators of elected and appointed officials elected or hired on or after 7/1/2015 provide the following and questionnaire to individuals electing not to participate in the Employees' Pension System:
	Form 60.15 Election Not to Participate – Appointed and Elected Officials
* must	be notarized

Enrollment forms, documents and questions must be sent through the secure **Employer Portal**.

ENROLLING NEW MEMBERS

FORMS & FUNCTIONS

All of the following forms and documents are to be submitted together to the retirement agency:

New enrollment forms are required when membership begins in a different plan or system. **Enrollment forms, documents and questions must be sent through the secure Employer Portal.**

Dual Enrollment: Members who work for multiple employers and/or in positions eligible for membership in different MSRPS. <u>All</u> employers must report hours and contributions for all positions in all eligible systems. Members must complete Membership forms for all employers and each MSRPS system.

Eligible members <u>not</u> properly enrolled are <u>not</u> entitled to benefits.

Application for Membership – Provides basic personal information necessary to establish account.

- Form 1 Employees, Teachers, Correctional Officers, LEOPS, State Police
- Form 2 Legislative
- Form 3 Judges

CORS positions: §25-201

Eligible Teachers' positions COMAR 22.04.03, *Public School (02), Board of Education (03), University or State College (04), Community College (05) Public Library (06).*

Retirement/Pension Systems:

- 02 Correctional Officers' Retirement System
- 03 State Police Retirement System
- 06 Teachers' Pension Systems
- 07 Employees' Pension Systems
- 09 Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System

Designation of Beneficiaries – Names individuals, organizations, trust or estate to receive survivor benefits.

- Form 4 Employees, Teachers, Correctional Officers, LEOPS, State Police
- Form 4.1 Judges
- Form 55 Legislative

Position Description

Proof of Birth – Verifies member's age, a primary factor in determining eligibility for benefits.

FILING DEADLINE: At commencement of member's employment. COMAR 22.01.12.01 requires members to be enrolled the 1st day of employment. See ADMINISTRATIVE FEES page 9.

POB documents.

22.01.12.02

Rehiring Retirees: Most retirees are <u>not</u> re-enrolled. Contact MSRA about Judges and Legislative retirees. MSRPS retirees and employers must notify the retirement agency in writing of date of reemployment, name of

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Membership is <u>mandatory</u> for permanent (part/full time) employees budgeted to work at least 500 hours, not including overtime, in a fiscal year. Once enrolled, enrollment continues regardless of the number of hours worked.

Enrollment provides survivor, disability and other retirement benefits...

Temporary, contractual, and emergency employees are <u>not</u> eligible for membership (§1-101, §13-101, COMAR 22.04.02.04). See glossary for definitions.

Requires retirement coordinator completion and signature.

Transfer: If member indicates membership in a different State or local retirement or pension system, review transfer provision on back of Form 1. See MSRPS TRANSFER CREDIT page 16

Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) eligible members', and appointed or elected officials' election not to participate in MSRPS is final, binding and irrevocable. See OPTIONAL RETIREMENT PLAN page 11.

Form must be notarized. See BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION page 10.

Birth Certificate or valid (unexpired): driver's

request by the Retirement Agency. COMAR

Members may designate or change a new beneficiary electronically through mySRPS secure portal

license, U.S. passport, naturalization records, MD

identification card, resident alien registration card Contact the Retirement Agency for other acceptable

Teachers, LEOPS, PGU CORS member, and upon

Section 5, Item G.

employer and anticipated earnings. Maryland law § 23-407 (d) requires a minimum of 45 days between their retirement date and the date rehired by a MSRPS participating employer. Questions? Call MSRA See REEMPLOYMENT page 31.

<u>Teacher Rehire/Retire Program</u>: The Board of Education assigns coordinators the responsibility of rehiring retirees for this program. The Board will be subject to a penalty for failure to submit certification for reemployed retirees. Contact Megan Myers at 410-625-5608 or mmyers@sra.state.md.us.

ENROLLMENT EXCEPTION REPORTS

Enrollment Exception Reports - MSRA provides retirement coordinators a list of employees who are not properly enrolled. These reports help employers avoid administrative fees.

Membership is mandatory. All employees must be properly enrolled when first employed or when membership begins in a different plan or system.

Enrollment provides members with survivor, disability and other retirement benefits.

Designation of beneficiaries authorizes the Maryland State Retirement Agency to pay death benefits to beneficiaries chosen by the member or retiree. Otherwise benefits are paid to their estate.

NOTE: Incomplete, improperly notarized or forms with errors will result in AE status.

See ENROLLING NEW MEMBERS and BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION

The Enrollment Exception Report is often referred to as an AE (Automatic Enrollment) report of members automatically enrolled upon the receipt of payroll data or contributions.

If a coordinator does <u>not</u> receive a listing, then everyone was properly enrolled at the time the report was generated.

Review previously submitted forms before contacting retirement agency.

If a coordinator received a report in error, immediately upload a copy of the AE report with a note to the secure employer portal

If a coordinator receives a listing, they have <u>three</u> weeks to:

- Review previously submitted forms to determine if they were properly completed
- Contact active employees on the AE report to submit properly completed forms to MSRA;
- Indicate on the AE report the date properly completed forms were submitted for active employees or any other action taken;
- 4. Document employee termination date on AE report;
- Questions? Contact the enrollments division supervisor at the phone number or e-mail printed on the report; and
- 6. Upload to Employer Portal AE report with notes and copies of all forms to the Maryland State Retirement Agency.

FILING DEADLINE: Three weeks after receiving AE report, notify MSRA of terminated AE employees or submit supporting documents to correct status of member's account. Employers <u>must</u> enroll all eligible employees hired before April 1st by June 30th of the same fiscal year to avoid administrative fees.

ADMINISTRATIVE FEE: MSRA shall impose \$100 per employee per year administrative fee on participating employers for eligible employees hired before April 1st, still on payroll June 1st and not properly enrolled by June 30th of the same fiscal year. Payment is due 30 days after invoice date (COMAR 22.01.12.03). There is <u>no</u> waiver of fees.

BENEFICIARY DESIGNATION

FORMS & FUNCTIONS

Designation of Beneficiaries –

- mySRPS secure portal
- Form 4 Employees, Teachers, Correctional Officers, LEOPS, State Police
- Form 4.1 Judges
- Form 55 Legislative

Member or retiree designates individuals including minor children, other relatives, friends, "My Estate", "Trustee as appointed by Agreement of Trust or Will", or charitable organization to receive death benefits unless otherwise restricted by law.

Payments to minor children are paid to guardian.

<u>Primary beneficiary (ies)</u>-Survivor benefit will be equally distributed between primary designated beneficiaries.

<u>Contingent beneficiary (ies)</u> - Survivor benefits will be equally distributed between contingent beneficiaries only if all primary beneficiaries are deceased.

MILITARY DUTY IMPORTANT REMINDER:

Continued disability coverage is provided for our members called to military duty or training during membership, along with continued survivor benefit coverage for their beneficiaries (§38-102). If called to military duty or training during membership, member or coordinator should file a Form-46 Notification of Military Service Entry. See APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE or MILITARY NOTIFICATION Advise member returning from military duty to submit Form-43 Claim of Retirement Credit for Military Service upon their return. See FORM for more information.

Spouse Law Death Benefit: A monthly lifetime benefit paid to the spouse of an Employees, Teachers or Correctional Officers member who was active on payroll or on an approved leave of absence, was eligible to retire at time of death or met spouse law age/service requirements prior to death.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Form must be notarized. Must provide complete address for each individual or organization listed on form.

Member may designate or change a new beneficiary electronically through mySRPS secure portal

<u>Updates</u>: Members may change their designations at any time without coordinator assistance.

Coordinators should periodically remind members to update their beneficiaries, when:

- Family composition changes- marriage, birth, adoption, divorce, death...
- Returning after a leave of absence
- Changing health insurance coverage
- Military deployment
- Retirement

Retirement: Prior designations of beneficiaries do <u>not</u> carry forward from a member account to a retirement benefit. Retiring members must designate beneficiary(ies) on the retirement application, or by submitting a new Beneficiary Form with their retirement application if they are designating more than one beneficiary.

At retirement, complete Beneficiary Form ONLY if selecting basic payment allowance or optional payment allowances 1 or 4 to designate multiple beneficiaries. Retirees submit Form 4 directly to MSRA to update beneficiaries. IMPORTANT: If retired under OPTION 2, 3, 5 or 6, designate sole beneficiary on the retirement application. Retiree must complete a Form 66 to initiate a beneficiary change.

If retiree applicant chooses the Basic allowance and names more than one (1) beneficiary, advise applicant to consider Option 1 or 4 which may provide a larger lump sum payment to listed beneficiaries. Advise member to contact a SRA retirement specialist to discuss payment allowance options.

FILING DEADLINE: Must be received at the retirement agency <u>before</u> the death of the member or retiree. Notary seal must be clearly visible.

OPTIONAL RETIREMENT PLAN

Eligible institutions include: University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, St. Mary's College of Maryland, Community Colleges, and the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

IMPORTANT: An employee must make their election to join the Optional Retirement Program no later than the commencement of their employment. An employee who signs the form even one day after the start of their employment will be denied their election and must instead be enrolled and reported as a member of the Pension System.

FORMS & FUNCTIONS

Form 60 Election Not to Participate - Institutions of Higher Learning-Member signs the form to elect *not* to participate in the MSRPS, to waive all rights to MSRPS benefits and to acknowledge that their election is final and irrevocable.

Coordinator certifies professional classification and eligibility for option.

Optional Retirement Plan Contract-Indicates member's optional retirement plan.

<u>Community Colleges</u>: Certification of Professional Position for Optional

Retirement Program - College president certifies position to be a professional position eligible to elect ORP participation. Must be signed by college president.

MSRPS Contributions: Contributions made in error after ORP enrollment <u>must</u> be refunded to the member by the employer.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Must be notarized.

Membership in MSRPS is mandatory unless an eligible employee selects the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) at commencement of employment (Title 30).

Eligible Members: Members are eligible based on where they work and the nature of their classifications. Only individuals in ORP eligible positions that have <u>never</u> been a <u>MSRPS</u> <u>member</u> as an employee of State or ORP employing institution may have an election to join prior to commencement of employment.

<u>Option Selection</u>: Eligible employees must elect to join the ORP at commencement of employment.

<u>CAUTION</u>: Once an eligible employee selects ORP, they <u>cannot</u> change their election to enroll in MSRPS.

The option to participate in an alternate retirement plan is *final*, *binding* and *irrevocable* as long as the individual is an employee in an ORP eligible position of an institution of higher learning which permits such an option.

FILING DEADLINE: Must elect to join at commencement of employment.

OPTIONAL MEMBERSHIP – Appointed and Elected Officials

Membership is optional for certain officials elected and appointed for a fixed term if they were elected or hired on or after July 1, 2015 as set forth in Section 23-204, State Personnel and Pension Article, Annotated Code of Maryland. These individuals must elect to participate in the Employees' Pension System on or before their effective date of participation. To elect not to participate, the elected or appointed official must complete the following form:

Form 60.15 Election Not to Participate-Fixed Term Elected or Appointed Official

Their decision is a one-time irrevocable decision.

TERMINATING EMPLOYMENT CHECKLIST

		s should encourage members to view videos on MSRA website and discuss the following MSPRS members leaving employment:
	• Is • W	ership in the MSRPS ends if the member: separated from employment for more than four years (Teachers' Retirement Plan 5 years) ithdraws his or her accumulated contributions, if any etires es
	benefit MSRP service	- refers to the right of a member separated from MSRPS employment to a future retirement payable at plan's normal retirement age for the years and service earned before termination. S members enrolled prior to 7/1/11 are vested after accumulating at least 5 years of eligibility e. Members enrolled on or after 7/1/11 are vested after accumulating at least 10 years of ity service.
		To determine if they are vested, encourage members (enrolled before 7/1/11) with over 3 years of creditable service or members (enrolled <u>after</u> 7/1/2011) with over 8 years of creditable service to contact MSRA before they withdraw their accumulated contributions.
		Advise vested members terminating employment to keep their name, address and beneficiary information updated with the retirement agency.
		y eligible to retire? Retirement eligibility for all systems may be found in system PLAN MARIES.
		Members at normal retirement age or older terminating employment, will not get a greater benefit if they delay retirement.
		If a member terminates employment when they are 72 years of age or older, per IRS regulations, retirement is mandatory. Active members on payroll do <u>not</u> have to retire at 72 years of age.
	employe their co years o	ty: If eligible, member has up to 4 years (Teachers' Retirement Plan 5 years) after paid ment ends to apply a claim for ordinary or accidental disability benefits if they did <u>not</u> withdraw ntributions. Accidental claim must be based on an accident occurring within the past five (5) f the claim (EXCEPT State Police Retirement System, Correctional Officers' Retirement or LEOPS Members).
for a	a future	members, not of retirement age, who separate from employment, who are not eligible retirement benefit and are not intending to return to employment with a participating , should complete a Form 5 packet to withdraw or transfer their contributions.
		rs provide the Application for Withdrawal of Accumulated Contributions Package to non-vested rminating employment. The withdrawal package includes:
	For Spe	m 5 Withdrawal of Accumulated Contributions and FAQs- must be notarized m 193 Trustee to Trustee Distribution form (Refund Choice #2 or #3 only) ecial Tax Notice Regarding Plan Payments RPS Plan Benefit Summaries

An individual who withdraws his or her accumulated contributions and interest, forfeits all service credit and the right to a future benefit. Withdrawing contributions ends an approved leave of absence and processing of disability claim. Contributions stop earning interest after membership ends.

Vested – A member, separated from MSRPS employment, has a right to a future retirement benefit payable at normal retirement age for the years and service earned before termination. The minimum years of service required to be vested:

- 5 years enrolled prior to 7/1/11;
- 10 years after 7/1/2011.

At normal retirement age, former member completes the service or early retirement forms to receive a benefit.

Member is responsible for informing retirement agency of any subsequent address changes to ensure delivery of benefits when they are due.

Coordinator section is <u>not</u> needed to collect a vested benefit. Unused sick leave is not included in a vested benefit.

If the member was not eligible for service retirement, the retirement date will be the first of the month after the vested member reaches normal retirement age. COMAR 22.01.14.03

UPDATING MEMBER INFORMATION

Accurate reporting of the home address is important because it is used for mySRPS registration letters, and to contact inactive members

Address or Name Changes

Active members: Address or name changes are made through regular payroll data submissions.

Inactive members (i.e. not on payroll) must notify MSRA in writing of address or name changes. For name changes, include a copy of marriage certificate or court order. Member's social security number or member identification number should be included on any change of address or name correspondence.

INACTIVE MEMBERS

Inactive notices are sent to members whose payroll data is incomplete or has not been received by the SRA.

Employer Reporting Errors: Employers are responsible for determining the cause when an actively employed member receives an inactive letter by reviewing payroll records and enrollment forms.

There are numerous administrative errors that may occur causing a member not to be active in our System such as :

- No payroll information is being reported to the retirement agency,
- · Payroll is being reported under the wrong social security number, or
- Enrollment forms were submitted under the wrong social security number.
- STATE AGENCIES: Check Workday Maryland Statewide Personnel System.

MILITARY DUTY IMPORTANT REMINDER: Continued disability coverage is provided for our members called to military duty or training during membership, along with continued survivor benefit coverage for their beneficiaries (§38-102). If called to military duty or training during membership, member or coordinator should file a Form-46 Qualified Leave of Absence Request or Notification of Military Service Entry. See APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE or MILITARY NOTIFICATION on page 20

REFUNDS

FORMS & FUNCTIONS

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Form-5 Application for Withdrawal of Accumulated Contributions – Member or former member terminated from employment completes form to withdrawal or transfer employee accumulated contributions and interest.

Applicant may not be employed by the State or any participating employer to withdraw accumulated contributions.

Contributions reported in error to MSRPS must be refunded to the member by the employer.

The Withdrawal Package includes Form 5 Withdrawal of Accumulated Contributions- *must be notarized;* Form 193 Trustee to Trustee Distribution form (only if they are rolling over their contributions); Special Tax Notice Regarding Plan Payments; and MSRPS Plan Benefit Summaries.

Must be notarized. Must be signed by the retirement coordinator unless the individual has been off payroll more than <u>six</u> months.

Ensure the resignation/termination date is accurate.

Advise members that they forfeit all future benefits, including disability benefits when they withdraw contributions.

Withdraw of contributions terminates any approved leave of absence period.

IMMEDIATELY Notify the retirement agency if the member does not terminate membership or returns to employment.

Rollover payments are made payable to the Financial Institution receiving the rollover for the benefit of the individual (e.g. National Bank for benefit of Robert Smith) and are mailed to the individual who must then deliver the check to the financial institution.

Form-742 Application for Withdrawal of Voluntary Funds-Withdrawal of voluntary contributions with interest.

Must be notarized. Voluntary funds can be withdrawn only at the time of retirement, termination or death. If applicable, MSRA will notify member they are eligible for a refund and send the form directly to the member.

Form-744 Election of Disposition of Voluntary Funds

If applicable, MSRA will send the form directly to the member.

FILING DEADLINE: Refund may take up to 30 days to process after all expected contributions are received. Applications may not be processed during the month of July.

Returned refund checks take 45-60 days to re-credit and reprocess.

SERVICE CREDIT PACKET

The following forms and documents are provided to members by coordinators to assist members in transferring service credit from another system or plan, claiming credit for military service, purchasing service or making corrections through payroll adjustments.

Advise members to contact MSRA to review their account and discuss service credit.

To transfer service credit between MSRPS systems and plans.

Form 37 Request to Transfer Service
Form 37.37 Election to Combine Employees and Teachers Pension System Service

To transfer credit from an eligible non-participating employer:
Form 37.26 Request to Transfer Service from Local Retirement or Pension System to MSRPS

To redeposit withdrawn state funds, purchase service credit not already in their account or purchase credit for an approved leave of absence: msrapurchasegroup@sra.state.md.us

Form 26 Request to Purchase Previous Service

To claim military service prior to or during membership:

☐ Military Service Guide☐ Form 43 Claim of Retirement Credit for Military Service

To request MSRA approval of an employer approved leave of absence or notify MSRA of entry into military service:

Form 46 Qualified Leave of Absence Request or Notification of Military Service Entry

Payroll Adjustments:

 \Box

State employers coordinate payroll adjustments with Central Payroll

PGU employers' payroll staff or coordinators use the Employer Portal to adjust payroll data previously submitted, such as salary, hours worked and/or contributions:

The secure <u>Employer Portal</u> is the preferred method of sending forms, secure messages and other documents. Contact: payrollrecteam@sra.state.md.us

SERVICE CREDIT TYPES

Creditable Service: Service credit for each day worked and required contribution received. Credit used in the calculation of the allowance that determines the dollar amount of the member's benefit.

Eligibility Service: Service credit that determines the member's eligibility for a benefit. <u>Pension Systems</u>: Members earn one (1) year of eligibility service during any fiscal year they work at least 500 regular hours, excluding overtime. *Retirement Systems*: Creditable and eligibility credit are the same

PAYROLL ADJUSTMENT

FORMS & FUNCTIONS

State Agencies: Must send a memo or letter to Central Payroll and MSRA to correct payroll, member contributions and employer subsidy. Please coordinate with Central Payroll and MSRA Payroll Division. Contact MSRA Payroll payrollrecteam@sra.state.md.us

Employer Portal- PGU employers' payroll staff or coordinators use the Employer Portal adjustments to adjust payroll data previously submitted, such as salary, hours worked and/or contributions.

Do not report excess contributions.

The secure **Employer Portal** is the preferred method of sending forms, secure messages and other documents.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Begin payroll deductions and reporting hours for eligible employees as soon as they are hired. <u>Do not wait for the Application for Membership</u> (Form <u>001) to be completed before submitting payroll records to MSRA.</u>

Contact MSRA Payroll Contact: payrollrecteam@sra.state.md.us before making any electronic retroactive changes to members' accounts.

Contact our Data Control Division with any questions or concerns related to retirement payroll reporting.

NOTE: Minimum standard hours for a fulltime position cannot be less than 30 hours per week for a teacher or ten month employee or 35 hours per week for a 12 month employee.

FILING DEADLINE: Employer will either be billed or refunded employer subsidy. Payment for any missed member contributions can be made at *any time* during an employee's membership. However, interest is applied at the end of the each fiscal year. Contact: payrollrecteam@sra.state.md.us

CONTRIBUTION DEFICIENCIES

Missed contributions or payroll reporting errors may result in an account deficiency. A deficiency is the difference between the contribution amount received and the amount expected; plus interest.

mySRPS Account Balance - Contribution deficiency will show in the account balance section.

Notice of Cost-Sent to member by MSRA if a transfer between systems causes a deficiency.

Member may send a copy of mySRPS page or Notice of Cost with a check payable to Maryland State Retirement Agency.

or

Also, the member may send a secure message through the mySRPS portal requesting a bill for the deficiency.

FILING DEADLINE: Member may pay their deficiency with interest at any time prior to retirement. If the deficiency is not paid before the member retires, the retirement allowance will be actuarially reduced to reflect the deficiency.

TRANSFERRING CREDIT WITHIN MSRPS SYSTEMS

FORM 37 Request to Transfer Service -

Transfers service credit between different MSRPS systems and plans.

New enrollment forms are <u>required</u> when membership begins in a different plan or system. See ENROLLING NEW MEMBERS on page 7

Form 37.37 Election to Combine within the Employees' or Teachers' Pension

System – Combine prior Employees or Teachers' Pension System service credit into Reformed Pension System. (§23-303.1)

Advise members to contact MSRA to discuss transfer rules, options and plan differences such as benefit allowance, retirement eligibility, contribution rate, vesting and any other transfer factors.

Retirement coordinator at current job completes the bottom of the form.

Review the transfer provisions on the back of the Application for Membership (Form 1) with <u>all</u> members indicating prior MSRPS membership. Advise members to contact MSRA to discuss transfer rules/options.

Employee must go directly from one job to the next, without a break in service greater than 30 days in order to transfer credit (Title 37).

Special rules apply if there was a break in service between/within the Employees' and Teachers' Pension system (Title 23).

Additional employee contributions are due on transferred credit if the new system/plan required a higher employee contribution during the years to be transferred.

Members do <u>not</u> need to file a Form 37 if they will remain in the same system and plan.

FILING DEADLINE: Member must apply for the transfer of the credit <u>within</u> one year of state membership in new plan or system to receive credit. Special rules apply if there was a break in service. Election to Combine within the Employees' or Teachers' Pension System may be done one year after completing Form 37.37.

MUNICIPAL TRANSFER CREDIT

TRANSFERRING CREDIT FROM ANOTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL RETIREMENT or PENSION SYSTEM TO MSRPS

Examples of eligible non-participating employers are: Baltimore City Government, Baltimore County Government, Anne Arundel County Government, and Montgomery County Government.

Form-37.26 Request to Transfer Service from Local System

- Previous retirement system certifies municipal membership to be transferred.
- Transfers service credit from a Maryland eligible nonparticipating municipal retirement system to the MSRPS system (Title 37).

Member forfeits any benefit from former municipal retirement system. Advise members to contact MSRA and former system to discuss transfer rules, options and plan differences such as benefit allowance, retirement eligibility, contribution rate, vesting and any other transfer factors.

Employee must go directly from one job to the next, without a break in service greater than 30 days, in order to transfer credit.

Additional employee contributions are due on transferred credit if the new system/plan required a higher employee contribution during the years to be transferred, or a deficiency will be on the members' account.

Out-of-state municipal or federal employment is <u>not</u> eligible for transfer but may be purchased at retirement at full cost.

FILING DEADLINE: Member must apply for the credit, and if applicable, the transfer of funds must occur <u>within</u> one year of state membership to receive credit. Otherwise, member must wait until retirement to purchase the service at full cost. <u>msrapurchasegroup@sra.state.md.us</u>

MILITARY CREDIT

Section 5, Item G.

Form-43 Claim of Retirement Credit for

Military Service – (Title 38). Provides retirement credit for up to five years of U.S. Military service before membership and up to 5 years credit if military service interrupts membership. Maximum 36 months for National Guard Service or U.S. armed forces reserves).

May <u>not</u> claim credit for military service eligible for any other pension system benefit (except disability payments).

Member may purchase at normal cost additional service credit for "war zone" military service.

The secure <u>Employer Portal</u> is the preferred method of sending forms, secure messages and other documents.

Application must include separation papers to verify entrance and discharge dates (DD 214 or equivalent).

- If duty interrupts membership, member must return to the system within one year of discharge and cannot accept other permanent employment in the interim.
- If duty precedes membership, must have 10 years of creditable service in the MSRPS system to claim military time.

NOTE: If called to military duty or training during membership, member or coordinator should file a Form-46 Qualified Leave of Absence Request or Notification of Military Service Entry. See APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE or MILITARY NOTIFICATION on page 20.

Do NOT withhold contributions from differential pay.

FILING DEADLINE: Prior to termination of membership or retirement.

NORMAL COST SERVICE PURCHASE

NORMAL COST PURCHASES

FORMS & FUNCTIONS

Form-26 Request to Purchase Previous

Service – Used by members of the Retirement System and Pension System to purchase past membership credit, usually for missed contributions such as a MSRA approved leave of absence, delayed enrollment or contributions previously withdrawn from MSRPS.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Must complete a separate form for each employer.

Member pays missed contributions plus interest to-date of purchase.

Member can not make a partial purchase.

FILING DEADLINE: May purchase credit at any time during membership or while on an SRA approved leave of absence, prior to termination of membership *or* retirement. Advise members to contact MSRA to discuss service purchase rules/options. mailto:msrapurchasegroup@sra.state.md.us The secure mailto:msrapurchasegroup@sra.state.md.us The secure mailto:msrapurchasegroup@sra.state.md.us The secure documents.

FULL COST SERVICE PURCHASE

FULL COST PURCHASES

(Retirement and Pension Systems)

FORMS & FUNCTIONS

Form-26 Request to Purchase Previous

Service – Used upon retirement for purchases of creditable service including out-of-state, public, or non-public teaching; federal employment; and service with a non-participating municipality. For Retirement System members, it would also be used for the purchase of prior membership service.

Member pays the cost to fund the benefit the additional purchased service will provide. Credit is not awarded unless payment is made.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Must complete a separate form for each employer.

Forward the Form-26 to the appropriate employer to verify the employment period. Completed Form-26 is forwarded to the retirement agency by former employer.

Service not verified cannot be purchased.

May purchase a minimum of 1 month & a maximum of 10 years of service credit.

FILING DEADLINE: Purchases may be made only in the 12-month period preceding retirement. Purchase must be made while member is active on payroll or while on an SRA Approved Leave of Absence; prior to retirement.

TYPES OF SERVICE REQUESTED FOR PURCHASE

<u>In-State Service</u> Member employment with a participating MSRPS employer including state agencies, participating governmental units and permanent teaching service. In-state service includes delayed enrollment, contractual service and any other State or Participating Governmental Unit service <u>not</u> already in their MSRPS account.

<u>Leave of Absence</u> Credit for a qualifying MSRA approved leave of absence up to a maximum of 2 years.

State Redeposit Contributions plus interest previously withdrawn from the MSRPS

Non-State Service Out-of-State and/or private school teaching, federal government, out-of-state municipal and non-participating municipal service

<u>Municipal Redeposit</u> Re-deposit of funds withdrawn or credit transferred from a non-participating municipal retirement system.

APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE or MILITARY NOTIFICATION

View Leave of Absence video on MSRA website.

Form-46 Qualified Leave of Absence Request or Notification of Military

Service Entry – Application for a qualifying employer approved leave of absence (LOA) for a maximum of two years provides survivor benefit coverage and the ability to purchase additional service credit while on an MSRA approved LOA (COMAR 22.05.01.03).

COMAR 22.05.01.02 defines the legally acceptable reasons for a MSRA qualifying leave of absence, such as:

- Member's personal illness
- Birth of a child or adoption (Maternity/Paternity)
- Career-related study

FMLA for a family member is not a MSRPS pension qualifying leave of absence.

Non-contributory members continue to earn service credit. Contributory members may purchase MSRA approved LOA time upon their return to work in the same system; before retirement; or if they do not return to work, within 60 days of LOA expiration (§22-303.1, 23-304.1, 24-304.1, 25-304.1, 26-306).

Notification of Military Service Entry

Notifies MSRA member has been called to military service.

Encourage all Employees', Teachers', Correctional Officers', State Police and LEOPS' members before beginning a leave without pay status for 30 days or more, who meet the qualifying types of leave to complete a Form 46.

Must be employer approved.

If member is unable, employer completes the Form 46 on behalf of the member. Employer must submit documentation confirming member is unable to complete form.

<u>Intermittent Leave</u>: Intermittent leave may <u>not</u> qualify as a leave of absence for purposes of retirement. A Leave of Absence Form 46 does <u>not</u> need to be completed for any month a member was paid by the employer for time worked.

Return to Work: Advise members to submit a Request to Purchase Previous Service (Form 26) upon returning to work in the same system from an approved leave of absence.

For more information view Leave of Absence video.

Advise military service member they or their beneficiary may be eligible during their absence for a disability or death benefit (§38-102). Advise member returning from military duty to submit Form-43 *Claim of Retirement Credit for Military Service* upon their return. See page 17 for more information.

FILING DEADLINE: Prior to unpaid leave of absence. MSRA Executive Director has limited authority to waive the filing period requirements.

PURCHASING CREDIT - QUALIFIED APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Form-26 Request to Purchase Previous **Service** – (§23-304.1) Enables members to purchase approved leave time.

To be eligible to purchase time on leave, member must have filed Form-46 prior to beginning of leave. If leave period was prior to 1/1/74, no Form-46 was required.

Advise members to submit a *Request to Purchase Previous Service* (Form 26) upon returning to work from an approved leave of absence.

FILING DEADLINE: Prior to termination of membership *or* retirement. May purchase time within 60 days after the approved leave of absence term expires. The MSRA Executive Director may for good cause extend the period of time service credit may be purchased to allow the member to be eligible to file an ordinary disability retirement claim.

DISABILITY RETIREMENT PACKET

Coordinators provide the following documents or forms to members filing for ordinary, accidental or special disability benefits. Encourage members to view Disability videos on website.

<u>Disability</u>: Member is <u>permanently</u> and totally disabled from performing their job duties. Ordinary Disability: Must have 5 years of eligibility service. Accidental: No service minimum. Claim must be filed within 5 years of accident (Except State Police, CORS and LEOPS) NOTE: If the disability is not permanent, the claim must be reviewed if a disability retiree returns to the same job or a job with the same job duties they were previously found unable to perform.

The <u>member</u> is responsible for the submission of forms and materials to the Maryland State Retirement Agency (MSRA) within time frames stated on forms and request letters. Claim will be closed if the member does not diligently pursue the claim.
☐ Disability Retirement Pamphlet
Service Retirement: A member or former member must file a disability claim <u>prior</u> to the effective date of a service retirement. Advise members eligible for retirement to contact MSRA to discuss retirement options prior to filling disability claim. Retirees are <u>not</u> eligible to file a disability claim.
<u>Leave of Absence</u> : Members on an unpaid approved leave of absence should file Form 46 Qualified Leave of Absence Request. May purchase leave of absence time within 60 days after the approved leave of absence term expires in order to be eligible to file an ordinary disability retirement claim. See APPROVED LEAVE OF ABSENCE or MILITARY NOTIFICATION on page 20.
Step One: Filing Disability Claim
 ☐ Form 129 Preliminary Application for Disability Retirement* ☐ Form 20 Statement of Disability
☐ Form 20 Section THREE Physician's Medical Report☐ Last three years of primary care physician and pertinent medical records
The Statement of Disability (Form-20) and the Preliminary Application for Disability Retirement (Form-129) must be properly completed and submitted to the retirement agency to begin a claim.
 □ Application for an Estimate of Disability Retirement Allowances ** □ Form 21A Employees, Teachers & Correctional Officers □ Form 22 State Police □ Form 100 LEOPS
Retirement Coordinators must complete and submit the following forms and documents: Form 20 Section TWO Retirement Coordinator/Employer Applicant's job description (signed by employer) Applicant's use of sick, accident and other leave usage (Note if not available) Applicant's performance appraisals (Note if not available) Employer's first report of injury or other employer accident reports (if applicable)
Members applying for accidental disability benefits submit the above items as well as the following:
Accident documentation and medical evidence to show that the accident was the direct cause of the disability;
Employer's first report of injury; and Copies of Workers' Compensation awards.
For special/accidental disability claims, state police and LEOPS members also must submit:
Evidence that the disability arose out of, or in the course of, the performance of duty.
Step Two: Apply for Retirement If approved; member must apply to retire no later than 120 days by completing the retirement package to accept disability. State employees will be considered resigned COMAR 17.04.03.16E

* notarized **estimates are only sent to members approved by the BOT for disability retirement

TERMINAL ILLNESS

Alert the retirement agency <u>immediately</u> when a terminal case is involved. We will then assign the claim priority status when the application arrives. To notify the retirement agency of a terminal case, please contact the Secretary of the Medical Board at **410-625-5519**. Send forms and inquiries to <u>disability@sra.state.md.us</u>

Other documentation will be needed to determine eligibility for accidental benefit.

FORMS & FUNCTIONS

Physician's Statement – Statement of member's diagnosis and prognosis (terminal status).

Form-129 Preliminary Application for Disability Retirement - Authorizes the Board of Trustees to pay a disability allowance if the claimant is approved for a disability retirement, is off payroll, and dies before submitting Form 13-23.

Goes into effect when the claim is approved and expires on the retirement date.

Job Description - Medical Board evaluates the claim in relation to the individual's job duties. Must be signed by employer.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Physician's statement of the member's terminal status and form 129 to the Disability Unit may be sent by email to disability@sra.state.md.us

Claimant must select either option 1 or option 2. Member cannot write-in any other option. Beneficiary information must be completed if option 2 is selected.

Notary Reminders: The date the form signed by the member and date notarized do not have to be the same date. The document is <u>not</u> legally binding if there are any cross-outs or changes.

Active death benefit will be paid if member is on payroll the date of death.

DISABILITY RETIREMENT- FILING DEADLINE

Members cannot file for disability indefinitely. Applicants are subject to the following time limits:

- Teachers' Retirement System: five (5) years after paid employment ends.
- Other systems (except Judges' or Legislative): four (4) years after paid employment ends. Membership ends when contributions and interest are withdrawn, member dies or retires. Withdrawn members are <u>not</u> eligible to file for disability. **Deadline Extension:** Contact retirement agency.

DISABILITY RETIRMENT-EMPLOYER FILED

If the member is <u>unable</u> to apply, the following individuals may file on the member's behalf:

- Teachers' System: Member's state or county superintendent of schools;
- State Police: The Secretary of the State Police (if member is unable <u>or</u> refuses to apply for disability retirement).
- Other Systems: Member's appointing authority or department head.

The employer completes and signs the Statement of Disability (Form-20), the Preliminary Application for Disability Retirement (Form-129), and the final retirement application (Form-13-23). The last designation of beneficiary Form 4 will determine beneficiary and option selection. (COMAR 22.06.02.03)

DISABILITY RETIRMENT- SURVIVING BENEFICIARY

Surviving beneficiary may be eligible to apply for a benefit if member dies within seven days of completing the *Preliminary Application for Disability Retirement* (Form 129) and the Maryland State Retirement Agency receives the form and affidavit of signature within 30 days of member's death. Beneficiary should contact the retirement agency for filing instructions (§29-103).

DISABILITY RETIREMENT CLAIM APPLICATION

The review process averages two to four months; accidental claims take longer.

FORMS & FUNCTIONS

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

The Statement of Disability (Form-20) <u>and</u> the Preliminary Application for Disability Retirement (Form-129) must be properly completed and submitted to the retirement agency to begin a claim.

Form-129 Preliminary Application for Disability Retirement Form 20 Statement of Disability-	See special instructions for DISABILITY RETIREMENT – TERMINAL ILLNESS. All applicant, coordinator and physician sections
 Applicant/Member Section One Retirement Coordinator Section Two Physician's Medical Report Section Three 	must be completed.
Physician's Medical Report (Form 20 - 3) Primary Care Physician Medical Record Other Pertinent Medical Records	Physician report must be completed and signed by treating physician regardless of other documentation submitted. See list on page 6. Please submit last three years of primary care physician and other pertinent medical records
Job Description - Medical Board evaluates the claim in relation to the individual's job duties.	Must be signed by employer. The claimant must be deemed completely and permanently unable to perform his or her job to qualify for disability.
Leave Usage Report and Performance Evaluations, <i>if available</i> Other Employer Documents	Employer provides leave usage (w/ leave code explanation) and performance evaluation within the last year, if available. Note if not available. Upon Request.
Form 21A, 22, 100- Disability Retirement Allowances Estimate Application DISABILITY RETIRE	Prepared/sent to members approved by the Board of Trustees for disability retirement (approx. 3-4 weeks)

DISABILITY RETIREMENT-ACCIDENTAL

Must be filed with or <u>prior</u> to ordinary claim unless the injury occurs after an ordinary claim is filed. Claim must be based on an accident occurring within the past five (5) years of the claim (EXCEPT State Police Retirement System, Correctional Officers' Retirement System or LEOPS Members). All claims are evaluated for ordinary disability if they have five years of eligibility service credit.

Employer's First Report of Injury and any Workers' Compensation Awards –

Workers' Compensation benefit may have an impact on accidental disability retirement benefit.

Accidental Disability claims only.

Notify retirement agency if disputing facts of the incident.

DISABILITY - WORKERS' COMPENSATION

IMPORTANT NOTE: Instruct the member to contact the Retirement Agency to discuss impact of Workers' Compensation benefits on an accidental disability retirement.

Disability benefits are "coordinated" with benefits payable from Workers' Compensation. Retirement law may require the Retirement Agency to withhold an amount equivalent to the Workers' Compensation award if the Workers' Compensation benefits and disability benefits are based on the same event and are paid for the same period of time.

Retirees receiving an accidental disability retirement must notify the Retirement Agency in writing if additional Workers' Compensation awards are received.

The Retirement Agency may <u>not</u> offset a retirement allowance for Workers' Compensation benefits that are health insurance premiums, reimbursements for legal fees, medical expenses or other payments made to third parties and not to the retiree.

The offset described above does not apply to Employees' Pension System retirees who receive a disability retirement benefit as a former employee of a county board of education, the Board of School Commissioners of Baltimore City, or a participating governmental unit or a designated beneficiary.

DISABILITY RETIREMENT- EMPLOYER NOTIFICATION

The retirement agency shall notify retirement coordinators at three key disability claim "milestones":

- (1) General Claim Letter: All documents received and the Medical Board will review the claim.
- (2) <u>Claim Closed Letter</u>: Claimant failed to diligently pursue the claim or failed to accept retirement. The member may file a new disability claim if they are eligible to apply.
- (3) <u>BOT Claim Approval/Denial Letter</u>: The Board of Trustees approved or denied a disability retirement benefit.

DISABILITY RETIREMENT-DATE

The effective date of retirement is the <u>later</u> of the first day of the month:

- a) following the last day on payroll, as certified by the applicant's employer;
- b) after Statement of Disability and Preliminary Application for Disability Retirement received;
- of the date on the **Application for Disability Retirement**. If left blank, the retirement agency will provide the earliest possible date.

The effective date of retirement may <u>not</u> be later than 120 days from the date of the Disability Unit's notice to the applicant. Contact MSRA if applicant was on a leave of absence or purchased service. COMAR 22.06.05.06

RETIREMENT PACKET Coordinators recommend members: View MSRA website for videos, forms, benefit estimator, newsletters and other resources Attend a MSRA sponsored pre-retirement seminar/webinar Apply for service credit (Form 26) ☐ Claim military service credit (Form 43) Contact employer to inquire about and complete other employer forms before retirement Schedule an appointment with a MSRA retirement specialist, if member has benefit questions Disability Retirement: Retirees are not eligible to file a disability claim. A member or former member must file a disability claim prior to the effective date of a service retirement. Advise members eligible for retirement to contact MSRA to discuss retirement options prior to filing disability claim. mySRPS: Members can create and compare estimates. mySRPS is the fastest way to receive an estimate. mySRPS will provide the earliest date for retirement. Members can also adjust estimate for salary increases or unused sick leave. Please encourage all members to register for mySRPS. Coordinators provide the following forms and documents for members to file two months prior to retiring: П Guide to Choosing an Option for...pamphlet Retirement Checklist pamphlet The following forms and materials must be submitted to the Maryland State Retirement Agency (MSRA): Application for Service/ Disability Retirement * П State employees only: Coordinators highlight for emphasis #7 of instructions ☐ Form 13-023 Employees, Teachers & Correctional Officers* ☐ Form 15 Legislators ☐ Form 16 Judges Form 14-024 State Police* ☐ Form 98-101 LEOPS* П Designation of Beneficiary* (If Basic, Option 1 or Option 4 is selected) ☐ Form 4 Employees, Teachers, Correctional Officers, LEOPS, State Police* ☐ Form 4.1 Judges* ☐ Form 55 Legislative* mySRPS secure portal Form 85 Direct Deposit-Electronic Fund Transfer Sign-up Form Form 766.11 Maryland State Tax Withholding Request IRS Form W-4P Federal Tax Withholding Form 143 Verification of Retiree's Disabled Child (if applicable) Form 703 Option Waiver* - to change option before 1st check paid In addition, Coordinators assisting State Police and LEOPS members provide the following forms and documents to apply for Deferred Retirement Option Program: Form 756* State Police & 504* LEOPS Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) Form 506 State Police & 507 LEOPS Binding Letter of Resignation At the end of DROP participation, the member completes and submits to the Maryland State Retirement

Agency:

Form 757 State Police & 505 LEOPS Application for Withdrawal of DROP Account Form 757.2 State Police & 505.2 LEOPS Election to Terminate DROP

Reemployment form

must be notarized

Section 5. Item G.

ESTMATE REQUEST FOR SERVICE or EARLY RETIREMENT ALLOWANCE

mySRPS is the fastest way to receive an estimate. Please encourage all members to register for mySRPS mySRPS will provide the earliest date for retirement. Members can also adjust estimate for salary increases or unused sick leave.

FORMS & FUNCTIONS

Application for Estimate of Service Retirement Allowances - Provides an estimate of the monthly payments the retiree would receive for each of the available MSRPS allowance options.

- Form 9 Employees, Teachers, CORS
- Form 10 State Police
- Form 97 LEOPS

NOTE: Retirees cannot change their option selection after their first payment is paid.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

- Completed within one year of retirement.
- Encourage eligible members to make an informed choice by requesting an estimate.
- Do <u>not</u> delay or prevent a retirement by requiring the member to request an estimate.
- If a beneficiary named, estimate reflects the Basic Allowance and all option allowances 1-6. If no beneficiary named, estimate reflects the Basic Allowance, Options 1 and 4 only.
- SERVICE PURCHASE: Attach Form 26 since it will affect dollar figures and Check "yes" to the question: "Do you plan to purchase any previous service for which you are eligible?"

FILING DEADLINE: mySRPS can create multiple estimates 24/7. The Retirement Agency will only create estimates for members within 12 months of their retirement date. Estimates may take a month or longer to process. A prior estimate, or information from the Maryland State Retirement on-line estimators are also helpful retirement resources.

Retirement Allowance Options

Advise member to contact the retirement agency to discuss retirement allowance options.

IMPORTANT: Retiree cannot change option after the first payment is due

Retiree may select only one retirement allowance option.

MARITAL STATUS (State Police and LEOPS retirees only): Married State Police and LEOPS retirees must select the Basic Allowance and name the spouse as beneficiary. If not married, the State Police and LEOPS retirees may select any option.

MULTIPLE BENEFICIARIES: Basic Allowance, Options 1, or 4 allow for multiply beneficiaries.

DUAL LIFE OPTIONS: Option 2, 3, 5 or 6 Retiree can name only <u>one</u> beneficiary and must submit proof of birth for beneficiary. No contingent beneficiary (ies) may be named. OPTION 2 OR 5: The beneficiary cannot be more than 10 years younger than the retiree unless the beneficiary is the spouse or retiree's disabled child. To designate a disabled child under option 2 or 5, a completed *Error! Reference source n of found.* must be submitted with the retirement application

HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFICIARY COVERAGE: The State Retirement Agency does <u>not</u> manage retiree health benefits. Not all participating employers provide retiree health coverage. Contact the employer's health benefits division for information.

State of Maryland employees: If eligible, only Option 2, 3, 5 or 6 continue health program coverage for eligible surviving dependents (i.e., spouse, dependent children) after retiree's death. State Police and LEOPS surviving spouse receiving benefits have continued health coverage. Eligible surviving dependent must be named as the beneficiary. Contact employee benefits division at 410-767-4775 for eligibility and cost information.

OPTION WAIVER (Form 703): **Retiree cannot change option after the first payment is due.** <u>Before</u> first payment is due, retiree can change their allowance option selection by filing an Option Waiver (Form 703) with MSRA. Contact MSRA for form.

QUESTIONS? Contact the retirement agency to discuss retirement allowance options

RETIREMENT APPLICATION

APPLYING FOR RETIREMENT

FORMS & FUNCTIONS

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Application for Service or Disability Retirement - Initiates payment of retirement benefits based on selected allowance option.

- Form 13-23 Employees, Teachers, CORS
- Form 14-24 State Police
- Form 98-101 LEOPS

<u>Beneficiaries</u>: Prior designations of beneficiaries do <u>not</u> carry forward from a member account to a retirement benefit. Retiring members must designate beneficiary(ies) on the retirement application, or by submitting a new Beneficiary Form with their retirement application if they are designating more than one beneficiary.

Beneficiary Form 4 (ONLY use for Basic payment allowance or optional payment allowances 1 or 4) Completed at retirement to designate multiple beneficiaries. Retirees submit Form 4 directly to MSRA to update beneficiaries. Or update beneficiaries on mySRPS secure portal

Retirees may change beneficiaries after retirement but <u>not</u> their allowance option. Retiree must complete a Form 66 to initiate a beneficiary change. The monthly allowance will be recalculated when beneficiary is changed for options 2, 3, 5 or 6.

<u>No</u> retirement contribution is due for a pay period ending on or after the retirement date.

Voluntary Funds: See mySRPS

Form must be sent to the Agency from the coordinator for active members.

Retiree can not be on payroll the date they retire.

For Option 2, 3, 5 or 6, proof of birth for sole beneficiary must be submitted. If Option 2 or 5 is selected, the beneficiary listed cannot be more than 10 years younger than the retiree unless the beneficiary is the spouse or retiree's disabled child.

Option Waiver (Form 703): Cannot change option after the first payment is due. Before first payment is due, retiree can change their allowance option selection by filing an Option Waiver (Form 703) with MSRA. Contact MSRA for form.

Employer Page: Must be completed if they have been on payroll within last 60 days. Employer must verify last day on payroll (i.e. worked or paid leave). Include the job classification on the back of the form.

Unused Sick Leave: Coordinators are required to re-certify number of <u>days</u> of unused sick leave thirty (30) days <u>after</u> the member's actual retirement date, regardless of whether or not there are <u>any</u> changes. For more detailed instruction, See UNUSED SICK LEAVE section and checklists for retirement application.

Reemployment After Retirement - Explains the consequences of reemployment after retirement

FILING DEADLINE (**COMAR 22.01.14**): To avoid payment delays, submit application 30 days <u>prior</u> to retirement date. Do <u>not</u> encourage members to file late. Do not delay submitting retirement paperwork to MSRA. Filing delays result in payment delays.

Retiring Upon Separation of Employment: MSRA accepts applications after their retirement date. Application must be properly completed and notarized within the month of retirement to retire the first day of the month; otherwise retirement date will be the first of the month after the application is received if retiree is separated from employment and eligible for a full service retirement.

<u>Vested</u>: If the member was not eligible for service retirement, the retirement date will be the first of the month after the vested member reaches normal retirement age. COMAR 22.01.14.03

<u>Teachers</u>: Applicant must be separated from employment as of June 30 and application must be received on or before September 15 for a July 1st retirement date. <u>10 month employees</u> with a July 1st, August 1st or September 1st retirement date must have their application notarized on or before August 31st and received on or before September 15.

DISABILITY RETIREMENT: Must be completed and filed within 120 days of notification of Board approval for disability retirement. COMAR 17.04.03.16E states, if a State employee is approved for disability retirement by the Maryland State Retirement Agency, unless the employee resigns or is removed earlier, the employee shall be considered resigned from State service as of the 120th day after the approval.

SERVICE RETIREMENT

APPLYING FOR RETIREMENT (CONTINUED) FORMS & FUNCTIONS SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Form-85 Direct Deposit Electronic Fund

Transfer Sign-Up - Provides for direct deposit of retiree's check to a bank, savings institution, or credit union. Cannot be paid to a third party (i.e. not retiree or beneficiary).

Form-766.11 Maryland State Tax Withholding Request - Allows retiree to designate how much Maryland tax to have withheld from the retirement check.

IRS Form W-4P Federal Tax Withholding

- Should be submitted at least one month prior to desired retirement date.
- Retirement checks must be direct deposited unless retiree lives outside of U.S. or has been approved by MSRA executive director for an undue hardship waiver.
- Should be submitted at least one month prior to retirement date. Withholding amounts can be changed at any time. Submitting a new form replaces previous withholding selections.

FILING DEADLINE: Should be filed with the Application for Service or Disability Retirement Form.

UNUSED SICK LEAVE CREDIT

Application for Service or Disability Retirement Section E. Unused Sick

Leave Retirees are entitled to receive creditable service for unused sick leave if the member retires on or before 30 days after the member is separated from employment (§ 20-206). Unused Sick Leave Credit Eligible Retirement Types: ordinary disability, early or service retirement

<u>Unused sick leave</u>: Leave available to the employee as sick leave <u>during</u> employment. No other unused leave balances (i.e. personal leave) may be reported as unused sick leave.

Unused sick leave cannot be used to qualify a member for retirement or reduce an early retirement reduction.

The Maryland State Retirement Agency calculates the creditable service for unused sick leave days.

Employer certifies the number of unused sick leave days.

Converting hours to days: Convert the number of unused sick leave hours to days by dividing hours by the <u>standard</u> full-time hours.

<u>Standard Full-Time Hours</u>: The standard full-time hours for State agencies and *most* MSRPS participating employers (PGU) is eight (8) hours. Participating units whose standard full-time hours is less than eight (8) hours per day should divide unused sick leave hours by the employer's standard full-time hours.

Examples:

2500 hours ÷ 8 standard hours = 312.5 days. Report as 312 days.

2500 hours ÷ 7.5 standard hours = 333.3 days. Report as 333 days.

Part-time employees: Divide unused sick leave hours by the standard full-time hours regardless of hours worked.

Example: 1250 hours ÷ 8 hours = 156.25 days. Report as 156 days.

FILING DEADLINE: Retirement paperwork <u>must</u> be properly completed and notarized within 30 days after the member is separated from employment to receive creditable service for unused sick leave. <u>10 month employees</u> with a July 1st, August 1st or September 1st retirement date must have their application notarized on or before August 31st and received on or before September 15.

Coordinator must report unused sick leave days *prior to* retirement date <u>and</u> recertify unused leave 30 days *after* the effective retirement date for all retirees regardless of type of retirement, system or whether there are any changes.

	UNI
Years of Service	Maximum UNUSED Sick Leave DAYS
0 - 1	0 - 15
1 - 2	16 - 30
2 - 3	31 - 45
3 - 4	46 - 60
4 - 5	61 - 75
5 - 6	76 - 90
6 - 7	91 - 105
7 - 8	106 - 120
8 - 9 9 - 10	121 - 135 136 - 150
10 - 11	151 - 165
11 - 12	166 - 180
12 - 13	181 - 195
13 - 14	196 - 210
14 - 15	211 - 225
15 - 16 16 - 17	226 - 240
16 - 17	241 - 255
17 - 18	256 - 270
18 - 19	271 - 285
19 - 20	286 - 300
20 - 21	301 - 315
21 - 22 22 - 23	316 - 330 331 - 345
23 - 24 24 - 25	346 - 360 361 - 375
25 - 26	376 - 390
26 - 27	391 - 405
27 - 28	406 - 420
28 - 29	421 - 435
29 - 30	436 - 450
30 - 31	451 - 465
31 - 32	466 - 480
32 - 33	481 - 495
33 - 34	496 - 510
34 - 35	511 - 525
35 - 36	526 - 540
36 - 37	541 - 555
37 - 38	556 - 570
38 - 39	571 - 585
39 - 40	586 - 600
40 - 39	601 - 615
41 - 42	616 - 630
42 - 43	631 - 645
43 - 44	646 - 660
44 - 45	661 -675

UNUSED Sick Leave Days	Retirement Credit 10 month Teachers & Employees	Retirement Credit 12 Month Employees
1 - 10	0	0
11 - 32	1	1
33 - 54	2	2
55 - 76	3	3
77 - 98	4	4
99 - 120	5	5
121 - 142	6	6
143 - 164	7	7
165 - 186	8	8
187 - 208	9	9
209 - 230	10	10
231 - 252	10	11
253 - 274	10	12
275 - 296	11	13
297 - 318	12	14
319 - 340	13	15
341 - 362	14	16
363 - 384	15	17
385 - 406	16	18
407 - 428	17	19
429 - 450	18	20
451 - 472	19	21
473 - 494	20	22
495 - 516	20	23
517 - 538	20	24
539 - 560	21	25
561 - 582	22	26
583 - 604	23	27
605 - 626	24	28
627 - 648	25	29
649 - 670	26	30

<u>Unused sick leave</u>: Leave available to the employee as sick leave during employment. No other unused leave balances (i.e. personal leave) may be reported as unused sick leave. Unused sick leave cannot be used to qualify a member for retirement or reduce an early retirement reduction.

Employers certify <u>all</u> unused leave days and report unused sick leave days to the Maryland State Retirement Agency

Maryland State Retirement Agency determines unused sick leave retirement credit.

Retirees may receive creditable service for unused sick leave if the member retires on or before 30 days after the member is separated from employment (§ 20-206). (Retirement type: ordinary disability, early or service retirement). Retirees may receive one month of creditable service for each 22 days of unused sick leave reported. And an additional month if they have 11 or more days remaining. Retirees are allowed a maximum of 15 days of unused sick leave for each year of service credit.

Retirees with over 45 years of service and 670 days of unused sick leave may receive more unused sick leave credit unless they have reached their plans maximum benefit.

DROP PARTICIPATION

Confirm with DROP Administrator mhampton@sra.state.md.us or 410-625-5687 eligibility to participate in DROP. Participation eligibility is based on creditable service. See System: LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS PENSION SYSTEM (LEOPS) and System: STATE POLICE RETIREMENT SYSTEM (SPRS)

LEOPS State

Police

Deferred Retirement Option Program* (DROP) Enrollment

Form 504 Form 756

Package

Notifies MSRA of intent to participate in DROP and duration of participation.

Participation date is the same date as retirement date. Form must be acknowledged by a notary public.

Retirement Application Form 98 Form 14

Form must be acknowledged by a notary public.

Binding Letter of Resignation Form 507 Form 506

Acknowledgement of Special Tax Notice

Beneficiary(ies) Proof of Birth

FILING DEADLINE: 30 days prior to retirement date.

Payroll: STOP reporting hours and contributions after retirement date.

Unused Sick Leave Credit: Adjust sick leave balance to remove unused sick leave reported to be applied to retirement benefit.

DEFERRED RETIREMENT OPTION PROGRAM DROP Withdrawal

LEOPS State Police

DROP Termination Package Form 505 Form 757

Notifies MSRA of intent to withdrawal

Election to Terminate DROP Participation Form 505.2 Form 757.2

Special Tax Notice Regarding Rollovers

Form 193 Trustee to Trustee Form for Rollovers

Form 85 Direct Deposit Form

Optional Forms:

Form 766.11 Tax Withholding Form IRS Form W-4P Federal Tax Withholding

Form 77 Change of Address

Form 4 Beneficiary Form or MySRPS secure portal

NOTIFICATION DEADLINE: 30 days prior to termination date.

ACTIVE DEATH BENEFITS

Form 28 Request for Certification of

Salary - Certifies annual salary, total unused sick days of deceased and payroll information.

The Maryland State Retirement and Pension System provides valuable survivor benefits to members who die while:

- Active on payroll, including paid leave or leave without pay less than 30 days
- Qualified MSRA approved leave of absence
- Performing qualified military duty

Death Certificate - official copy

Form 20A Physician's Medical Report – Required for line of duty death.

Salary figure must be accurate since it is the basis for determining beneficiary compensation. Benefit equals one year's salary plus any accumulated contributions and interest for active members.

MSRA will send beneficiary (ies) Form 32
Notification and Claim of Beneficiary. Form must be notarized and must be accompanied by an official copy of death certificate.

MSRA will make payment to the deceased member's beneficiary(ies) in accordance with §29-201 through §29-207 of the Annotated Code of Maryland based upon the information provided by the employing agency and the information on the deceased member's MSRA account.

MSRA will send a copy of form to beneficiary to be completed by physician.

REEMPLOYMENT AFTER RETIREMENT

No offers of reemployment should be discussed by the member with their employer prior to retirement.

The Annotated Code of Maryland §20-101 defines a "retiree" as an individual who has "separated from employment" with a participating employer and "retirement" means the grant of a retirement allowance after "separation from employment" with a participating employer.

Therefore, in order to retire, the retiree must be "separated from employment", and the employer must certify that such a separation has occurred.

Maryland law § 23-407 (d) requires a minimum of 45 days between their retirement date and the date rehired by a MSRPS participating employer.

MSRPS retirees are required by law (§ 23-407 (b)) to notify the retirement agency in writing of their intention to accept reemployment, name of employer and anticipated earnings.

Retirees who retire early or return to their same employer may be subjected to an earnings limitation. Retirees receiving a disability retirement may have their benefit suspended if they return to work. Encourage retiree to review the most current rules for reemployment.

Teacher Rehire/Retire Program: The Board of Education assigns coordinators the responsibility of rehiring retirees for this program. The Board will be subject to a penalty for failure to submit certification for reemployed retirees. Contact Megan Myers at 4 I 0-625-5608 or mmyers@sra.state.md.us.

Encourage retiree to contact MSRA prior to returning to reemployment with any participating employer.

SYSTEMS

ACPS

Alternate Contributory Pension Selection is an enhanced benefit provided under the Employees' /Teachers' Pension System established July 1, 2006. Provides a specified enhanced benefit to (1) State employees in the ECPS and ERS Bifurcated Plan (Plan C); (2) members of the TCPS and TRS Bifurcated Plan (Plan C); (3) eligible employees of those Participating Governmental Units that elected participation in the ACPS by June 30, 2007; and (4) eligible employees of Frederick County (withdrawn employer). **Closed June 30, 2011 to new members.**

CORS

Correctional Officers' Retirement System established 7/1/1974

ECPS/TCPS

Employees' Contributory Pension System/Teachers' Contributory Pension System established as of July 1, 1998 under the EPS/TPS to provide an enhanced benefit formula and limited compounded Cost of Living Adjustment. The ECPS currently consists of employers that did not elect the ACPS.

EPS/TPS

Employee's Pension System/Teachers' Pension System established January 1, 1980 as non-contributory plans. The EPS currently consists of employers who did <u>not</u> elect the ECPS (7/1/1998) or ACPS (7/1/2006). Additionally, those members who transferred from the Retirement Systems to the EPS/TPS after April 1, 1998 receive the original benefit formula established January 1, 1980.

ERS/TRS

Employees' Retirement System established 10/1/1941. Teachers' Retirement System (established 8/1/1927). Systems closed as of January 1, 1980. As of July 1, 1984 includes Plans A, B, and C (separate member contribution rates and COLAs). After December 31, 2004 members may not step down to a lesser Plan selection or transfer to a Pension System

JRS

Judges' Retirement System established 7/1/1969

LEOPS

Law Enforcement Officers' Pension System established 7/2/1990

LEOPS

Retirement system established 7/1/1989. Tier within LEOPS for those members transferred from the ERS that provides a higher benefit formula than the general LEOPS benefit formula and requires a higher member contribution. **Closed to new participants after December 31, 2004.**

LFPS

Local Fire and Police System established 7/1/1989. Tier within LFPS for those members who transferred from the ERS that provides a higher benefit formula than the LFPS benefit formula and requires a higher member contribution. **Retirement tier closed to new participants after December 31, 2004. Closed 7/1/08.**

LPP

Legislative Pension Plan established 1/13/1971

RCPB

Reformed Contributory Pension Benefit established July 1, 2011 for new members of the EPS/TPS. (CORS, LEOPS and SPRS – Reformed Benefit)

SPRS

State Police Retirement System established 7/1/1949

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

(Annotated Code of Maryland State Personnel and Pensions § 20-101)

Accumulated Contributions Amounts credited to a member's individual account. It includes the

member's contributions and regular interest.

AFC Average Final Compensation

The average annual earnable compensation computed as provided by

law § 20-204, 20-205 or 20-205.1 New members after 7/1/2011= 5 years Prior Members before 7/1/2011= 3 years

Annuity The part of the allowance derived from member's accumulated

contributions.

Basic Allowance Allowance computed without modification under 21-403

Salary History x Service Years x System Formula = Annual Retirement Allowance

BOT Maryland State Retirement Agency Board of Trustees

Break in Service Any break in employment in which the member did not actually work, use

paid leave or owe contributions for greater than 30 days

COLA Cost of Living Adjustment. May be awarded to retirees in July after one

full calendar year of retirement based on plan allowance and U.S.

Department of Labor's Consumer Price Index.

Creditable Service Service credit for each day worked and required contribution received.

Credit used in the calculation of the allowance that determines the dollar

amount of the member's benefit. Determines AMOUNT of benefit.

Contractual "Contractual employee" means an individual who provides personal services to a

participating employer for pay if <u>all</u> of the following conditions exist: (i) The services and pay are specified in a <u>current written</u> personal services agreement between the employer and an individual; (ii) There is an employer-employee relationship between the participating employer and the individual; and (iii) The individual does <u>not</u> receive any fringe <u>benefits</u>, except as provided by law or by statutorily authorized written policies adopted on or before November 6, 2017, which the employer has applied uniformly and which define a class of contractual

employees who are entitled to receive specified fringe benefits. COMAR

22.04.02.04 Personnel § 13-101

Deficiency Missed contributions or payroll reporting errors may result in an account

deficiency. A deficiency is the difference between the contribution amount

received and the amount expected; plus interest.

Defined Benefit The System is an employer sponsored defined benefit plan. A defined

benefit is defined by law and based on a formula using salary history and

duration of employment.

Salary History x Service Years x System Formula = Annual Retirement Allowance

Disability Member is <u>permanently</u> and totally disabled from performing their job

duties.

DROP Deferred Retirement Option Program – Open to SPRS and LEOPS only

Eligibility Service Service credit that determines the member's eligibility for a benefit.

Determines WHEN a member is eligible to retire.

Pension Systems: Members earn one (1) year of eligibility service during any fiscal year they work at least 500 regular hours, excluding overtime. Retirement Systems: Creditable and eligibility credit are the same.

"Emergency employee" means an individual who: (i) Is appointed by a **Emergency**

> participating employer to provide personal services on an emergency basis; (ii) Is employed for a nonrenewable period not to exceed 6 months; and (iii) Except as provided by law, does not receive any fringe benefits. COMAR 22.04.02.04

Full Cost Member pays the cost to fund the benefit the additional purchased

> service will provide. Purchases may be made only in the 12-month period preceding retirement. Purchase must be made while member is active on payroll or while on an SRA Approved Leave of Absence; prior to

retirement.

Former Member an individual, who was a MSRPS member, is not collecting a benefit (i.e.

retired, died) and is separated from employment beyond their

membership period (Most systems: 4 years, Teachers Retirement: 5

years)

Member An individual whom membership in MSRPS is a condition of employment,

> pays required contributions, is not collecting a benefit (i.e. retired, died) and is within their membership period (Most systems: 4 years, Teachers

Retirement: 5 years)

MSRA Maryland State Retirement Agency

MSRPS Maryland State Retirement and Pension System

Normal Cost Member pays missed contributions plus interest to-date of purchase. May

> purchase credit at any time during membership or while on an SRA approved leave of absence, prior to termination of membership or

retirement.

Permanent A permanent (part/full time) employee is budgeted to work at

least 500 hours, not including overtime, in a fiscal year.

Purchased Credit Service credit members may purchase for previous employment

Retiree Individual "separated from employment" with a MSRPS participating

employer and receiving a retirement benefit. Pensions § 20-101

Retirement Granting of a retirement allowance after "separation from employment"

with a participating employer.

Retirement Allowance A benefit payable in equal monthly installments for life of recipient.

Options § 21-403

SSIL Social Security Integration Level is the average of the Social Security

Taxable Wage Bases (SSTWB) for the last 35 years. The SSIL changes

annually effective January 1.

SSWB

Social Security Taxable Wage Base SSTWB with respect to each calendar year is the maximum amount of earnings for employees subject to tax under the Federal Insurance Contribution Act.

Temporary

"Temporary extra employee" means an individual who: (i) Provides personal services to a participating employer; (ii) Is employed for a <u>nonrenewable period not to exceed 6 months</u>; and (iii) Except as provided by law, does not receive any fringe benefits. COMAR 22.04.02.04. The State defines a temporary employee as including contractual or emergency employees (Personnel §1-101)

Unused Sick Leave

Leave available to the employee as sick leave <u>during</u> employment. No other unused leave balances (i.e. personal leave) may be reported as unused sick leave.

Vested

Refers to a member, separated from MSRPS employment, right to a future retirement benefit payable at normal retirement age for the years and service earned before termination. The majority of MSRPS members enrolled prior to 7/1/11 are vested after accumulating at least 5 years of eligibility service. Members enrolled after 7/1/11 are vested after accumulating at least 10 years of eligibility service.

Withdrawn Employer

Former Participating Governmental Unit that elected to withdraw from the State Retirement and Pension System

PLAN SUMMARIES

System: TEACHERS & EMPLOYEES Reformed Contributory Pension Benefit (RCPB) Status: Established 7/1/2011

Membership	Mandatory for permanent teachers and employees who are budgeted to work more than 500 hours in a fiscal year.		
Member Contributions	7% of annual compensation		
Average Final Compensation	Average of 5 highest consecutive years of earnings		
Vested Benefits	Eligibility: At least 10 years of eligibility service Allowance: Benefit payments begin at age 65 based on AFC at time of termination of employment. May qualify for a reduced benefit as early as age 60		
Service Retirement	Eligibility: Age 65 with 10 years eligibility service or Age + Eligibility Service years = 90 Allowance: 1.5% (.015) of AFC x creditable service		
Early Retirement	Eligibility: Age 60 and 15 years of service Allowance: Service benefit reduced 6% per year (.005 X months) under age 65 Maximum reduction 30%		
COLA	Limited to 2.5% for years system meets assumed interest rate, 1% for years assumed rate not met		
Ordinary Disability	Eligibility: 5 years of eligibility service if medical board certifies the member is permanently disabled with regard to the performance of their job duties and MSRPS BOT grants disability allowance Allowance: Service retirement benefit with creditable service and salary projected to age 65		
Accidental Disability	Eligibility: Permanently disabled as a direct result of an on the job injury. Must file within 5 years of the accident. Allowance: Annual benefit is 2/3 (.667) of AFC plus an annuity based on the members accumulated contributions. Allowance may not exceed a member's AFC.		
Active Death Benefit	Eligibility : 1 year of eligibility service, or in the course of duty Payable : Annual salary plus member's contributions with interest. Note: In lieu of lump sum payment can take Spouse Law Active Death Benefit if qualifications below are met.		
Spouse / Child Law Active Death Benefit	Eligibility: If the member 1. was eligible to retire 2. had at least 25 years of eligibility service or 3. was at least 55 years old with 15 years of eligibility service Payable: In lieu of active death benefit, spouse entitled to receive a lifetime monthly allowance based on an option 2 benefit. If no spouse, children under age 26 or disabled children at any age, shall receive 50% of what the member's basic allowance would have been, had the member been retired.		
Line of Duty Death Benefit	A single lump sum payment consisting of the member's contributions and interest paid to the designated beneficiaries. <i>PLUS</i> the spouse receives a monthly benefit equal to 2/3 of member's AFC. If there is no spouse, children will receive the payment until the youngest child attains the age of 26, lifetime benefit for disabled children, or if no spouse or child, dependent parent for life.		

System: TEACHERS & EMPLOYEES ALTERNATE CONTRIBUTORY PENSION SYSTEM (ACPS) Status: Established 7/01/2006 Closed to new members 6/30/2011

Membership	Mandatory for teachers and employees who were active as of 7/1/2006 to 6/30/2011 (closed)		
Member Contributions	7% of annual compensation		
Average Final Compensation	Average of 3 highest consecutive years of earnings		
Vested Benefits	Eligibility: At least 5 years of eligibility service Allowance: Benefit payments begin at age 62 based on AFC at time of termination of employment. May qualify for a reduced benefit as early as age 55.		
Service Retirement	Eligibility: 30 YEARS OF SERVICE <u>or</u> age 62 with 5 years eligibility service age 63 with 4 years eligibility service age 64 with 3 years eligibility service age 65 with 2 years eligibility service Allowance: 1.2% (.012) of AFC x creditable service up to 6/30/98 <u>plus</u> 1.8% (.018) of AFC x creditable service after 6/30/98		
Early Retirement	Eligibility: Age 55 and 15 years of service Allowance: Service benefit reduced 6% per year (.005 X months) under age 62 Maximum reduction 42%		
COLA	Limited to a 3% compounded COLA; Service after 7/1/2011 limited to 2.5% for years system assumed interest rate, 1% for years assumed rate not met		
Ordinary Disability	Eligibility: 5 years of eligibility service if medical board certifies the member is permanently disabled with regards to the performance of their job duties and MSRPS BOT grants disability allowance. Allowance: Service retirement benefit with creditable service and salary projected to age 62.		
Accidental Disability	Eligibility: Permanently disabled as a direct result of an on the job injury. Must file within 5 years of the accident. Allowance: Annual benefit is 2/3 (.667) of AFC plus an annuity based on the members accumulated contributions. Allowance may not exceed a member's AFC.		
Active Death Benefit	Eligibility: 1 year of eligibility service or death occurs in the performance of duty. Payable: Annual salary plus member's contributions with interest. Note: In lieu of lump sum payment can take Spouse Law Active Death Benefit if qualifications below are met.		
Spouse/ Child Law Active Death Benefit	Eligibility: If the member 1. was eligible to retire 2. had at least 25 years of eligibility service or 3. was at least 55 years old with 15 years of eligibility service Payable: In lieu of active death benefit, spouse entitled to receive a lifetime monthly allowance based on an option 2 benefit. If no spouse, children under age 26 or disabled children at any age, shall receive 50% of what the member's basic allowance would have been, had the member been retired		
Line of Duty Death Benefit	A single lump sum payment consisting of the member's contributions and interest paid to the designated beneficiaries. <i>PLUS</i> the spouse receives a monthly benefit equal to 2/3 of member's AFC. If there is no spouse, children will receive the payment until the youngest child attains the age of 26, lifetime benefit for disabled children, or if no spouse or child, dependent parent for life.		

System: TEACHERS & EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM (TRS/ERS)
Status: TRS established 8/1/1927, ERS established 10/1/1941 Closed to new members 1/1/80

	Mandatory for permanent members under the ERS and TRS plan (Closed 1/1/80)		
Membership			
Member Contributions	Plan A – 7% of annual compensation Plan B – 5% of annual compensation Plan C – Members whose employers didn't participate in the ECPS 0% up to SSWB 5% of compensation in excess of SSWB for the year Plan C – teachers, state employees or members whose employers elected to participate in ACPS and Reformed 7% of annual compensation (2% of elected ECPS)		
Average Final Compensation	Average of 3 highest years of earnings		
Vested Benefits	Eligibility: At least 5 years of eligibility service Allowance: Accrued allowance begins at age 60 based on service and salary at termination of employment.		
Service Retirement	Eligibility: At least age 60, regardless of creditable service or at least 30 years of service regardless of age. Allowance: AFC x Years of Service Note Plan C requires 2 part calculation. 55		
Early Retirement	Eligibility: At least 25 years of creditable service Allowance: Service benefit reduced 6% per year (.005 x months) under age 60 or 30 years, whichever is smaller – Maximum reduction is 30%		
COLA	Plan A – Unlimited annual compounded COLA Plan B – Limited to a maximum 5% annual compounded COLA Plan C – Based on a combination of unlimited or 5% maximum compounded cola and 3% of initial benefit – Noncontributory Pension System or 3% compounded cola Contributory Pension System, ACPS and Reformed.		
Ordinary Disability	Eligibility: 5 years of eligibility service if medical board certifies the member is permanently disabled with regards to the performance of their job duties and MSRPS BOT grants disability allowance. Allowance: Greater of normal service benefit or if member is under normal retirement age, lesser of 25% of AFC or normal service benefit with projected salary and service. OR 25% of AFS if member is normal retirement age.		
Accidental Disability	Eligibility: Permanently disabled as a direct result of an on the job injury. Must file within 5 years of the accident. Allowance: Annual benefit is 2/3 (.667) of AFC plus an annuity based on the members accumulated contributions. Allowance may not exceed a member's AFC.		
Active Death Benefit	Eligibility: 1 year of eligibility service or death occurs in the performance of duty. Payable: Lump sum annual salary plus member's contributions with interest.		
Spouse/Child Law Active Death Benefit	Eligibility: If the member 1. was eligible to retire 2. had at least 25 years of eligibility service or 3. was at least 55 years old with 15 years of eligibility service Payable: In lieu of active death benefit, spouse entitled to receive a lifetime monthly allowance based on an option 2 benefit. If no spouse, children under age 26 or disabled children at any age, shall receive 50% of what the member's basic allowance would have been, had the member been retired		
Line of Duty Death Benefit	A single lump sum payment consisting of the member's contributions and interest paid to the designated beneficiaries. <i>PLUS</i> the spouse receives a monthly benefit equal to 2/3 of member's AFC. If there is no spouse, children will receive the payment until the youngest child attains the age of 26, lifetime benefit for disabled children, or if no spouse or child, dependent parent for life.		

System: EMPLOYEES NON-CONTRIBUTORY PENSION SYSTEM (NCPS)
Status: Established 1/1/1980; Open *only* to PGUs who elected NOT to participate in the Contributory or ACPS

Status: Established 1	/1/1980; Open only to PGUs who elected NO		
Membership	Mandatory membership for employees of Prince George's County Government, Prince George's County Crossing Guards, City of Crisfield, Crisfield Housing Authority and Town of North Beach Withdrawn Employers: Anne Arundel County Community Action Committee, Caroline County Roads Board, Carroll County Government, Town of Elkton, Garrett County Commission, Garrett County Roads Board and Howard County Government		
Member	0% of annual contribution up to SSWB		
Contributions	5% of annual compensation in excess of the	e SSWB for the year	
Average Final	Member prior to 7/1/2011: Average of 3 hig		
Compensation	Member on or after 7/1/2011:Average of 5		
Compensation	Member prior to 7/1/2011:		
Vested Benefits	Eligibility: At least 5 years of eligibility service Allowance: Benefit payments begin at age 62 based on AFC at time of termination of employment. May qualify for a reduced benefit as early as age 55.	Member on or after 7/1/2011: Eligibility: At least 10 years of eligibility service Allowance: Benefit payments begin at age 65 based on AFC at time of termination of employment. May qualify for a reduced benefit as early as age 60.	
Service Retirement	Member prior to 7/1/2011: Eligibility: 30 Years of eligibility service OR Age 62 with 5 years eligibility service Age 63 with 4 years eligibility service Age 64 with 3 years eligibility service Age 65 with 2 years eligibility service	Member on or after 7/1/2011: Eligibility: Age 65 with 10 years eligibility service OR Age + Eligibility Service years = 90	
	Allowance: .8% (.008) of AFC up to SSIL x 1.5% (.015) x AFC in excess of		
Early Retirement	Member prior to 7/1/2011: Eligibility: Age 55 and 15 years of service Allowance: Service benefit reduced 6% per year (.005 X months) under age 62. Maximum reduction 42%	Member on or after 7/1/2011: Eligibility: Age 60 and 15 years of service Allowance: Service benefit reduced 6% per year (.005 X months) under age 65.Maximum reduction 30%	
COLA	Service accrued prior to 7/1/2011 limited to a maximum 3% COLA on initial benefit. Service after 7/1/2011 limited to 2.5% for years system meets assumed interest rate, 1% for years assumed rate not met		
Ordinary Disability	Eligibility: 5 years of eligibility service if medical board certifies the member is permanently disabled with regards to the performance of their job duties and MSRPS BOT grants disability allowance. Allowance: Service retirement benefit with creditable service projected and salary to normal retirement age		
Accidental Disability	Eligibility: Permanently disabled as a direct result of an on the job injury. Must file within 5 years of the accident. Allowance: Annual benefit is 2/3 (.667) of AFC plus an annuity based on the members accumulated contributions. Allowance may not exceed a member's AFC.		
Active Death Benefit	Eligibility: 1 year of eligibility service or death occurs in the performance of duty. Payable: Annual salary plus member's contributions with interest. Note: In lieu of lump sum payment can take Spouse/Child Law Active Death Benefit if qualifications below are met.		
Spouse/ Child Law Active Death Benefit	Eligibility : If the member 1. was eligible to retire 2. had at least 25 years of eligibility service or 3. was at least 55 years old with 15 years of eligibility service Payable : In lieu of active death benefit, spouse entitled to receive a lifetime monthly allowance based on an option 2 benefit. If no spouse, children under age 26 or disabled children at any age, shall receive 50% of what the member's basic allowance would have been, had the member been retired		
Line of Duty Death Benefit	A single lump sum payment consisting of the member's contributions and interest paid to the designated beneficiaries. <i>PLUS</i> the spouse receives a monthly benefit equal to 2/3 of member's AFC. If no spouse, children receive payment until youngest child attains age of 26, lifetime benefit for disabled children, or if no spouse or child, dependent parent for life.		

System: EMPLOYEES CONTRIBUTORY PENSION SYSTEM (ECPS)
Status: Established 7/1/1998; Open only to PGUs who elected NOT to participate in the ACPS

	Mandatory for active employees of Town of Emmitsburg, City of Frostburg, Town of		
Membership	Middleton and City of Taneytown.		
Member Contributions	2% of annual compensation		
Average Final	Member prior to 7/1/2011:Average of 3 highest consecutive years of earnings		
Compensation	Member on or after 7/1/2011: Average of 5 highest consecutive years of earnings		
•	Member prior to 7/1/2011: Member on or after 7/1/2011:		
Vested Benefits	Eligibility: At least 5 years of eligibility	Eligibility: At least 10 years of eligibility	
	service	service	
	Allowance: Benefit payments begin at	Allowance: Benefit payments begin at	
	age 62 based on AFC at time of	age 65 based on AFC at time of	
	termination of employment. May qualify	termination of employment. May qualify	
	for a reduced benefit as early as age 55.	for a reduced benefit as early as age 60.	
	Member prior to 7/1/2011:	Member on or after 7/1/2011:	
Service Retirement	Eligibility: 30 Years of eligibility service OR	Eligibility:	
	Age 62 with 5 years eligibility service Age 63 with 4 years eligibility service	Age 65 with 10 years eligibility service <u>OR</u> Age + Eligibility Service years = 90	
	Age 64 with 3 years eligibility service	Age + Eligibility Service years = 50	
	Age 65 with 2 years eligibility service		
	Allowance: 1.2% (.012) of AFC x creditable service up to 6/30/98		
	1.4% (.014) of AFC x creditable service after 6/30/98		
	Member prior to 7/1/2011: Eligibility: Age 55 and 15 years of service	Member on or after 7/1/2011: Eligibility: Age 60 and 15 years of service	
Early Retirement	Allowance: Service benefit reduced 6% per year (.005 X	Allowance: Service benefit reduced 6% per year (.005 X	
	months) under age 62. Maximum reduction 42%	months) under age 65 Maximum reduction 30%	
COLA	Service accrued prior to 7/1/2011 limited to a 3% compounded COLA. Service after		
	7/1/2011 limited to 2.5% for years system meets assumed interest rate, 1% for years		
	assumed rate not met		
Ondinam, Disability	Eligibility: 5 years of eligibility service if me		
Ordinary Disability	permanently disabled with regards to the performance of their job duties and MSRPS		
	BOT grants disability allowance.		
	Allowance: Service retirement benefit with creditable service and salary projected to		
	normal retirement age Eligibility: Permanently disabled as a direct result of an on the job injury. Must file		
Accidental Disability	within 5 years of the accident.	t result of all off the job injury. Must life	
Accidental Disability	Allowance: Annual benefit is 2/3 (.667) of A	AFC plus an annuity based on the members	
	1	•	
	accumulated contributions. Allowance may not exceed a member's AFC. Eligibility: 1 year of eligibility service or death occurs in the performance of duty.		
Active Death Benefit			
Active Beatin Benefit	Payable : Annual salary plus member's contributions with interest. Note: In lieu of lump sum payment can take Spouse Law Active Death Benefit if qualifications below are		
	met.		
	Eligibility: If the member 1. was eligible to retire	2. had at least 25 years of eligibility service or 3.	
Spouse/ Child Law Active	was at least 55 years old with 15 years of eligibi	lity service Payable: In lieu of active death	
Death Benefit	benefit, spouse entitled to receive a lifetime mor		
	no spouse, children under age 26 or disabled children at any age, shall receive 50% of what the		
Line of Duty Deeth	member's basic allowance would have been, ha		
Line of Duty Death	A single lump sum payment consisting of the		
Benefit	to the designated beneficiaries. <i>PLUS</i> the s		
	2/3 of member's AFC. If there is no spouse, children will receive the payment until the		
	youngest child attains the age of 26, lifetime benefit for disabled children, or if no		
	spouse or child, dependent parent for life.		

System: CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM (CORS) Status: Established 7/1/1974

	Mandatary mambarahin for normanant ampley	oos in cligible positions	
Membership	Mandatory membership for permanent employees in eligible positions.		
Member	State Personnel and Pensions § 25-201 5% of annual compensation		
Contributions	3 % of affilial compensation		
Average Final	Member prior to 7/1/2011: Average of 3 highest years of earnings		
Compensation	Member on or after 7/1/2011: Average of 5 highest years of earnings		
-	Member prior to 7/1/2011:	Member on or after 7/1/2011:	
Vested	5 years of creditable service payable at age	10 years of creditable service payable at age	
Benefits	55	55*	
		*Note: For a member who served as a maximum security attendant at Clifton T. Perkins Hospital Center and separated from employment before July 1, 2016, and does not resume employment in a position eligible for membership in the Correctional Officers' Retirement System, the vested allowance is payable at age 60.	
		dless of age, or age 55 for a correctional officer	
Service	with 5 years of service if a member prior to 7/1/	/2011 or 10 years of service if a member on or	
Retirement	after 7/1/2011.		
	Allowance: AFC x Years of Service /55 Eligibility: Generally N/A. Exception: if you worked @ Baltimore City Jail prior to 1/1/1991 for		
Early	at least 5 years and was CORS member on or after of 6/30/2006 the member has at least 10		
Retirement	years but less than 20 years of service.		
COLA	Service prior to 7/1/2011 Unlimited compounded COLA. Service on or after 7/1/2011 2.5% for years		
	system meets assumed interest rate, 1% for years assumed rate not met		
Ordinary Disability	Eligibility: 5 years of eligibility service if medical board certifies the member is permanently disabled with regards to the performance of their job duties and MSRPS BOT grants disability allowance. Allowance: Greater of normal service benefit or if member is under normal retirement age, lesser of 25% of AFC or normal service benefit with projected salary and service. OR 25% of AFS if member is normal retirement age.		
	Eligibility: Permanently disabled as a direct result of an on the job injury.		
Accidental	Allowance: Annual benefit is 2/3 (.667) of AFC plus an annuity based on the members		
Disability	accumulated contributions. Allowance may not exceed a member's AFC.		
Active Death Benefit	Eligibility: 1 year of eligibility service or death occurs in the performance of duty. Payable: Annual salary plus member's contributions with interest. In lieu of lump sum payment can take Spouse Law Active Death Benefit if qualifications below are met.		
Spouse/ Child Law Active Death Benefit	Eligibility: If the member 1. was eligible to retire 2. had at least 25 years of eligibility service or 3. was at least 55 years old with 15 years of eligibility service Payable: In lieu of active death benefit, spouse entitled to receive a lifetime monthly allowance based on an option 2 benefit. If no spouse, children under age 26 or disabled children at any age, shall receive 50% of what the member's basic allowance would have been, had the member been retired		
Line of Duty Death Benefit	A single lump sum payment consisting of the member's contributions and interest paid to the designated beneficiaries. <i>PLUS</i> the spouse receives a monthly benefit equal to 2/3 of member's AFC. If there is no spouse, children will receive the payment until the youngest child attains the age of 26, lifetime benefit for disabled children, or if no spouse or child, dependent parent for life.		

System: LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS PENSION SYSTEM (LEOPS) Status: Established 7/2/1990

	Mandatan, manharahin far namanan at amalaya	an in aliaible positions	
Membership	Mandatory membership for permanent employees in eligible positions.		
Memberomp			
Member Contributions	7% of annual compensation until reaches maximum 32.5 years of service credit. No member contributions paid after 32.5 years of creditable service credit earned		
Average Final	Member prior to 7/1/2011:Average of 3 highest consecutive years of earnings		
Compensation	Member on or after 7/1/2011: Average of 5 hig	hest consecutive years of earnings	
	Member prior to 7/1/2011:	Member on or after 7/1/2011:	
Vested	Eligibility: 5 years of eligibility service Allowance: Accrued retirement allowance	Eligibility: 10 years of eligibility service Allowance: Accrued retirement allowance	
Benefits	payable at age 50.	payable at age 50.	
	Eligibility: 25 years of service or age 50.	payable at age 60.	
Service	Allowance: 2% average of final compensation	for each year of creditable service up to a	
Retirement	maximum of 32.5 years. Members may not exce	eed 65% of their AFC.	
Early	N/A		
Retirement	IN/A		
COLA	Service prior to 7/1/2011 Up to 3% compounded. S	ervice on or after 7/1/2011 2.5% for years system	
	meets assumed interest rate, 1% for years assu	, ,	
	Eligibility: 5 years of eligibility service if medica		
Ordinary	disabled with regards to the performance of the	ir job duties and MSRPS BOT grants disability	
Disability	allowance.		
	Allowance: Service retirement benefit with creditable service projected and salary to age 50.		
Accidental	Maximum of 30 years Eligibility: Permanent disability from performing job duties and incapacity must have arisen		
Disability	out of, or in the course of, the actual performance of duty as certified by the MSRPS BOT.		
_	Allowance: Annual benefit is 2/3 (.667) of AFC plus an annuity based on the members		
	accumulated contributions.		
Ondinon Doodle	Allowance : If active member dies with less than 1 year of eligibility service and death does not occur in the line of duty, beneficiary receives a single payment consisting of member's		
Ordinary Death Benefit	contributions with interest. If active member dies with at least one but less than two years of		
Delielit	eligibility service and death does not occur in the line of duty, designated beneficiary receives a		
	single payment of 100% of salary at the time of death plus member's accumulated		
	contributions with interest.	•	
	Eligibility: 2 or more years of service and death was not in the line of duty		
Active Death	Allowance : A single lump sum payment consisting of member's contributions and interest. <i>PLUS</i> the spouse receives a monthly benefit equal to 50% of the ordinary disability retirement		
Benefit			
	allowance. If there is no spouse the children under the age of 26 will receive the payment until they attain the age of 26. Lifetime benefit for disabled child.		
Special Death	A single lump sum payment consisting of the member's contributions and interest paid to the		
Benefit	designated beneficiaries. PLUS the spouse rec		
	member's AFC. If there is no spouse, children v	. ,	
	attains the age of 26, lifetime benefit for disable parent for life.	a children, or il no spouse or child, dependent	
DROP	Permits eligible retirees to continue to work as a	a law enforcement officer while depositing their	
	_	rning 4% interest a year, compounded annually.	
	Voluntary participation is the lesser of: (1) 7 years maximum, (2) difference between 32 years		
	and member's years of service, or (3) term selected by member. Must have at least 25 years		
	but less than 32 years of creditable service.		

System: LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM Status: Established 7/2/1990 Closed 12/31/2004

	No new members after 1/1/2005.		
Membership			
Member	Plan A members - 7% of annual compensation		
Contributions	Plan B members - 5% of annual compensation Plan B members - 5% of annual compensation		
Contributions	Eligibility: 5 years of creditable service		
Vested Benefits	Allowance: Accrued retirement allowance payable at age 50.		
Average Final Compensation	Average of 3 highest years of earnings		
	Eligibility: 25 years of service regardless of age or age 50 regardless of		
Service Retirement	years of service.		
Retirement	Allowance : 2.3 average of final compensation for each year of creditable service up to 30 years. Plus 1% of AFC for service over 30 years of creditable service.		
	Service up to 30 years. Thus The Strike Old Service over 50 years of decitable service.		
Early Retirement	N/A		
COLA	Plan A – Unlimited compounded		
	Plan B – Limited to a maximum of 5% compounded COLA		
	Eligibility: 5 years of eligibility service if MSRPS BOT certifies the member is		
Ordinary	permanently disabled with regards to the performance of their job duties.		
Disability	Allowance: Service retirement benefit with minimum 25% of AFC.		
Accidental	Eligibility: Permanently disabled as a direct result of an on the job injury as certified		
Disability	by the MSRPS BOT.		
	Allowance: 2/3 of the AFC plus member's contribution as an additional annuity		
Ondinon Dooth	Allowance: If active member dies with less than 1 year of eligibility service and death does not occur in the line of duty beneficiary receives a single payment consisting of		
Ordinary Death Benefit			
Denent	member's contributions with interest. If active member dies with at least one but less than two years of eligibility service and death does not occur in the line of duty,		
	designated beneficiary receives a single payment of 100% of salary at the time of		
	death plus accumulated member's contributions with interest		
	Eligibility: 2 or more years of service and death was not in the line of duty		
Active Death	Allowance: A single lump sum payment consisting of the member's contributions and		
Benefit	interest. PLUS the spouse receives a monthly benefit equal to 50% of the ordinary		
	disability retirement allowance. If there is no spouse, children under age 26 will receive		
	the payment until child attains the age of 26, lifetime benefit for disabled children or dependent parent for life.		
Special Death	A single lump sum payment consisting of the member's contributions and interest paid		
Benefit	to the designated beneficiaries. <i>PLUS</i> the spouse receives a monthly benefit equal to		
	2/3 of member's AFC. If there is no spouse, children under age 26 will receive the		
	payment until child attains the age of 26, lifetime benefit for disabled children or if no		
DDOD	spouse or child, dependent parent for life.		
DROP	Permits eligible retirees to continue to work as a law enforcement officer while		
	depositing their monthly retirement allowance in an account earning 4% interest a year, compounded annually. Voluntary participation is the lesser of: (1) 7 years		
	maximum, (2) difference between 32 years and member's years of service, or (3) term		
	selected by member. Must have at least 25 years but less than 32 years of service.		
	The state of the s		

System: STATE POLICE RETIREMENT SYSTEM (SPRS) Status: Established 7/1/1949

Status: Established			
Membership	Mandatory for a police employee or cadet of the M		
Member Contributions	8% of annual compensation until member reaches maximum benefit at 28 years of creditable service credit. No member contributions paid after 28 years of creditable service credit earned.		
	Member prior to 7/1/2011: Average of 3 highest years of earnings		
Average Final			
Compensation	Member on or after 7/1/2011:Average of 5 highes	st years of earnings	
Vested Benefits	Member prior to 7/1/2011 5 years of creditable service	Member on or after 7/1/2011 10 years of creditable service	
	Allowance: accrued retirement payable at age 50		
	Member prior to 7/1/2011	Member on or after 7/1/2011	
Service	22 years of creditable service regardless of age,	25 years of creditable service regardless of age,	
Retirement	or age 50.	or age 50.	
	28 years of service maximum. Mandatory retireme		
	year of creditable service up to a maximum of 28 y		
	Member's annual basic allowance may not exceed	I 71.4% of AFC	
Early Retirement	N/A		
COLA	Service earned before 7/1/2011 Unlimited, comp	ounded COLA. Service on or after 7/1/2011 2.5% for	
	years system meets assumed interest rate, 1% for	years assumed rate not met	
	Eligibility: 5 years of eligibility service if MSRPS E	BOT certifies the member is permanently disabled	
Ordinary	with regards to the performance of their job duties.	•	
Disability	Allowance: computed as a service retirement bas	ed on service retirement formula. Benefit cannot be	
•	less than 35% of AFC.		
	Earnings Limitations : retirees have an earning limitation on any employment with a participating		
	employer.		
	Eligibility: There is no minimum service credit requirement. Totally and permanently incapacitated for		
Special	duty arising out of or in the course of the actual performance of duty without willful negligence by		
Disability	member and certified by the medical board		
-	Allowance: Annual benefit is 2/3 (.667) of AFC plus an annuity based on the member's accumulated		
	contributions. Allowance may not exceed a member's AFC.		
	Eligibility and Allowance:		
Ordinary Death		es not occur in the line of duty - beneficiary receives	
Benefit	a single payment of member's contributions with interest.		
	At least one but less than two years of eligibility service and death does not occur in the line of duty,		
	designated beneficiary receives a single payment	of 100% of salary at the time of death plus	
	member's accumulated contributions with interest.		
	Eligibility: 2 or more years of service and death was not in the line of duty		
Active Death	Allowance: A single lump sum payment consisting of member's contributions and interest. PLUS		
Benefit	spouse receives a monthly benefit equal to 1/2 of	the member's AFC. If there is no spouse, children	
	will receive the payment until the youngest child at	tains the age of 18, lifetime benefit for disabled	
	children or if no spouse or child, dependent parent for life.		
Special Death	Eligibility: Death occurred in the line of duty.		
Benefit	Allowance: A single lump sum payment consisting	g of member's contributions and interest. PLUS	
	spouse receives a monthly benefit equal to 2/3 of	the member's AFC. If there is no spouse, children	
	under age 18 will receive the payment until child a		
	children or if no spouse or child, dependent parent		
DROP		tate trooper while depositing their monthly retirement	
		ir, compounded annually. Voluntary participation is	
		ge 60 and member's age, (3) difference between 32	
	years and member's years of service, or (3) term s		

System: JUDGES RETIREMENT SYSTEM (JRS)
Status: Established 7/1/1969

	Mandatan fan iudaan af tha Diatriat Count Cinavit C	Parish Carried of Annuals, and Carried of Currellal	
Mambarahin	Mandatory for judges of the District Court, Circuit Court, Court of Appeals, and Court of Special		
Membership	Appeals; members of the State Workers' Compensation Commission; and, full time masters in		
Manakan	chancery and juvenile causes appointed on or before June 30, 1989.		
Member	8% of annual compensation for all members up to 16 years of service; after 16 years members no		
Contributions	longer contribute.		
	Member before 7/1/12: Immediate vesting, with Member after 7/1/2012: After 5 years, payments		
Vested Benefits	payments beginning at age 60 begin at age 60		
	Allowance: Based on the creditable service accrue		
	of active judge/commissioner at time of retirement.	For masters, the salary is that master's salary at	
	time of termination of membership		
	Eligibility: Age 60, regardless of service. Members	s must retire at age 70 as required by	
Service	Article IV, section 3 of the Maryland Constitution.		
Retirement			
	Allowance : 2/3 of the salary of active judge for 16	years of membership. Benefit is	
	prorated if service is less than 16 years.		
Early Retirement			
	N/A		
COLA	Retiree benefits are recalculated when the salary of active judge/commissioner is increased. Retired		
	Masters receive an increase based on the percentage of increase provided to active Circuit Court		
	judges.		
	Eligibility: Permanently disabled as determined by MSRPS BOT; no minimum service requirement.		
Ordinary	Allowance: Service retirement calculation based on the members' actual length in service. However,		
Disability	members with at least 3 years of eligibility service receive no less than 1/3 of annual compensation of		
	an active judge of that court.		
Accidental			
Disability	N/A		
	50% of the retirement allowance that would have been payable were the member alive and eligible to		
Active Death	receive a retirement allowance payable to the spouse. If the member does not have a spouse at the		
Benefit	time of death, payable to child (ren) under the age of 26 - each child receives equal share until age		
	26. Payment ends when last child reaches age 26. If no spouse or children under age 26, receives		
	annual salary plus member's contributions and interest.		
Survivor Benefits	If the member is married at time of retirement or ha		
	designate the spouse or if no spouse, children under		
	50% lifetime benefit (ends for child at age 26) at the death of the retiree. If no spouse or children		
	under age 26 at time of retirement, the member may elect one of several optional reduced benefit		
	allowances.		

System: LEGISLATIVE PENSION PLAN (LPP) Status: Established 1/8/2003

Membership	Mandatory for legislators on or after January 14, 2015
Member	7% mandatory contributions of annual compensation for all members up to 22 years and three months
Contributions	of service. After that a member is no longer required to contribute to his/her retirement plan.
	Eligibility: Members are vested with eight years of service. Eligible to receive vested benefit at
Vested Benefits	service retirement age.
	Eligibility: Age 60 if earned creditable service before 1/14/2015. Age 62 if no earned creditable
Service	service before 1/14/2015. Member must have at least eight years of service
Retirement	Allowance: 3% of salary for each year of service for a maximum of 22 years and 3
	Months (2/3 of salary)
Early Retirement	Eligibility: At least age 50 with earned creditable service before 1/14/2015 or age 55 with no earned creditable service before 1/14/2015 and eight years of service.
	Allowance: Service retirement benefit reduced 6% per year (.005 X month) under service retirement
	age. Maximum reduction 60% if retire at age 50 or 42% if retire at age 55.
COLA	Retiree's benefit is recalculated when the salary of active legislator is increased.
	Eligibility: Permanently disabled after eight years of service.
Ordinary Disability	Allowance: Service benefit earned at time of disability.
Accidental Disability	N/A
Active Death Benefit	Less than eight years of service - a lump sum benefit of annual salary plus member's contributions with interest. Eight years or more of service - surviving spouse receives 50% of the retirement allowance that would have been payable were the member alive and eligible to receive a retirement
Denem	allowance. Or lump sum of annual salary plus member's contributions and interest. If not married, lump sum benefit.
Survivor Benefit	If the member is married at time of retirement, the member must designate the spouse for a 50% lifetime benefit. If the member is not married may designate a beneficiary for a monthly lifetime benefit or multiple beneficiaries for a lump sum payment. If the member marries or remarries during retirement, these alternate designations are voided and the spouse becomes the beneficiary.



Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date:

February 10, 2025

Submitted by:

Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator Regine Watson. Town Clerk

Item Title: Bostwick House Update | Community Activation Event | February 2025

Discover Bostwick | An update on the community activation event planned for May 5, 2025 (12 PM – 3 PM)

Work Session Item [X] Council Meeting Item [X]

Documentation Attached:

Recommended Action:

INFORMATION ONLY: This is an update to give the Council more information about the planned event on the exterior of Bostwick House. This will allow residents to understand the site's history and significance.

Overview and Summary for the Town Council: Discover Bostwick Event

Event Title: Discover Bostwick

Date/Time: Saturday, May 3, 2025, 12:00 – 3:00 PM

Partners:

- M-NCPPC Prince George's County Placemaking Section (PGC Placemaking)
- 2. Town of Bladensburg
- 3. University of Maryland Historic Preservation Program

Theme:

"Contextualizing Bostwick for the Current Community in 2025"

Event Summary: The Discover Bostwick event will highlight the historical and cultural significance of the Bostwick property while engaging the local community in a family-friendly, interactive outdoor event. Activities will be primarily focused on the lawn and include tours of the orchard and interior displays showcasing the property's history.

Event Offerings:

- Vendors Artisans/Makers: Small, local businesses and makers will offer items for sale.
- **Food Options:** Local food trucks will be on-site, with necessary applications and health inspections coordinated in advance.
- Music: Performances from musical artists, DJs, or school groups will be featured.
- Arts: Collaborative arts-related activities in partnership with local arts organizations.
- Local/Cultural Organizations: Participation from local nonprofits and groups, including the library, Anacostia Watershed Trust, Eco City Farms, UMD, M-NCPPC Port Towns team, and Sankofa Arts on a Roll.
- Children's Activities: Games and activities designed to engage young attendees.

Planning Leadership: Ray Jefferies and Regine Watson are leading the project. They will provide updates on the event's scale and scope and coordinate with food vendors and other contributors to ensure a successful event.

Significance: This event serves as the launch of the community engagement process

Section 5, Item H.

recommended by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) in its Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) report, which was shared with the Council on January 13, 2025. It aligns with the broader goal of fostering community connections and awareness of Bostwick's historical and cultural value.

Next Steps: The Town Administrator is available to address any questions or provide additional information about the event planning process and logistics.

This event promises to be an exciting opportunity to bring the community together while showcasing Bostwick's rich history in a contemporary context.

Budgeted Item: Yes [] No [] NA	Continued Date:
Budgeted Amount:	
One-Time Cost: NA	
Ongoing Cost: NA	
Council Priority: Yes [] No []	Approved Date:



Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date:

February 10, 2025

Submitted by:

Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator

Item Title: Strategic Plan Update | February 2025

This item outlines the plan to update the Town's Strategic Plan.

Work Session Item [X] Council Meeting Item [X]

Documentation Attached: Strategic Plan 2016-2021

ICMA Report on Strategic Planning

Recommended Action:

This has been provided for Council consideration, the appointment of members of the Strategic Planning Committee, and general council input.

Summary: The Town of Bladensburg's **2016-2021 Strategic Plan** established key priorities in **Economic Development, Public Safety, Infrastructure, and Collaboration and partnerships**, serving as a guiding framework for decision-making and resource allocation. Due to the pandemic and management transitions, several initiatives were delayed or adapted, necessitating a formal review of accomplishments and remaining priorities.

To ensure alignment with the Town's current needs and future vision, the Town Administrator proposes initiating the process to **update the Strategic Plan**. This effort will include:

- Assessing the progress made under the existing plan
- Engaging residents, businesses, and stakeholders in the development of new strategic goals
- Aligning the plan with fiscal sustainability and potential alternative funding sources
- **Undertaking a competitive bid process** to hire a consultant for plan development, with options presented to the Council in the Fall

The updated Strategic Plan will guide Bladensburg's policy and budget priorities over the next five years, ensuring that services, infrastructure improvements, and economic initiatives reflect the community's evolving needs. A copy of the recent ICMA report on Strategic Planning in Small Communities, which has been included to provide some additional information, is attached. This will help to provide more information on the strategic planning process and models of what other counties and cities have done throughout the Country,

Next Steps:

- 1. Council Approval to proceed with the Strategic Plan review and update process.
- 2. **Development of an RFP** to solicit proposals for a strategic planning consultant.
- 3. **Public Engagement Strategy** to gather input from residents, businesses, and key stakeholders. Appoint and engage a Strategic Planning Committee.
- 4. Consultant Selection in 2025, with recommendations presented to the Council.

The Plan Development and Implementation with the Council and Town Administrator.	Action Plan will be completed in coordination
Council approval is requested to proceed with these on past successes and effectively plan for the future background information and facilitate Council questions.	This summary is intended to provide
Budgeted Item: Yes [] No [] NA	Continued Date:
Budgeted Amount:	
One-Time Cost: TBD	
Ongoing Cost: NA	
Council Priority: Yes [] No []	Approved Date:

Town of Bladensburg

Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2016 to 2021









March 2017

Prepared for the Town of Bladensburg, Maryland by Management Partners





Table of Contents

Background and Methodology	1
Vision	3
Mission	4
Core Values	5
Goal Area A – Economic Development	6
Goal Area B – Police and Public Safety	8
Goal Area C – Infrastructure and Roads	9
Goal Area D – Collaboration and Partnerships	11
Conclusion	13



This Page Purposely Left Blank



Background and Methodology





The historic Bostwick House, built in 1746, is located in Bladensburg.

Introduction

The Bladensburg Strategic Plan includes the vision, mission, core values, goals and priorities that will guide resource allocation and work planning for the next five years. Success measures, which will be useful in tracking progress, are included for each goal. Accompanying the Strategic Plan is a separate document that specifies the activities and tasks required to implement the priorities associated with each of the goals.

Strategic Planning Process and Workshop

The process for creating Bladensburg's first strategic plan began with individual interviews with members of Council, the interim town administrator and clerk, along with directors and managers. Interviewees shared their perspectives on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) facing the Town. The key themes that emerged from the SWOT analysis were used to inform a community input session facilitated by Management Partners.

The Mayor and town administrator conducted a follow-up community input session, and surveyed community members and business owners about their ideas for the future of Bladensburg. The multiple forums and opportunities for community and stakeholder input were used by the Town Council to understand the primary issues of importance among their constituents. A summary of the themes, along with data on current

About Bladensburg

9,640 - Population estimate in 2015

1.01 square miles – Total area of the town

3,826 – Number of total housing units

91% - Percentage of population that are minority



socio-economic trends, was developed as background information for a workshop with members of the Council, the administrator and directors. The strategic planning workshop was held in November 2016. This document is the result of that session.



Vision Section 5, Item I.

Vision



The vision is a statement of what Bladensburg will be in the future.

Photo: The Peace Cross, a WWI memorial dedicated in 1925

The Town of Bladensburg is a vibrant and exciting destination that offers superior services and opportunities to all community stakeholders in a clean and safe environment, promoting redevelopment, investment and diversity.



Mission Section 5. Item I.

Mission



The mission is a statement of purpose that defines what the Town stands for. It directs the day-to-day actions for the Town Council and employees.

Bladensburg is an ethical and responsive government that provides high-quality customer service committed to creating a culturally and economically viable community.

Incorporated in 1854

Council-Manager form of government

The Mayor and Council members serve four-year terms

Council members are elected from and represent two Wards



Core Values Section 5, Item 1.

Core Values



Values drive the organizational culture and are the operating principles that govern the actions and behaviors of leaders and employees of the Town.

Bladensburg CARES exemplifies the values we hold in the delivery of excellent public service to residents, property owners and stakeholders of the Town.

Collaboration – We value effective partnerships.

Accountability – We recognize our individual and collective roles and responsibility for service and program delivery.

Responsiveness – We value prompt customer service.

Ethics and Efficiency – We are ethical and efficient in our operations.

Service Excellence to the Community – We value efficient, high quality service in everything we do.



Goal Area A – Economic Development



Position the Town to be a competitive destination for future economic development/ redevelopment opportunities in the Prince George's County and Greater Washington, D.C region.

Photo: The Publick Playhouse is one of two remaining art deco theatres in Prince George's County.

Success Measures

- Complete and adopt an economic development and marketing plan
- Update and revise housing and property maintenance regulations
- Create and host a first annual signature event

Objective: To improve the economic sustainability of the Town through sound practices and policies.

Strategies

- 1. Develop an economic development/redevelopment plan for key commercial areas in the Town (Coordinate with Collaboration and Partnerships, priority #10).
- 2. Identify and explore annexation alternatives and opportunities to expand the tax base of the Town.
- 3. Work with the State legislators, Maryland National Capital Park and Planning, and Prince George's County Planning Department to create and pass legislation that will provide Bladensburg with greater zoning and land use authority.
- 4. Develop policies to attract quality housing opportunities.



- 5. Develop a marketing plan to promote and position Bladensburg as a commercial business destination, attract investment opportunities, and address job creation and workforce development.
- 6. Market and preserve the historic and cultural assets of the Town and region to attract visitors to Bladensburg.
- 7. Create and host an annual signature event for the Town.
- 8. Develop inclusive policies, procedures and programs that promote sustainability.
- 9. Develop and expand partnerships (local, regional and state) that will support increased economic development.



Goal Area B – Police and Public Safety



Ensure that public safety services and operations meet and exceed the needs of the public and national standards.

Success Measures

- Percentage of Police
 Department assessment recommendations
 completed within budget
- Percentage of public safety initiatives completed with partner support
- Percentage of survey respondents indicating pedestrian connectivity is good or excellent
- Percentage of survey respondents rating community policing as good or excellent

Objective: Use best practices to enhance the public safety of the community.

Strategies

- 1. Expand the Police Department's facilities to better meet the needs of the department and the community.
- 2. Improve community-based policing and outreach to establish and build relationships.
- 3. Develop and enhance partnerships with local, county, regional and national public safety agencies, as determined by the needs of the community.
- 4. Assess the need for additional street lighting.
- 5. Improve the connectivity of pedestrian and vehicle traffic through enhanced traffic safety measures (Coordinate with Infrastructure and Roads, priority #6).
- 6. Update the Property Maintenance Code to reflect the needs of the community.



Goal Area C - Infrastructure and Roads



Promote multi-modal access to and within the Town and provide well maintained public infrastructure.

Success Measures

- Complete and adopt a Stormwater Management Plan
- Percentage of capital improvement projects completed as budgeted
- Percentage of gateway projects completed
- Complete and adopt a Complete Streets Plan

Objective: Assess infrastructure and road conditions and prepare development, maintenance and funding plans.

Strategies

- 1. Conduct a baseline conditions assessment of all buildings and facilities owned by the Town.
- 2. Advocate for the development of a Stormwater Management Plan.
- 3. Develop a Capital Improvement Plan to fund facilities maintenance, purchase equipment and construct new infrastructure;
- 4. Assess the need for traffic improvements, including traffic calming and safety alternatives for streets maintained by the Town.
- 5. Create a sense of place for key gateways and development areas by identifying the highest and best uses and accompanying improvements, including signage, landscaping, lighting, street furniture, etc.





6. Develop a Complete Streets Plan to support multimodal transportation access and options (Coordinate with Police and Public Safety, priority #4).



Goal Area D – Collaboration and Partnerships



Develop effective local, regional and national partnerships to enhance the sustainability of Bladensburg.

Success Measures

- Percentage of respondents rating the cleanliness of the waterfront as good or excellent
- Percentage of historic projects completed with partner participation
 - o Funding
 - o In-kind resources
- Percentage of workforce development opportunities resulting from partnerships

Objective: Cultivate new and grow existing partnerships with public, private, non-profit and government organizations to support a thriving community.

Strategies

- 1. Work with and encourage the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning to identify ways to promote Bladensburg waterfront recreational opportunities and increase the number of visitors to the park.
- 2. Partner with Prince George's County and Maryland agencies to protect Bladensburg's historic and cultural assets.
- 3. Identify and build relationships to increase workforce development opportunities.



- Percentage of survey respondents rating social media outreach as good or excellent
- Complete and adopt a comprehensive land use and zoning plan master plan

- 4. Support the expansion of cultural events and celebrations, especially in the Town of Bladensburg.
- 5. Increase and strengthen existing partnerships.*
- 6. Improve and strengthen relationships with county, state and federal legislatures and agencies.
- 7. Improve outreach to educational institutions and community organizations.
- 8. Expand social media networks and platforms to inform and promote outreach to residents and stakeholders.
- 9. Partner with the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the Prince George's County Planning Department to develop a master plan for Bladensburg (Coordinate with Economic Development, priority #1).



^{*} Note: Potential partnership organizations include, but are not limited to: Prince George's County Redevelopment Authority, Prince George's County Chamber of Commerce, Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation, the Maryland Department of Commerce, Prince George's County Planning Department, Maryland Municipal League, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, National League of Cities, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

Conclusion Section 5, Item 1.

Conclusion



This Strategic Plan represents the "soul and spirit" of what Bladensburg aspires to become as a result of input and discussions between the Town, residents and stakeholders. The goals, objectives, and four strategic priorities as identified by the community include:

- Economic Development
- Police and Public Safety
- Infrastructure and Roads, and
- Collaboration and Partnerships

The goal areas encompass the overarching priorities articulated by the Town Council and will serve as a guide for budget priorities and how services are delivered to Bladensburg residents, property owners and visitors over the next five years.

A separate Implementation Action Plan will be developed and provided to the Town Administrator. It will describe the sequence of actions required to carry out each strategy associated with the goal areas. The action plan places an emphasis on seeking alternative sources of funding to assist with implementing the Strategic Plan while ensuring the fiscal sustainability of the Town.

Bladensburg Town Council

Walter L. James, Jr.

Mayor

Cris MendozaCouncil Member, Ward 1

Selwyn D. Bridgeman *Council Member, Ward 1*

Walter Ficklin Council Member, Ward 2

Beverly HallCouncil Member, Ward 2

Town Administrator
Debi Sandlin



Conclusion Section 5, Item 1.

Town of Bladensburg

Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2016 to 2021





STRATEGIC PLANNING IN SMALL COMMUNITIES A MANAGER'S MANUAL

September 2022

STEPHANIE DEAN DAVIS, Ph.D.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



and Control of the co

Prior to her position with Virginia Tech, Davis served in local government for 20 years as a budget and management analyst; finance, human resources, and information technology director; and as vice president/consultant for a national consulting firm. Her research interests include public sector budgeting, regional collaboration, and inter-local relations.

Davis holds a Ph.D. in public policy and administration, a master of public administration, and a bachelor of science in economics. She serves on the Commission on Local Government for the state of the Virginia, the GFOA Budgeting for 2020 and Beyond Task Force, and GFOA's Educational Advisory Committee.

Connect with Stephanie:

sddavis@vt.edu

This report was completed as part of ICMA's Local Government Research Fellowship program. ICMA Research Fellows are practitioners and academics that conduct action-oriented research addressing important trends, drivers, and issues facing local governments. Their work advances ICMA's strategic priority to provide thought leadership and resources that support members and other local government stakeholders in creating and sustaining thriving communities throughout the world.

Table of Contents

4 Foreword

5 Introduction

- 5 Report Organization
- 5 Overview of the Research Report and Process

7 Why Do Strategic Planning?

- 7 As an Accountability Tool
- 7 As a Prioritization Tool
- 8 As a Communication Tool
- 8 Organizational Capacity Challenges In Small Communities
 - 8 Financial Capacity
 - 9 Administrative Capacity
 - 9 Leadership Capacity

11 Strategic Planning in Action

11 Initial Steps for Developing the Strategic Plan

- 11 Developing Leadership Support
- 12 Establishing a Strategic Planning Committee
- 13 Determining the Level of Community Engagement
- 14 Determining Preferences for Facilitation
- 14 Considering the Costs and Funding Available
- 15 Conducting a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC) Analysis
- 16 Planning for the Logistics
- 17 Structuring the Retreat

18 Developing the Strategic Plan

- 18 Developing the Mission
- 18 Developing the Vision
- 18 Establishing Values
- 19 Developing Goals
- 20 Developing Strategies

22 We Have a Strategic Plan, Now What?

- 22 Adopting the Strategic Plan
- 23 Reporting on Progress
- 24 Linking to the Budget
- 24 Updating the Strategic Plan

26 Conducting Performance Management

- 26 What is Performance Management?
 - 26 Identify Benchmark Communities
 - 27 Identify Common Questions
 - 27 Prepare for Ad Hoc Requests
 - 27 Consider What Types of Measures to Use

28 Case Studies/Best Practices

- 28 Mariposa County, California
- 29 Town of Vinton, Virginia
- 30 City of Stevenson, Washington
- 31 Village of Lindenhurst, Illinois
- 32 Town of Rolesville, North Carolina

34 Appendix A: Full Survey Results

- 45 References
- **46 Photo Credits**

Foreword

ike everything else in the time of the pandemic, strategic planning has become more difficult. Between the intensely partisan and divisive politics of 2020 and the complete uncertainty of budget numbers, thinking about mission statements or visionary goals seems superfluous to many elected officials and nonsensical to others. Elected officials find themselves inundated at public hearings by residents demanding answers to national COVID policies, when the virus will be stopped, or when they can go back to their regular life. Residents want to debate the merits of critical race theory and how to address an individual's preferred pronouns in school. Meanwhile, making sure basic services or needs are met or that employees have what is needed to do their work becomes secondary to the headline of the day or the budget crisis du jour.

Who has the time or energy to think about what the community would look like if it were perfect when there is so much energy focused on what is wrong, wrong, wrong in this very moment? Yet, somehow, good government must move past what is wrong and refocus energy on what is right—and what is possible. Our communities are places of unity, cohesion, and pride. In our lifetime, there has never been a harder time to find consensus on a future vision and remain focused on local priorities. Strategic planning, linked to the locality's budget process, allows facts to be known and shared, goals to be established, and priorities to be set. Through this process, small communities can remember what makes them unique, focus their efforts on what unites them, and move toward a better future, and do so in a way that pulls the community closer, rather than drives it apart.

In 2021, in the midst of so much antagonism and angst, ICMA funded this fellowship to help managers remember what they already know—our time and energy, as well as our budgets, should reflect what matters to our

community and what makes the community a better place. Dr. Stephanie Davis, with local government budgeting experience in localities small and large, serving as a professor in the School of Public and International Affairs at Virginia Tech, was the ideal person to bring us all back around to what matters. Strategic planning - that involves the community, incorporates the unique vision and goals of the community, is agreed to by the elected body, and tied firmly to our budgets — will keep residents, staff, and elected representatives focused on the business, as well as the vision, of government and how to make the community a better place. Davis uses data from communities around the country to show the current status of strategic planning in small communities and best practices to refocus the process. She knows of what she speaks. She has facilitated these retreats and held the hands of many managers as they navigate this tumultuous time and sacred duty.

Strategic planning and a better budget process won't solve all your community's problems. But it will help your community remember that while the national debates and discussions over issues of incredible importance matter deeply to us, good governance must go on.

Revenues must be predicted, budgets balanced, bills paid, and services rendered. And, if we want to be more than we are already, we must do these things with a future in mind. Otherwise, our community is stagnant. So, in this time of chaos and noise, the way forward is simple and elegant. Processes already exist to assist local governments in refocusing their energies on their mission, vision, and values. This study will help each of us to remember what we know and to find additional tools to do our budgeting and strategic planning better.



Sara McGuffin Town Manager Amherst, Virginia

Introduction

66 If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else. 97

Yogi Berra, former New York Yankees catcher

or many local government managers, the COVID-19 pandemic has shifted the priorities of the local government to mitigation and response to the public health crisis. The ability to set aside time with elected officials, staff, and other key stakeholders to develop a plan for action is severely limited. Quite frankly, strategic planning is just not a priority.

But at some point, strategic planning should be considered a priority. In my experience with small communities in a challenging area of the country, the ability to prioritize resources is essential *because of the lack of resources*. Strategic planning is a necessity to align human and financial resources with the priorities of the community.

A strategic plan is a tool for you, your elected officials, and your residents for the effective and efficient delivery of services in your community. The strategic plan provides you and your elected officials with the answer to the question "Why are we doing this?" The strategic plan is the elected official's vision for the community and provides the guide for budgeting new resources or reallocating existing ones. Whether created through formal or informal processes, complicated or simple, a strategic plan is unique and tailored to fit your community's needs.

This report is intended for first-time administrators and/ or those working in communities without a strategic plan, specifically for those in small communities with populations 20,000 and below. It provides an overview of the benefits of having a strategic plan from managers who have them, use them, and encourage them. Most importantly, this report provides managers with guidelines on "how to" and items to consider before starting the process. The case studies at the end of the report provide detailed information directly from small community managers on how they built the case for, created, and implemented their own strategic plan.

Report Organization

This report is composed of five sections. Why Do Strategic Planning provides an overview of the benefits, including utilizing the plan as an accountability tool, a prioritization tool, and a communication tool. Strategic Planning in Action provides the reader with process guidance, examples, and key questions to consider when moving forward with a strategic plan process. We Have a Strategic Plan, Now What? details steps of adoption, updates, reporting

on progress, and linking to the budget. **Conducting Performance Management** introduces performance management and how it overlaps with strategic planning.

The final section provides five **Case Studies** and an in-depth review of the processes and procedures used by the communities to develop their strategic plan.

Overview of the Research Report and Process

This research report was developed in phases over a period of six months. In July 2021, the academic and professional literature was reviewed. Virtual interviews were conducted with 13 local government officials in Virginia. The purpose of the interviews and the research review was to collect data to inform the development of a survey to be distributed to local governments. The communities who participated in the initial interviews are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Interview Participants

Virginia Local Government	Population	Local Government Official
Pearisburg	2,909	Town Manager
Bedford	6,657	Town Manager
Ashland	7,565	Town Manager
Scottsville	524	Town Manager
Amherst	2,732	Town Manager
Crew	2,465	Town Manager
Bland County	6,270	County Administrator
Alleghany County	15,223	County Administrator
Patrick County	17,608	County Administrator
Norton	3,687	City Manager
Emporia	5,766	City Manager
Falls Church	14,128	Deputy City Manager
Poquoson	12,460	City Manager
Bristol	17,219	City Manager

A strategic planning survey, distributed in August 2021, provided a snapshot of strategic planning initiatives in small communities throughout the United States and is referenced throughout this report. The survey was piloted with International City/County Management Association (ICMA) staff and 14 local government managers in Virginia to review the flow and structure of the survey.¹

The final survey was then distributed in August 2021 by the Virginia Municipal League (VML), Virginia Association of Counties (VACO), Virginia Local Government Management Association (VLGMA) and ICMA. Data analysis was conducted during the month of September 2021.

The survey was completed by 95 local government officials in 24 states, the District of Columbia, and one international respondent. Tables 2A, 2b, and 2C below detail the types of local government, the population of the representative governments, and the local government official completing the survey.

The respondents included local government managers, assistants or deputy managers, department heads, elected officials, and others, including clerks, interim managers, and retired managers. The respondents represented a balance of city/town and county governments and 70% were from communities with populations less than 10,000.

Tables 2A, 2B, 2C: Survey Respondent Demographics

Type of Local Government (n=93)	Percentage
City	47%
County	9%
Town	44%

Population Range (n=95)	Percentage
0-5,000	36%
5,001-10,000	34%
10,001-15,000	14%
15,001-20,000	16%

Position Held by Respondent (n=95)	Percentage
County, city, town manager	65%
Assistant or deputy manager	13%
Department head	4%
Elected official	6%
Other (e.g., town clerk, interim appointment, retired manager)	12%

Local government officials were asked if they had a strategic plan, were in the process of developing one, or had some components of a strategic plan. About half of the officials responding noted they have a strategic plan. A majority of respondents had experience with strategic planning with either some components of a plan or a plan in development. Whether or not they have a complete or partial plan, they were able to offer insights into the advantages and challenges of strategic planning in small local governments.

More information on the strategic planning survey can be found in Appendix A.

Why Do Strategic Planning?

66 The strategic plan helps us decide where our energy and resources go. 99

Sara McGuffin, Town Manager, Amherst, Virginia

rom the survey, communities with strategic plans identified several benefits to having a strategic plan:

- The strategic plan provides clear guidance on the goals of the governing body to the manager.
- The strategic plan is used as a communication device for staff.
- The strategic plan communicates to employees that what they do is important and has a purpose.
- The strategic plan helps local government managers prioritize the work in the organization and the limited financial resources available during the budget process.
- Local government managers stated the strategic plan has helped the elected officials make decisions on controversial issues.

The benefits of having a strategic plan have been documented in previous reports and articles^{2,3,4,5,6} and are identified in three major categories for the purpose of this research project: as an accountability tool, a prioritization tool, and a communication tool.

As an Accountability Tool

We use the strategic plan as an accountability tool in the manager's and deputy's annual evaluation.

Cindy Mester, Assistant City Manager, Falls Church, Virgina

The strategic plan serves as a framework for the local government manager to achieve the goals and priorities of the governing body. From the survey, 91% of local governments who had a strategic plan agree the strategic plan provides clear guidance on the goals of the governing body to the manager. The framework provides the direction, goals, and strategies to accomplish the vision of the elected officials. As such, the strategic plan serves as an accountability tool in several ways. First, local government managers can report progress on goals and strategies in monthly or quarterly reports to the governing body. Reporting progress should be relatively simple, straightforward, and easy to understand. By providing regular updates in the elected officials meeting packets, there are no surprises on progress and elected officials are kept well informed.

Figure 1: Strategic Plan Benefits



Second, elected officials can use the strategic plan as part of their annual evaluation process of the local government manager. Both the manager and the elected officials can discuss the goals achieved or accomplishments over the past year and can discuss improvements, successes, and challenges in the context of the goals and strategies adopted by the governing body.

Finally, providing regular updates in the governing body's packet also provides updates to the public. Residents can track progress on projects, goals, and strategies on a regular basis. This activity provides a level of transparency as well, giving real-time information on key issues in the community.

As a Prioritization Tool

66 If you don't prioritize, council may prioritize everything and that can't be done.
99

Joshua Farrar, Town Manager, Ashland, Virginia

A key benefit to a strategic plan is the ability to prioritize resources to achieve the goals of the community. Of the respondents to the survey who had a strategic plan, 83% agreed the strategic plan is used as a prioritization tool for the work in the organization, 79% agreed it helped prioritize budget requests, and 85% agreed it helped them prioritize staff and financial resources as the manager. Using a strategic plan as a prioritization tool ensures that the staff, elected officials, and the local government manager are working together on the same goals and works in several ways. First, the local government manager can allocate staff resources to the priorities of the governing body. As vacancies arise, the manager, in consultation with key department heads, can evaluate the position and duties and determine if the position should be reclassified or reallocated to a different department or function to support the goals of the elected officials.

Second, the elected officials can appropriate financial resources through the annual budget process to support

their agreed upon priorities as identified in the strategic plan. Stevenson, Washington, developed a strategic plan to help prioritize and plan for \$16 million in mandated sewer updates that were burdening their already limited budget. The use of the strategic plan in the budget process provides the local government manager with the justification for new positions, new programs, and new initiatives. In addition, as new financial resources are allocated toward the goals defined in the strategic plan, the elected officials can communicate with the community on how their tax dollars are being spent in accordance with the strategic plan.

Finally, the connection to the strategic plan and the financial resource allocation through the budget process also supports transparency in the use of public funds. The staff in the organization understand why dollars are used in certain areas as opposed to others and residents can clearly see how their tax dollars are being used to achieve the overall vision of the community. By utilizing the strategic plan as a "explanatory tool," we can answer the question, "Why did they do that?"

As a Communication Tool

For new councilmembers, the strategic plan is really helpful.

Joshua Farrar, Town Manager, Ashland, Virginia

A strategic plan communicates the vision to both internal and external stakeholders in the community. Of the respondents to the survey who had a strategic plan, 89% agreed the strategic plan is used as a communication device for staff; 79% agreed that the strategic plan is used as a communication device for residents. Falls Church, Virginia, provides an annual report to the community on the progress of achieving the vision called the "Community Report Card." A strategic plan is used to communicate to residents the vision of the elected officials and what they want to achieve as their representatives. The strategic plan communicates to the local government manager what is important and where to allocate staff and financial resources. Further, the strategic plan communicates to staff why they do what they do and how they support the vision of the governing body. As noted above, a strategic plan is very helpful to new councilmembers as a communication tool of the previous governing body's vision for the community.

66 I have been a city manager in four communities for over 24 years. In every community, a strategic plan was developed and prioritized. This is my smallest populated community, and the strategic plan still works like it should; providing guidance and focus to local government policies and budget.⁹⁹

Survey Respondent

Organizational Capacity Challenges in Small Communities

Small communities, defined as cities, counties, and towns with a population of 20,000 or below, face several challenges in the delivery of services in their communities. In general, they lack organizational capacity for strategic planning initiatives. Organizational capacity is composed of financial capacity, administrative capacity, and leadership capacity.

Figure 2: Organizational Challenges in Small Communities



FINANCIAL CAPACITY

66 In a small town, where we live hand to mouth, we can't help but operate day-to-day. Strategic planning is a luxury we just can't afford.

Survey Respondent

Financial capacity refers to the level of financial resources available for local governments to spend on operational and capital needs. With limited financial capacity, local governments prioritize financial resources for mandated and direct services in their communities. For many small communities, the lack of financial capacity for discretionary funding initiatives is a major barrier to strategic planning. When faced with a broken water line or strategic planning services, most small communities understandably will choose to invest in infrastructure and delay the strategic planning process. As shown in Table 3, 64% of local government survey respondents who did not have a strategic plan agreed they do not have the

funding available for a strategic planning process. While the total body of respondents to this series of survey questions is small, results are still included in this section as a complement to interview perspectives.

Table 3: Financial Barriers to Strategic Planning Question

We do not have funding available for a strategic planning process. (n=17)		
Strongly disagree	12%	
Somewhat disagree	12%	
Neither agree nor disagree	12%	
Somewhat agree	29%	
Strongly agree	35%	

ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

66 ...lots of things we could do, and we are trying to do...we just don't have the staff time to do everything...

Survey Respondent

Administrative capacity refers to having the appropriate staff to deliver efficient and effective government services and the capability of those staff in terms of training, skills, and experience. The individual staff member's capacity to take on additional duties, such as support the logistics and planning efforts necessary for a strategic planning initiative, is challenging as they prioritize providing basic services daily.

In small communities, in contrast with large local governments, staff wear "many hats" and are responsible for a wide variety of services and programs. For many small communities, the lack of administrative capacity, in terms of number of staff and capabilities of staff, is a major barrier to strategic planning. Among local governments without a strategic plan shown in Table 4, 44% agreed they do not have the time to do a strategic plan and 42% agreed they do not have the staff expertise to do a strategic plan.

Table 4: Administrative Barriers to Strategic Planning

n=18	We do not have the time to do a strategic plan.	We do not have the staff expertise to do a strategic plan.
Strongly disagree	11%	18%
Somewhat disagree	11%	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	33%	24%
Somewhat agree	33%	18%
Strongly agree	11%	24%

LEADERSHIP CAPACITY

66 If they (elected officials) are not ready to put the work in that is needed for strategic planning, it is a waste of time.

Survey Respondent

Leadership capacity refers to the support of elected officials and local government managers to engage in a particular initiative or activity. Elected officials are the biggest barrier to any new local government initiative and without their support no initiative will be successful. Without elected officials support, there is little chance a new program, initiative or goal can be achieved. Of the respondents who did not have a strategic plan, shown in Table 5. 39% of local governments agreed that elected officials are not interested in developing a strategic plan.

However, an interesting finding from the interviews was that the local government managers who did not have strategic plans believed that their councilmembers or commission members generally agreed on the direction of the local government in terms of policy and budget decisions. Because there is consensus on general issues by the governing body, the local government managers did not believe they needed a strategic plan.

** The current council has a very good rhythm, no major problem, they know what they want.**

Survey Respondent

Local government managers without a strategic plan did say that a plan would be necessary if there was disagreement, or the governing body lacked consensus on issues. For some communities with challenging elected officials and a lack of consensus on the vision of the local government, a strategic plan can help navigate contention and refocus energy on the broad goals of the organization.

Table 5: Leadership Barriers to Strategic Planning

n=18	Elected officials are not interested in developing a strategic plan.	The elected officials cannot agree to do a strategic planning process.	
Strongly disagree	17%	28%	
Somewhat disagree	11%	11%	
Neither agree nor disagree	33%	33%	
Somewhat agree	33%	17%	
Strongly agree	6%	11%	

Small towns and villages struggle implementing these plans, many times over power struggles that elected officials have, they lose power by committing to a longterm plan...⁹⁹

Survey Respondent

Strategic Planning in Action

trategic planning is an active process that engages elected officials and the local government manager and staff to develop a vision for the community. With over 89,400 general purpose and special purpose governments in the United States, there are 89,400 ways to deliver public services in communities. The findings of the survey and interviews are that each local government conducted a unique strategic planning process.

This section provides a road map for the development of a formal strategic plan for your community. For this report, a formal strategic plan is the document that is developed that details the mission, vision, values, and goals as adopted by the elected officials. Goals are supported by strategies to achieve those goals and serve as operationalized tasks. This model process assumes a fundamental core element of creating a strategic plan that includes a strategic planning committee and a retreat or event where the elements of a plan are developed.

While this report outlines a formal process small communities can follow to create a complete strategic plan, this might not be possible in your community for a variety of reasons. However, there is value in adopting aspects of a full strategic planning process to help steer your community. Some planning is better than none.

Key questions, helpful tips, and examples of strategic planning elements in the field are included throughout the following section, providing strategies to develop the strategic plan and to help everyone, including elected officials, through the process.

Look for these icons throughout the manual:

KEY QUESTIONS

P TIPS

EXAMPLES

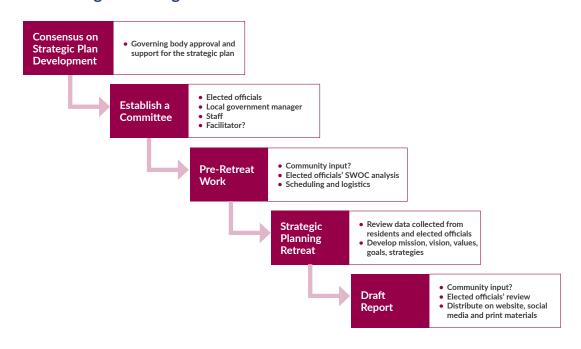
Initial Steps for Developing the Strategic Plan

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP SUPPORT

The biggest challenge to strategic planning can be garnering elected official support and buy-in for the process and outcome. The mayor or chair may be key figures in moving the process forward. Have a conversation about some of the challenges your community is facing and how a strategic plan may help to guide resources in the organization to solve some of these key issues.

At this stage, the manager should work with the elected officials to define the purpose of the strategic plan and the audience. Typically, the strategic plan is a document that guides the activities of the organization toward the achievement of a vision for the community. It serves as an internal guide for the manager and staff. It is important for the elected officials to agree on the purpose because this information will inform the other steps in the process. If the terminology of a strategic plan is making your

Figure 3: The Strategic Planning Process



234

elected officials wary, try giving it a different name or integrating the components into existing structures like the annual budget. As one survey respondent shared, their "board is wary of a single strategic plan, but have essentially participated in developing a group of plans that together provide a strategic vision."

P TIPS

Elected officials can be resistant to developing a strategic plan for a variety of reasons, such as a fear of losing control or a lack of understanding the purpose. At the beginning of the process, take time to outline the benefits of creating a plan with your elected officials, such as:

- Serves as a communication device for elected officials, staff, and the public.
- Helps prioritize organizational work and the limited financial resources available.
- Serves as a decision-making tool for controversial issues.
- Creates clear guidance on the goals of the governing body to the manager and can serve as an accountability tool for their performance.

We're fond of saying that we don't want buy-in, we want ownership. Our elected officials had ownership in the strategic plan because they directed staff to put it together and were involved in the process."

Dallin Kimble, Administrative Officer, Mariposa County, California

KEY QUESTIONS Elected Officials' Support

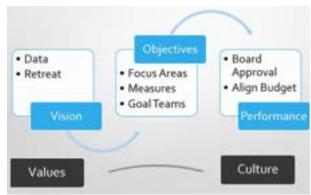
- Is there an advocate on the governing body that can help to garner support for the process?
- Do neighboring communities have a strategic plan?
 Is so, share the example.
- Will the strategic plan only be used as an internal document that is developed by the elected officials or as a document that includes resident input to the vision of the community?
- What other existing plans (i.e., budget, comprehensive plan, capital improvement plan) can inform the strategic plan?

ESTABLISHING A STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Once the elected officials have agreed to the idea of developing a strategic plan, a process should be established to guide the activities of the process. Typically, a strategic planning committee will be established for this task. This committee should include the elected officials, the manager, key deputies or assistants, and department heads. For small communities, this may be the mayor, town, or city manager and one or two staff members. This committee should begin with a discussion establishing ground rules and defining the roles and responsibilities of the committee.

Figure 4: Mariposa County, California Strategic Planning Process

Source: Mariposa County, 2019



(2) TIPS

Strategic planning processes can be perceived as "top down" and out of touch by staff responsible for implementing the plan. When possible, find ways to include staff from all levels of the organization throughout the process to help develop and check that the plan has meaning and practicality to the daily operations of your local government. This could be accomplished by including front-line staff on the strategic planning committee or by requiring committee members to update and solicit feedback from their staff throughout the planning process.

EXAMPLES

Both Lindenhurst and Mariposa County included staff early in the planning process using focus groups. Lindenhurst began its process with a focus group that included staff and the community that informed their elected body's development of the mission, vision, and values of the community. Mariposa County had staff teams of six-eight members create the goals and strategies of each focus area of their strategic plan

KEY QUESTIONS

Strategic Planning Committee

- Should elected officials be on the planning committee?
- · Which staff should be members of the planning committee?
- · Who will be the coordinator of the planning committee?
- How frequently will the committee meet?
- · Have you clearly defined the roles and responsibilities of the committee? What are the expectations of the committee and what are the deliverables?

DETERMINING THE LEVEL OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Determining the elected officials' preferences on community engagement is a key decision for the start of the process. 12 Thinking about community engagement in the strategic planning process, there are generally four levels: inform, consult, collaborate, and empower.¹³ Local governments often prefer the inform or consult levels of engagement, particularly if this is a new initiative. If the elected officials use the inform method of community engagement, then social media, print materials, fact sheets, and website distribution are key methods to showcase the proposed plan and obtain community input. If the elected officials want to use the consult method of community engagement, then create a community survey and set up town hall meetings and focus groups. For small communities, these activities may be only one or two meetings given the size of the community.



TIPS

The strategic plan is the elected official's vision for the community and the local government organization. Community input, whether formal or informal, provides guidance in the development of the plan, building credibility for residents.¹⁴ Community focus groups can be utilized at different points in the planning process as a way to connect the strategic plan to residents and were common methods of engagement in the case study communities. Whether you use formal or informal engagement, find a clear connection to community input to your strategic plan. At the very least, other initiatives, such as community engagement surveys or comprehensive plans that include an engagement process, can feed into the strategic plan and provide that link.

Figure 5: Levels of Community Engagement

Source: Trent, Sheryl (2021). How to Facilitate Inclusive Community Outreach and Engagement. Public Management Magazine.

Community Engagement

Providing balanced and objective information through various

Examples

- Media: newspapers, TV, social media
- Print material: brochures, fact sheets
- Website
- Open house

COLLABORATE

Partnering with community members in an ongoing, interactional process of planning and decision-making; community members provide advice, innovation and recommendations that are reflected in the final outcomes.

- Advisory/steering committee
- Policy roundtable
- Consensus-building events

Obtaining input and feedback from community members to help identify needs and assets, set priorities or make

Examples

- Resident panel
- Networking
- Community survey
- Focus groups

EMPOWER

Providing support to enable community members to define issues and create solutions. Community members lead and control the process.

Examples

- Community coalitions
- Citizen committees
- Neighborhood associations

EXAMPLES

For their initial strategic plan, Stevenson, Washington, leveraged the community input gathered from their comprehensive plan process, but plan to include an improved community engagement process in their next update.

Rolesville, North Carolina, held two facilitated community input sessions at the outset of the planning process to obtain feedback directly from residents and stakeholders in the community about their vision for the future of Rolesville.

KEY QUESTIONS

Level of Community Engagement

- Is the strategic plan seen more as internal guidance, or more of a public document? How should our engagement strategy change?
- Inform: Does the governing body want to develop the strategic plan and then get community input on the plan?
- · Consult: Does the governing body want to obtain community perspectives prior to the strategic planning retreat? Where might the public provide the most useful guidance in this process?
- None: Does the governing body feel comfortable moving forward with the process without formal community engagement? If so, what previous processes, if any, are feeding into the strategic plan, and how was the public involved in those processes?

DETERMINING PREFERENCES FOR FACILITATION

A key question for the strategic planning initiative is to determine if an outside facilitator will be engaged in the process. To ease the administrative burden on staff, almost 60% of governments responding to the planning survey used an outside facilitator. Outside facilitation can be expensive, so you will need to develop a request for proposals to obtain service and cost estimates for outside facilitators. You might also consider university and college resources or community members who specialize in group facilitation. Look to resources like your surrounding communities, state associations, or ICMA for sharing information on other community's facilitation experience, including a sample request for proposal.

KEY QUESTIONS

Facilitation

- Should we use a facilitator or in-house staff to facilitate the process? Can we bring in a facilitator at certain points in the process or should they be there from start to finish?
- If we use a facilitator, how much would that cost?
- If we use a facilitator, how will we procure this?
- Are there other communities that have a sample request for proposal as a guide?
- What resources have other local governments used in my region?



TIPS

Choosing to engage a facilitator is one decision, but finding the right facilitator is another. Ideally, you will want someone experienced and familiar with the unique constraints of small communities who can easily build a rapport with your elected officials and key personnel. If you decide to hire a facilitator, engage your strategic planning committee in the process of selecting one and ask potential facilitators these questions:

- · What experience do you have working in small communities and within their unique constraints?
- What facilitation style do you utilize? Do you follow academic theory or are you more flexible?
- · What kind of questions do you like to ask the group? How do you encourage deep conversation during the planning process?
- How do you move from discussions to action?
- What local governments can we contact for references?

CONSIDERING THE COSTS AND FUNDING AVAILABLE

One challenge for the development of a strategic plan is the cost. The case study communities provided information on the costs of their strategic plan ranging from \$2,000 to \$19,000. This amount does not include staff time or other indirect financial resources utilized for the process.

Many factors can influence the cost of strategic planning, including the level of citizen engagement, use and choice of a facilitator, and the length and location of the process. While there are many ways to structure the process, focusing on intentional community engagement and limiting the time a facilitator is engaged can be key factors in keeping costs low. Finding ways to couple strategic planning with existing processes like the budget may be additional ways to capitalize costs.



KEY QUESTIONS

Funding the Strategic Plan

- Are you using a facilitator?
- Are you developing a survey for residents?
- Is there a cost for the location/facility for the
- Do we have funding available for this process? Do we have surplus funds we could use for the process? Do we request additional funding for the process?



EXAMPLES

While a price tag of \$19,000 to create a plan can seem overwhelming, Stevenson made it work with a small investment of \$2,000 by hiring an outside facilitator to run the retreat and using staff to complete other components of the process. Costs listed here include expenses associated with the planning process, such as citizen engagement, facilitation, and retreats.

Table 6: Sample Strategic Planning Budgets

Local Government	Cost	Inclusion
Mariposa County, CA	\$19,000	Consultant facilitator for retreat, community survey
Town of Vinton, VA	\$2,000	Consultant facilitator for retreat
City of Stevenson, WA	\$2,000	Consultant facilitator for retreat
Village of Lindenhurst, IL	\$16,900	University facilitator for retreat and development, community survey, and focus groups
Town of Rolesville, NC	\$16,200	University facilitator for retreat and development, community focus groups

CONDUCTING A STRENGTHS. WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND **CHALLENGES (SWOC) ANALYSIS**

Have each elected official individually conduct a SWOC analysis exercise prior to the strategic planning retreat to save time and to ensure complete and thoughtful responses. The purpose of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges analysis is to assess the internal and external factors that impact the local government's ability to achieve the elected officials' vision. Elected officials can brainstorm in a word document or on paper, but the purpose is to gather their perspectives on the challenges and opportunities that are facing the local government, both internally and externally. This analysis will be used as a baseline and guide the development of the strategic plan. You will need to ensure enough time to gather the SWOC analysis data and compile the information prior to the strategic planning retreat.

KEY QUESTIONS

SWOC Analysis

- Have you developed a template for the SWOC analysis?
- How will you compile the information from all the elected officials?
- Have you allowed for sufficient time for this to be completed and shared prior to the strategic planning retreat?



While it may seem daunting to invite input on negative topics, it is critical to clearly define problems facing your community that need to be addressed to achieve your vision. Local governments face complex, multifaceted issues and the SWOC analysis is your opportunity to dissect and clarify these problems. Once a problem is defined, causes and their prospective solutions help create your goals and strategies.



EXAMPLES

The Government Financial Officer Association (GFOA)) and ICMA's "Defining the Problem" offers an additional resource to help further define problems more clearly that include six design principals: reject zero-sum thinking, provide procedural justice, create psychological safety, recognize and mitigate cognitive biases, go beyond positions, and understand interests and introduce constraints.

Table 7 shows a simple SWOC analysis framework that has been used in small communities and can be used as is or tailored to your community as needed.

Table 7: SWOC Analysis Framework

Strengths	Weaknesses
What are our major internal or present strengths?	What are our major internal or present weaknesses?
Opportunities	Challenges

PLANNING FOR THE LOGISTICS

Once the committee has been formed and questions related to cost/budget, level of community engagement, and outside facilitator or in-house staff have been determined, the next step is to schedule a strategic planning retreat. There are nuances to discuss with your planning committee on where to hold the retreat.

Generally, the event should be held in a site outside your normal setting to help focus the group on the task at hand. This can be another facility you own or an off-site space, depending on what the budget allows.

If your local government has chosen to use the consult method of community engagement, this is the time to send surveys and hold town halls or focus groups to gather community input. You will need to ensure enough time to gather community input and compile that information prior to the strategic planning retreat.



O EXAMPLES

Vinton, Virginia, kept costs low by hosting the retreat in a facility they owned, providing their own supplies like snacks and writing material, hiring a facilitator from a local nonprofit, and limiting on-site time to half a day by emphasizing preliminary work.



KEY QUESTIONS

Planning for the Logistics

- · Where will the retreat be held? At an on-site or off-site location?
- What are your open meeting requirements for publicizing and accessibility? Have you reviewed and summarized community engagement data and SWOC analysis if applicable?
- What advance arrangements need to be made for supplies, refreshments, A/V equipment, etc.?

Table 8: Strategic Plan Components

Strategic Plan Component	Answer the Question	Description
Mission	What do we do today?	The mission states what the local government does now; it communicates to residents, businesses, nonprofits, and other key interest groups what you do on a day-to-day basis.
Vision	What do we want our community to look like in 10-15 years?	The vision states what you want your community to look like in 10-15 years; it communicates to the external environment what you want to achieve and how the governing body sees itself in the future.
Values	What values are important to the governing body when we make a decision?	The values (typically four-five values) communicate guiding principles that the governing body uses to make decisions for the community (ethics, efficiency, equity, etc.).
Goals	What are the goals to make progress toward our vision?	The goals are broad statements or affirmations the governing body agrees on to achieve the vision of the community.
Strategies	What do we need to do now to achieve those goals?	Strategies are action items that establish how you will achieve those goals in the next one-two years.

STRUCTURING THE RETREAT

The purpose of the retreat is to develop the strategic plan and the deliverable at the end of the meeting should be a draft that includes a mission, vision, values statement or values, goals, and strategies to achieve the goals. The retreat should include an agenda with time allocations for the individual components of the strategic plan. Appropriate materials such as flip charts, markers, post-it notes, pens, etc., should be provided at the meeting.



Don't forget to plan for documenting the discussion, and don't put this burden on those expected to actively contribute to it. Whether the strategic planning retreat is a few hours one afternoon or spans across multiple days, it will be a dense conversation with rich information to pull from. It is important to establish how the meeting will be captured and who is responsible. Outline a record keeping plan with staff or your hired facilitator in advance and clarify deliverables expected following the meeting.

KEY QUESTIONS Structuring the Retreat

- Have you or the facilitator developed ground rules on the engagement among the elected officials during the retreat (all ideas are judgment free, respect for diverse opinions, etc.)?
- Have you or the facilitator developed an agenda with key components identified?
- Have you or the facilitator planned for time allocated to each component?
- Who will take notes and compile the information during the retreat?
- Who will be responsible for compilation of the strategic plan after the retreat?
- What is the timeline for a draft plan to be developed?

Developing the Strategic Plan

DEVELOPING THE MISSION

The mission statement is typically defined as the reason the local government exists. The mission statement communicates the purpose of the local government to residents, staff, and other key stakeholders. The mission statement clearly states what your local government does, why you provide those services, and for whom. When you draft the mission statement, consider if it answers the questions: "Who are we? What do we do? For whom we do it? Why is it important?" The mission statement should be easily understandable, clear, and concise and does not need to be updated regularly.



KEY QUESTIONS

Mission Statement

- What do you do?
- · Why do you do it?
- Who do you serve?
- Why is it important?
- Is it clear, concise, and understandable?

Examples of Mission Statements

Village of Lindenhurst, Illinois

The Village of Lindenhurst, in partnership with our community, continuously strives to provide a safe, healthy, and vibrant environment through quality customer service, public safety, progressive leadership, and financial responsibility.

Town of Vinton, Virginia

The Town of Vinton provides valuable services to residents, visitors, and businesses through transparent, efficient, and responsible governance while protecting its unique character and values.

Mariposa County, California

We improve the quality of life in Mariposa County through active community engagement and the efficient delivery of outstanding public services.

Town of Crewe, Virginia

To provide quality services to residents, businesses, and visitors in an efficient, effective, and equitable manner.

Town of Woodstock, Virginia

To encourage and facilitate economic growth, to provide a safe environment for a diverse community, and to provide high quality and efficient services to the public,

while emphasizing the Town's unique character, planning for the future, and leading by example through the implementation of best practices.

DEVELOPING THE VISION

The vision statement reflects the governing body's view of the ideal community in 10-15 years. This statement communicates the governing body's picture of success and serves as the "goal post" to be achieved. The vision statement should answer the question, "Where do you want to be in 15 years?" It should provide a clear picture of the organization's future and does not need to be updated every year.15



KEY QUESTIONS

- Is it inspiring for the residents and staff?
- · Is it believable?
- Does it answer the question: Where do we want to be in 15 years?
- Is it clear, concise, and understandable?

Examples of Vision Statements

City of Williamsburg, Virginia

One Williamsburg that is courageously leading, innovating a modern city, prioritizing safety and wellness, engaging our partners while connecting the world.

Village of Lindenhurst, Illinois

The Village of Lindenhurst endeavors to be the friendliest and most appealing community in Lake County, Illinois; enriched by small-town values and traditions, fostering an atmosphere where residents and businesses can thrive.

City of York, South Carolina

York is an historic city with charming neighborhoods, caring residents, abundant opportunities, and an innovative and inclusive economy.

Town of Rolesville, North Carolina

Genuine community thrives in Rolesville as we seek to build a place that is focused on walkability, with connections to parks, greenways, and gathering spaces.

ESTABLISHING VALUES

The adoption of core values as a part of the strategic plan reflects the foundations underpinning policy decisions and actions taken by the governing body. The values (or values statement) are a tool to build organizational culture and should communicate to the public what is

important to the elected officials when they are making decisions. The values or values statement express the behavioral expectations in the day-to-day operations of the local government, whereas the mission and vision communicate the aspirations of the local government.



KEY QUESTIONS

Values/Values Statement

- What do the values say about what is important to the governing body?
- What do the values say about what is important to your community?
- Are the values reflected in decision making?

Examples of Values

Town of Ashland, Virginia

Sustainability, Community, Integrity, Equity, and Excellence

Mariposa County, California

Collaboration, Integrity, Sustainability, Transparency, Excellence

Town of Rolesville, North Carolina

Inclusive, Collaborative, Ethical, Transparent, Excellent

DEVELOPING GOALS

Goals are developed and adopted by the governing body and communicate broad initiatives or activities. Goals should be a two-four-year view of priorities that the local government establishes to achieve the vision of the community.



There is a tendency to become overly prescriptive when creating goals. As goals look two-four years in the future, there should be room for flexibility to accommodate for changing circumstances.¹⁶ Additionally, goals that are too specific may be rooted in current governmental practices, rather than encouraging innovation and creativity. Focus on creating three-five goals that describe guardrails rather than specific actions.



- Do the goals support the mission and vision?
- Are the goals realistic?
- · Are they easy to read and understand?
- Are they measurable?

Figure 6: Town of Rolesville, North Carolina's Goals or Key Focus Areas

Source: Town of Rolesville, 2020







242

We've debated back and forth between a thorough plan with estimated budgets, specific performance targets and timelines, and a simpler conceptual plan. For our first time, we opted for simple and now think we should make it even more simple. One page would be ideal to make it a frequent reference that is easy to remember and use.

Dallin Kimble, Administrative Officer, Mariposa County, California

Examples of Goals

Town of South Boston, Virginia

- Reinvent Riverdale as a gateway park.
- Remove and redevelop blighted and derelict buildings.
- Revitalize downtown/redevelop Randolph Hotel.
- Improve Westside/Westend services.
- Create a succession/contingency plan.

Village of Gambier, Ohio

- Support a vibrant mix of institutional and villageserving land uses that respect environmental restraints, promote a high quality of life, and plan for long-term growth.
- Preserve, enhance, and market Gambier's natural resources, parks, and trails as vital community assets.
- Preserve existing neighborhoods while increasing opportunities for diverse housing options within the village and conservation development on future residential land.
- Promote an identity that encourages collaboration, fosters community spirit, and capitalizes on Gambier's historic and environmental strengths.
- Strengthen the built environment to safely and efficiently move people, goods, and services within the village and to regional destinations.

City of Emporia, Virginia

- Pursue economic development opportunities through collaboration and partnerships to increase and improve employment for our residents.
- Support a culture of educational achievement and lifelong learning in order to develop and sustain a productive workforce ready for the 21st century employers.

- Develop cultural facilities whiles supporting our existing recreational providers.
- Vitalize the overall appearance of the city to create an atmosphere that is attractive and appealing to residents, businesses, and visitors.
- · Upgrade infrastructure throughout the city.

Town of Vinton, Virginia

- Enhance the town's infrastructure and livability.
- Maintain an efficient and high-performing government.
- Ensure the town's continued financial viability by actively pursuing quality economic development.

City of York, South Carolina

- · Resilient Infrastructure
- Economic Development
- Dynamic Community
- · Efficient and Effective Government

DEVELOPING STRATEGIES

Strategies are the action steps needed to be taken to achieve the broad goals of the community. ¹⁷ The strategies describe specific tasks, outputs and/or outcomes, typically within a one-two-year completion period. The number of strategies assigned to each goal will vary and are typically between three and seven.



Strategies

- · Are the strategies realistic in terms of budget?
- Do the strategies identify a time frame for completion?
- Have key personnel responsible for those strategies been identified?
- Can you, as the manager, report progress to the elected officials?



Rolesville, North Carolina, leadership developed specific workplans that could be addressed to achieve goals in a two-year work period. These initiatives are collected into the Staff Progress Report, which is updated three times a year and provided to the governing board in their agenda packet and publicly posted on the town's website.

Examples of Strategies

City of York, South Carolina

- Review and deploy advanced meter reading technology through city-wide implementation of a wireless meter reading system.
- Provide tools for customers to better understand utility usage.
- Develop programs to assist low-to-moderate income households with utility bills and infrastructure improvements.

Village of Lindenhurst, Illinois

Explore the possibility of implementing a TIF District to help with redeveloping Linden Plaza/Grand Avenue commercial corridor.

Town of Woodstock, Virginia

- Conduct an economic base analysis.
- Support an evaluation by a qualified firm or other professional to identify strategies that will help the town strengthen economic development opportunities.

Town of Vinton, Virginia

- Aggressively pursue economic development opportunities to enhance local retail and dining options.
- Conduct a thorough organizational efficiency review in municipal offices and implement changes based on results.

City of Stevenson, Washington

- The city will continue working toward lifting the commercial sewer connection moratorium, building efficient, sustainable, and affordable wastewater system updates with added BOD capacity by the spring of 2023.
- The city will partner with Skamania County Fire District 2 and the Skamania County Department of Emergency Management to build a new fire hall that meets the needs of the agencies, is affordable to the community, and is a valued asset of Rock Creek Drive.

We Have a Strategic Plan, Now What?

eveloping a strategic plan is just the beginning. Finding ways to integrate the plan into daily processes and decision-making is key to making the plan meaningful. Adjustments will need to be made to keep the strategic plan relevant and a "living document."

Adopting the Strategic Plan

Provide the draft document to the governing body for any corrections, amendments, or changes. Because the strategic plan reflects the vision of the elected officials, they should have an opportunity to comment on the draft report prior to distribution to the public or others.

If your local government is using the inform method of community engagement, once the governing body has completed review and changes have been incorporated, the draft document should be distributed through the local government's website, social media, and print to gather community input on the draft strategic planning document. If your local government is not utilizing community engagement for the process, the document can be approved at the next governing body meeting and posted to the local government's website, social media, and print media for distribution.

EXAMPLES

Once the Town of Rolesville, North Carolina, had adopted their strategic plan, they focused on regular communication to keep the plan alive and relevant. They created $11" \times 17"$ copies of the plan and placed them in front of the elected officials at all board meetings, hung them on staff bulletin boards, and included copies in their new hire onboarding packets. According to Town Administrator Kelly Arnold, "These easy-to-find copies of the plan help ensure it remains accessible to all and relevant to decision-making."

KEY QUESTIONS

Adopting the Strategic Plan

- Did the governing body adopt the strategic plan through a formal vote?
- Have you placed the adopted strategic plan on your website?
- Are there copies available in the town hall or administration building?
- Have you posted to the local government's social media pages?
- Can you meet with a local newspaper reporter and conduct an interview on the plan?

Figure 7: Village of Lindenhurst, Illinois Online Dashboard

Source: Village of Lindenhurst, 2022



Reporting on Progress

Timelines, staff responsibilities, and budget impacts should be included within the plan or as supplementary resources. This can be used by the local government manager to report progress to the governing body. In addition, local government managers can use this as a discussion tool in the annual evaluation meeting with the elected officials.



Sometimes included goals become outdated and are no longer relevant. When reporting on the strategic plan, take time to identify any goals that are no longer serving the mission, vision, or values of the community and exclude them moving forward.



Reporting on Progress

- Have your elected officials communicated how they would like progress reported?
- Will you report quarterly, monthly, once a year?
- What format will you use to report progress on the strategic plan?
- Will you use progress updates in your annual evaluation process?
- How will residents know about progress on goals and strategies in the community?

Table 9: Town Council Planning Retreat Summary — Saturday, January 12, 2019

Source: Town of Amherst, Virgina

Topic Area	Items to Accomplish by June 30, 2019	Work Plan for July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020	Goals for December 31, 2020	Long-Term Goals
Recodification	Town code recodification completed	Zoning and subdivision ordinance recodification	All code in Municode	
Pay Policies and Practices	Career development policy and COLA + merit (Step) policy implemented	Policies and practices implemented		
Brockman Park	Marketing material updated via Sweet Briar Partnership	Implement new marketing plan		Full capacity at Brockman Park
Town Park	Park available for "initial" public use	Formulate vision of park and implement vision	Create park and trail master plan	Implement park master plan
Town Square	Resurrect the project, work with stakeholders	Work with CVPDC to identify grant funding for the project	Project implementation	Implement town square
Trail	Complete project scope for water and sewer relocation	Relocate water and sewer	Construct the pedestrian/ bike trail to college	Provide recreational opportunities
Downtown	Create a vision for downtown	Identify strategies to implement vision for downtown	Implementation of vision for downtown	Effect downtown revitalization
Utilities		Committee to reconvene and start new negotiations	Implement new arrangements re water service to college	Implement new arrangements re sewer service to college
Police Department Building Renovation	Determine space utilization and develop RFP	Construction project out for bid, complete constructions		
	Move to paperless agendas; utilize tablets			Add attractions for young adults, new businesses, and housing options (i.e., for senior residents)
Various	YMCA: complete market analysis			More downtown events
	Improved capital improvement plan (CIP)			



EXAMPLES

Table 9 is an example of a small community's strategic plan with timelines. The manager uses this document to report to the town council monthly and uses this document during their annual evaluation. This is a simple spreadsheet that is easy to understand and easy to update.

Linking to the Budget

Once the strategic plan has been adopted, using the document to inform budget decisions is a key implementation tool for the local government. Over 80% of the respondents to the survey stated that the strategic plan is used to prioritize and justify budget requests during the annual budget process. For small communities, it may be a challenge to formally link the budget to the strategic plan but there are simple ways to accomplish this goal.

At the beginning of the budget process, review the strategic plan goals and strategies with the elected officials. Identify and prioritize budget requests and funding needs based on how they align with the goals and strategies in the strategic plan. A simple spreadsheet that lists the funding requests and identifies the corresponding goal is sufficient to communicate this information.¹⁸



KEY QUESTIONS

Linking to the Budget

- Have you identified funding requests and budget priorities prior to the start of the budget process?
- · What format will you use to communicate funding allocations that support the goals of the governing body?
- Have you worked with department directors; do they understand how to connect their budget and funding requests to the strategic plan?



EXAMPLES

Rolesville, North Carolina, has been recognized by GFOA for their effort to incorporate their strategic plan into their annual budget conversation. Department heads are required to tie requests for new initiatives to the strategic plan. These linkages are further reinforced within the annual budget document to help communicate to the public how the strategic plan is being accomplished.

Table 10 consolidates the annual budget requests from departments for the town. Three of the five budget request support town goals/topic areas from the example used in the "reporting on progress" section above. Elected officials can quickly see all requests, identify the connections to the strategic plan, and prioritize funding based on the connections to the strategic plan.

Table 10: Town Annual Budget Requests

Source: Town of Amherst, Virgina

Goal	Department	Budget Request	Funding Requested
Town Park	Parks and Recreation	Park and Trail Master Plan Development	\$50,000
Recodification	Administration	Municode Update	\$5,000
Brockman Park	Economic Development	Marketing Material	\$2,500
Utilities	Utilities	Administrative Assistant	\$30,000
Various	Administration	Internship Program	\$3,000

Updating the Strategic Plan

Once the initial plan has been developed, elected officials and managers inquire as to the frequency of updates to the strategic plan. Having a strategy for reviewing and updating your strategic plan is helpful-but this process is dependent on the local government, and as demonstrated in the report, all local governments are unique.

In the survey, local governments reported updating their strategic plans anywhere from annually up to every five years (Q8, Appendix A).



EXAMPLES

Rolesville, North Carolina, operates on a two-year cycle to correspond with local elections. This allows new the new town board to set their own short-term direction as they start their terms. While the mission and vision doesn't need to be updated annually, it may be appropriate to look at these components with a new board. Mariposa County set out hoping to update their plan annually but found in practice their first update happened 2.5 years after the initial adoption. Remaining flexible allowed them to spend limited staff time and resources when it will have the most impact.

P TIPS

Avoid having your review process become too routine or just to "check a box." Strategic plans and their goals should be flexible and shift when appropriate. Try different approaches to reviewing your strategic plan each time you update, focusing on key issues or aspects of the plan that invite conversation and change moving forward.

KEY QUESTIONS Undating the Strategic

Updating the Strategic Plan

- Has the governing body communicated to you, as the manager, when they want to update the full strategic plan?
- How will the update be similar to and different from the first strategic planning process?
- Do you need to plan for financial resources for the update in the upcoming budget?
- Will you need to hire a facilitator for the next update?
- What is a realistic timeline for you, as the local government manager, given the organizational capacity challenges in your community?

Conducting Performance Management

What is Performance Management?

identifying, collecting, analyzing, and reporting on indicators that show how well the organization performs, both internally and in the delivery of services to the public, and how that performance compares with its targets or with peer organizations.

More importantly, as a management tool, performance data is intended not as an end result, but rather as a means to more informed decision making and a more engaged community?

ICMA, Getting Started in Performance Management 19

or small communities with limited financial and administrative capacity, the idea of a formal performance management system is overwhelming. The focus of this report is on developing a strategic plan and utilizing the plan in the budget process to inform decision-making and to support communities. However, performance management is often an important component of strategic planning and connects strongly to the goals and strategies of the strategic plan.^{20,21} As such, this report seeks to provide guidance to small communities on how to implement performance management easily, concisely, and clearly.

First, interviews with the local government managers revealed that performance management does take place in small communities, but it is often on an ad hoc or as needed basis as opposed to a formal, annual process. Managers reported that the task of collecting and analyzing data takes place when an issue arises.

What do small communities need to conduct ad hoc performance management?

Small communities reported in interviews that they recognize performance management in their day-to-day work, and for many local governments performance management means answering questions, such as:

- · Are we coming in under budget?
- Did we meet our fund balance target?
- How long did it take to fix the water main break?
- What is our police department's response time?
- How many people are participating in the summer program?

- How many books are being checked out at the library?
- How much is the city paying entry level police officers?

All those questions and ones like them can be a small community's version of performance management. But small communities can start measuring performance by thinking about those questions in different ways, such as:

- What are our general fund budget and tax rates compared with other communities?
- What is our fund balance percentage as compared with other communities?
- How long does it take other communities to fix water main breaks?
- What are the response rates for police in other communities?
- Do other communities have summer programs?
 What kind? How long?
- What services do other community's libraries provide?
- What are other communities paying entry level police officers?

By thinking about the issue your community is having and changing the question to "What are other communities doing?," you can compare your local government to other communities that are similar in size and service to gauge your performance.

IDENTIFY BENCHMARK COMMUNITIES.

The first step is to identify benchmark communities. Benchmark communities are local governments that your local government competes with in terms of new employees, they share a border with your jurisdiction, and they are similar in size, budget, and services. Typically, local governments will identify five-seven local governments for comparison purposes.

Local government managers and key staff should develop a professional relationship with their counterparts in the benchmark communities to share data and information. Make sure you have their contact information for requesting information.

KEY QUESTIONS

Benchmark Communities

- Who do we "compete" with for employees and business?
- Which local governments do we share a jurisdictional boundary with?
- What other local governments have a similar population, budget, and service portfolio?

IDENTIFY COMMON QUESTIONS TO DEVELOP AN ANNUAL LIST OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES.

The next step is to identify frequently asked questions that are requested by the elected officials (i.e., tax rates, number of employees) and collect that data on an annual basis. Identify frequently asked questions by the manager to department heads (i.e., number of sidewalks maintained, capacity of wastewater treatment plan). The data collection will also provide your local government with trend information as you build three-five years of data. Managers and department heads should offer to share the information with the benchmark communities as well and can include findings in annual documents like the budget.

KEY QUESTIONS

Frequently Asked Questions

- What questions do I get asked frequently from elected officials?
- · What information do I need from other local governments?
- What statistics are important to the elected officials?
- · What data do we need on an annual basis, during the budget process, during the year?
- What are our general fund budget and tax rates compared with other communities?
- What is our fund balance percentage as compared with other communities?
- How long does it take other communities to fix water main breaks?
- What are the response rates for police in other communities?
- Do other communities have summer programs? What kind? How long?
- What services do other community's libraries provide?
- What are other communities paying entry level police officers?

PREPARE FOR AD HOC REQUESTS AT ANY **GIVEN TIME BY STARTING SMALL.**

With a list of benchmark communities and key contacts, local governments are now able to respond to ad hoc requests from elected officials or other key stakeholders for performance data. Most importantly, make sure you are asking the right question to the benchmark communities.

There are hundreds of performance measures that could be and are being compiled by local governments. Develop a list of 10 or fewer to begin with; think about the most frequent questions and start there.

CONSIDER WHAT TYPES OF MEASURES TO USE.

Table 11 below identifies three common performance measures, what they are measuring, and basic examples.²² It is important to recognize that one data point is insufficient to gather information; trend data meaning collection of data over a three-five-year period will inform you and the elected officials on activity-is it increasing, decreasing, or remaining stable. Starting now, your local government can begin to build a robust set of data for answering the most frequently asked questions.

Table 11: Sample Measure Types

Types of Measures	What are they measuring?	Examples		
Workload	How many of something; raw counts of outputs	Calls received, work orders completed, zoning applications processed		
Efficiency	Ratio, relationship between outputs and inputs, can be expressed in percentage	Cost per job reviewed, cost per capita, application processed per analyst, calls per police officer, building permits per inspector		
Outcome	Effectiveness, obtains quality, if a program or service is having an impact	Resident satisfaction, impact of a program, response time of 5 minutes or less		

EXAMPLES

Lindenhurst, Illinois, staff identified some measures that indicate performance with their overarching strategic planning themes. They update this data monthly to show elected officials and the broader public how they are performing in specific areas. Internally, their staff have a quarterly discussion to report on progress with action steps identified by the village's strategic plan.

Case Studies/Best Practices

s part of the survey distributed to local governments, respondents were asked to share their strategic plans and if they would be willing to serve as best practice communities for the report. After the data analysis was completed, five local governments from across the country were selected for more in-depth analysis of their process. The five local governments describe their strategic planning process in detail in the following section.



Mariposa County, California (Home of Yosemite)

Population: 17,100

Dallin Kimble, County Administrative Officer (January 2017 - Present)

https://www.mariposacounty.org/1780/Strategic-Plan

What was the process?

Our strategic planning process began with data collection, including a community survey. After several informative presentations about different aspects of the county, the board of supervisors met with department heads and

then on their own to complete a facilitated analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges. The board identified our mission, vision, values, and focus areas, along with a few key objectives for the future.

Staff then organized interdepartmental committees of sixeight staff for each focus area to flesh out the objectives and initiatives. The work of the committees was presented to the department heads and the CAO, who made a few minor tweaks primarily removing duplicates that appeared in multiple focus areas. The final draft was considered and approved by the board.

How did you obtain elected officials buy-in?

We're fond of saying that we don't want buy-in, we want ownership. Our elected officials had ownership in the strategic plan because they directed staff to put it together and were involved in the process.

How much did the process cost and did you use an outside facilitator?

We spent about \$11,000 on a community survey and about \$8,000 on a facilitator. We used primarily in-house staff except for the resources/costs noted above.

How much time to do the strategic planning process?

Our strategic plan took about six months to put together.

Did you engage residents in the process?

he county had recently completed a community-bycommunity process to gather input for the economic vitality strategy. Staff also conducted our first community survey, sought input on social media, and received public comment at various meetings along the way.

Did you use a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOC) analysis?

Yes.

Table 12: Comparison of Case Study Local Governments

Local Government	Population	Cost	Time for the Process	Facilitation	Community Engagement	SWOC Analysis	Updates	Reporting
Mariposa County, CA	17,100	\$8,000	6 months	In-house staff	Consult using survey data prior to the plan's creation	Yes	Annually	Annually
Town of Vinton, VA	8,128	\$2,000	6 months	Consultant	Inform residents after the plan was created	Yes	Annually	Annually
City of Stevenson, WA	1,700	\$2,000	9 months	Consultant	None	No	Annually	Annually
Village of Lindenhurst, IL	14,406	\$16,900	10 months	University	Consult using survey data and focus groups prior to the plan's creation	Yes	3-4 years	Monthly and Quarterly
Town of Rolesville, NC	9,359	\$16,200	3 months	University	Consult using community input sessions	Yes	2 years	Quarterly

How often do you update the strategic plan?

We aspire to update the strategic plan annually. In practice, we're beginning our first update of the plan about 2.5 years after adoption.

How often do you report progress on the strategic plan?

Progress on the strategic plan is reported annually and as significant milestones are reached.

Lessons learned or what you would do differently?

We've debated back and forth between a thorough plan with estimated budgets, specific performance targets and timelines, and a simpler conceptual plan. For our first time, we opted for simple and now think we should make it even more simple. One page would be ideal to make it a frequent reference that is easy to remember and use.

The right facilitator makes a big difference. We're glad we used a facilitator when we did; in the future, we would use facilitators in the staff committees as well. Along the way, we met several facilitators who were too academic or would not have been a good fit with our community and/or our staff. We also met a few who did, or we felt would have done excellent work consistent with our community.



Town of Vinton, Virginia

Population: 8,128

Richard "Pete" Peters, Town Manager (January 2021 – Present)

https://www.vintonva.gov/486/ Town-of-Vinton-Strategic-Plan-2020-2025

What was the process?

Over the past decade, Vinton had primarily conducted yearly planning retreats with members of staff and town council to develop annual goals and targets for establishing operating and budget priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. In 2020, the town underwent a

more comprehensive strategic plan update, with a desire to establish operating and budget priorities for the next five years (2021-2025).

How did you obtain elected officials buy-in?

Council supported the concept of establishing a longerterm planning document to provide more mid-range guidance to staff for CIP and operational planning. Annual planning to establish immediate priorities had been sufficient in recent years due to flat revenues—although given new revenue growth attributed to economic development projects, such as new restaurants and parimutuel gaming—a longer-term approach was necessary.

How much did the process cost and did you use an outside facilitator?

The town used a facility that it owned for the half-day retreat and the only expenses associated were snacks and the consultant contracted to facilitate the discussion and draft the written plan. The town contracted with Council of Community Services, a not-for-profit organization located in Roanoke that facilitates many community service activities on behalf of various local and state governments. The contract rate was \$2,000 for their work.

How much time to do the strategic planning process?

Council and staff met with the consultant over a half day, although the consultant had sent out surveys to participants several days in advance to establish much of the preliminary work.

Did you engage residents in the process?

Once a draft plan was created, council solicited feedback via requesting public comment on the concepts and direction of the strategic plan.

Did you use a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC) analysis?

A SWOC was used as part of the preliminary feedback gathered by the initial surveys sent to council and staff.

How often do you update the strategic plan?

The plan is reviewed annually as part of the annual operation and CIP budget development, as budget priorities are being tied back to strategies associated with the strategic plan.

Lessons learned or what you would do differently?

The method that we undertook to develop the plan went extremely well and was a very efficient process. Council has been very supportive of the annual updating practices being tied to the annual budget adoption and are very pleased with the outcomes being accomplished by the document and the activities the plan has generated.

252



City of Stevenson, Washington

Population: 1,700

Leana Kinley, City Administrator (September 2017 - Present)

https://www.ci.stevenson.wa.us/citycouncil/page/council-strategic-goals

What was the process?

Historically, the city goals and priorities were presented by department heads and discussed during the budget process. Leading up to the city's first strategic planning process, there were multiple projects that identified a need for the city to have a better long-range plan. During the update of the general sewer plan and facilities plan, the estimated cost to upgrade the city's system was \$16M and the residential base rates were projected to reach \$185/month. The upgrades were mandated by a state Department of Ecology Administrative Order issued to the city in 2017 for violations of its National Pollutant Discharge and Elimination System (NPDES) permit. At the same time, the city recently purchased land and was looking to design and build a new fire hall. There were also two recent street rebuild projects that moved forward without adequate improvements to the underlying water and sewer infrastructure. With limited staff and resources, decisions needed to be made on which projects were a priority and what needed to be pushed out or delayed.

With a new mayor and city administrator, we were looking to improve the planning process. Our first step was a half-day council retreat, facilitated by a community member, to set the stage for a strategic planning session. This was conducted two months into the mayor's first term (February 2018) and was a good starting off point to establish overall council direction.

In October of the same year, we held our day-and-a-half strategic planning retreat. Prior to the retreat, we sent out a survey on goals, priorities, and other feedback. It

consisted of an initial half-day session where we reviewed the previous goals from February, reviewed the survey, and proposed new goals and priorities. The next day, we reviewed the previous day, prioritized the goals, and developed strategies for meeting those goals. This was done by an outside facilitator and the result was a five-year strategic plan with a vision, mission, and SMART goals.

How did you obtain elected officials buy-in?

The mayor was on board to begin with and recent events at the city created the impetus for council to change direction and look at a better way to plan for the future.

How much did the process cost and did you use an outside facilitator?

We used a consultant who facilitated meetings for another local group. The cost was \$2,000 for their services.

How much time to do the strategic planning process?

The initial meeting was a day-and-a-half.

Did you engage residents in the process?

We have not engaged residents in this process yet. We are in the process of developing a community engagement and public participation plan that will be incorporated into this process.

Did you use a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC) analysis?

No.

How often do you update the strategic plan?

Annually. Every year council holds a retreat, ideally in Q1, and goes over the progress on the plan and discusses changes. These are then reviewed and confirmed at the beginning of the budget process. All plans and updates can be found on our website https://www.ci.stevenson.wa.us/citycouncil/page/council-strategic-goals and the progress of past goals are listed in each subsequent plan.

How often do you report progress on the strategic plan? Annually, see above.

Lessons learned or what you would do differently?

Going forward, there is a need to better involve the community on the strategic plan. Goals and priorities on the list were compared to the city's comprehensive plan, which has an engagement process, and they were not in conflict, but there was no public component of the strategic plan. When we come up on the end of the initial five-year plan, a reset will be needed, and we can incorporate an improved community engagement process to inform a new strategic plan.



Village of Lindenhurst, Illinois

Population: 14,406 (2020)

Clay Johnson, Village Administrator (September 2017 - Present)

https://www.lindenhurstil.org/department/division

What was the process?

After contracting with the Center for Governmental Studies out of Northern Illinois University (NIU), the Village of Lindenhurst reached out to various community stakeholders, staff, and residents to set up a series of focus groups to gain feedback on village performance and direction. The feedback from those focus groups was compiled into a single document and presented to the village board in a planning workshop.

Using the information gained from the focus groups, the mayor and village trustees went through a number of analytical exercises during a workshop session to develop a series of priorities that respond to the themes of the focus groups and analyses. In that same workshop, the priorities were organized in terms of their completion date and complexity. Our partners at NIU took these goals, and then sent them to our elected officials to rank in terms of priority. The results of the prioritization were then shared with elected officials and staff.

Once again with the help of the representatives from NIU, staff reviewed the newly developed goals and prepared a series of action steps that led to accomplishing a particular goal. Each action step was assigned a primary staff lead and timelines were established for updates and goal completion. The action steps also included any resources or outside agency assistance that may be needed.

Finally, after all goals and action steps were completed, the full strategic plan was publicized and adopted by the village board. After adoption, staff sent the strategic plan to all those who participated in the planning process.

How did you obtain elected officials buy-in?

Our village board has always prioritized long-term planning, but never took the time to solicit feedback from stakeholders and staff to drive the strategic initiatives of the village. Convincing the board to move in this direction was not a challenge as we sought to engage our public to a greater degree and increase transparency of village initiatives.

How much did the process cost and did you use an outside facilitator?

The village used the Center for Governmental Studies at NIU as consultants for our strategic planning process. Their representatives coordinated with village staff and led all focus groups and facilitators of our strategic planning workshop. Once all the data was collected, our partners drafted the strategic plan and worked with staff on action steps that would be used to meet the overall tenets of the plan. Cost was \$16,900.

How much time to do the strategic planning process?

From the moment we began to collaborate with NIU, the process took about 10 months.

How did you engage residents?

Before we began our strategic planning process, the village engaged a company to conduct a statistically significant community survey that would indicate how the community feels about various aspects of our local governments' approach and services. The community survey was then used as a data point in our strategic planning session. One of the first steps of the strategic planning process was the creation of three focus groups to provide their feedback on a variety of areas. Each focus group was facilitated by a representative of NIU and no village elected staff or management were present in the room during discussion. One focus group was composed of village staff, another with community stakeholders (schools, park districts, Chamber of Commerce), and the final group was with Lindenhurst residents.

Did you use a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Challenges (SWOC) analysis?

Yes, village board members, staff, and any attending public were divided into groups to each develop items that fit into a SWOC analysis. The group then reconvened to share their thoughts and ideas.

How often do you update the strategic plan?

We have not updated the plan as of yet, but we will likely update it every three-four years.

How often do you report progress on the strategic plan?

Village staff identified some measures that indicate performance with our overarching strategic planning

themes. We update this data monthly to show our elected officials and the broader public how we are performing in these specific areas. Internally, our staff has a quarterly discussion to report on progress with action steps identified by the village's strategic plan.



Town of Rolesville, North **Carolina**

Population: 9,359

Kelly Arnold, Town Administrator (June 2018 - Present)

Amy Stevens, Finance Director

(2012 - Present)

https://www.rolesvillenc.gov/strategic-plan

What as the process?

Rolesville's governing board embarked on the development of a comprehensive strategic plan in late 2019. Since early 2017, the town had identified a simple series of goals and objectives that were updated annually through an informal process. These goals were generally completed as part of an annual budget retreat with the town board and town manager.

With a relatively new manager and board taking office after the November 2019 election, the town targeted the period of November 2019 through February 2020 to initiate and complete a more comprehensive, long-term strategic plan with a two-year work program.

After the November 2019 election, town staff worked with the consultant to create a systematic approach that would produce the desired product over a three-month span. The February 2020 completion time frame would allow the strategic plan to be used and featured in the budget development for the 2020-21 fiscal year, which started July 1, 2020.

Over the course of the three-month period, the following activities took place:

- Initial full-day retreat with the governing board, consultant, and lead staff to conduct a regional forecasting exercise and a SWOC analysis of the community and organization. The group began creating consensus around a community vision and high-level goals.
- Two facilitated community input sessions to obtain feedback directly from residents and stakeholders in the community about their vision for the future of Rolesville. To maximize participation, one session was held during the business day and one session was held in the evening.
- Half-day facilitated discussion with town manager and department heads to create consensus around a mission statement and core values, which are the more internally focused components of the town's strategic plan.
- Final full-day retreat with the governing board, consultant, and lead staff to review the work from the community and staff input sessions. The primary objective of this session was to refine and finalize the essential elements of the strategic plan.
- Presentation and adoption of the strategic plan components at the governing board meetings in March 2020, which led to the development of materials that are now used as part of the strategic

The primary components of the adopted strategic plan that are essential to implementation are: the vision statement, four key focus areas, 16 goals, and the mission and core values of the internal organization.

How much did the process cost and did you use an outside facilitator?

In the fall of 2019, the board initiated a consultant selection process. This process called for experienced consultants to submit a request for proposal to assist with the development of the plan. A subcommittee with representation by the mayor, a town commissioner, and staff was formed, and this subcommittee conducted an interview process with the top candidates. The University of North Carolina School of Government was chosen for their experience, proposed process, and pricing. Their proposed process called for the School of Government consultants to direct development of the planning process, lead the facilitation of governing board and community input, and create the framework for the strategic plan. The cost for the services and materials was \$16,200.

How often do you update the strategic plan?

Over the course of the past two years, the strategic plan has been treated as an important roadmap providing clear guidance for the decision-making process regarding policy adoption and budget development. The plan is referenced as part of cover memos that are written for governing board agenda items, and staff members routinely develop recommendations based upon whether the policy is in alignment with the strategic plan.

How often do you report progress on the strategic plan?

After the adoption of the strategic plan, town leadership further developed specific work plan priorities that could be addressed over the immediate two-year work period. These initiatives were collected into the staff progress report, which is updated three times a year and provided to the governing board in their agenda packet and posted on the town's public website.

Regular communication has been an important factor in keeping the plan alive and relevant. The key components were formatted into an 11" x 17" document that could folded and used as a brochure or opened and used as a desk blotter or poster. A laminated version of the plan sits in front of elected officials at all board meetings. Copies of the plan were made available to staff and are part of the new hire onboarding packet. Staff members have copies of the strategic plan hanging on walls and bulletin boards. These easy-to-find copies of the plan help ensure it remains accessible to all and relevant to decision-making.

The strategic plan has been incorporated into the annual budget conversation. Department heads know that requests for new initiatives and staff should be tied to the strategic plan to be successful. These linkages are further reinforced within the annual budget document. With the

receipt of the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) 2021 Distinguished Budget Presentation Award, the town was recognized for meeting their standards for clearly communicating its strategic goals and the action plans developed to accomplish those goals.

Next Strategic Plan Cycle

For Rolesville, there is a two-year cycle associated with the strategic plan. While the vision statement is focused on the long-term development of the community, the specific goals and work plans are more suited to a shorter cycle of review and modification. A two-year cycle nicely corresponds with local elections and allows a new town board to set their own short-term direction as they start their terms.

The next strategic plan update, scheduled for late 2021, will follow a similar November through February time frame, but it will be more focused on minor modifications. Since this is a more limited scope of work, it will be facilitated by staff instead of an outside consultant. In the future, a more significant strategic plan process will proceed either due to the passage of time (i.e., the strategic plan is at least four years old) or a significant change of town board membership.

Going forward, there is a desire for the next major iteration of the strategic plan to include more participation of the staff leadership team, improved development of metrics to identify plan success, and incorporation of a biannual community survey in the alternating years.

Appendix A

Strategic Planning for Small Communities Survey

The strategic planning survey, distributed in August 2021, provided a snapshot of strategic planning initiatives in small communities throughout the United States. The survey was completed by local government officials in 24 of the 50 States, the District of Columbia and one international respondent.

The respondents included local government managers, assistants or deputy managers, department heads, elected officials and others including clerks, interim managers, and retired managers. The respondents represented a balance of city, county, and town local governments and over 68% were from communities with populations less than 10,000.

Q1 Is your local government a city, county, or town?				
Local Government Type	Percentage	Number		
City	47.3%	44		
County	9.7%	9		
Town	43.0%	40		
Total	100%	93		

Q2 What is your local government's population?				
Answer	Percentage	Number		
0-5,000	35.8%	34		
5,001-10,000	33.7%	32		
10,001-15,000	14.7%	14		
15,001-20,000	15.8%	15		
Total	100%	95		

Q3 | What state or country represented? Number Answer 3 Alaska California 4 Colorado 2 Connecticut 1 Delaware 1 Florida 2 Illinois 5 Indiana 1 2 Iowa 2 Maine Maryland 2 Massachusetts 1 2 Michigan 2 Minnesota 2 Missouri Nebraska 2 New York 1 North Carolina 3 Ohio 5 Oregon 1 Pennsylvania 3 South Carolina 2 1 Tennessee Virginia 28 Washington 4 Wisconsin 2 I do not reside in the United States 1 **Total** 85

Q4 What is your position?		
Answer	Percentage	Number
County, city, town manager	65.3%	62
Assistant or deputy manager	12.6%	12
Department head	4.2%	4
Elected official	6.3%	6
Other (please specify)	11.6%	11
Total	100%	95

Q5 | A strategic plan is defined as a plan that is adopted by the governing body and includes a mission, vision, values or value statement and goals and objectives for the organization and community. Does your local government have a strategic plan?

Answer	Percentage	Number
Yes	49.6%	55
No	21.6%	24
We are in the process of developing a strategic plan.	10.8%	12
We have some components of a strategic plan but not all as defined above.	18.0%	20
Total	100%	111*

^{*} Some respondents answered only this question and did not complete the full survey.

The following questions were answered by local government officials stating they had a strategic plan.

Q6 | What do you view as the benefits of having a strategic plan for the organization and the community?

Question	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Total
The strategic plan provides clear guidance on the goals of the governing body to the manager.	5.7%	0.0%	2.9%	20.0%	71.4%	35
The strategic plan is used as a communication device for staff.	5.7%	2.9%	2.9%	25.7%	62.9%	35
The strategic plan helps me to prioritize the work in the organization.	5.7%	2.9%	8.6%	28.6%	54.3%	35
The strategic plan communicates to employees that what they do is important and for a purpose.	5.9%	5.9%	14.7%	20.6%	52.9%	34
The strategic plan is used to prioritize budget requests.	8.8%	2.9%	8.8%	29.4%	50.0%	34
The strategic plans serves as an accountability tool for the governing body during the manager's evaluation.	6.1%	12.1%	24.2%	21.2%	36.4%	33
The strategic plan serves as a communication device for the citizens in the community on the goals of the governing body.	5.9%	2.9%	11.8%	38.2%	41.2%	34
The strategic plans helps me, as the manager, prioritize staff and financial resources.	5.9%	2.9%	5.9%	29.4%	55.9%	34
The strategic plan prioritizes resources from a organizational-wide perspective.	5.9%	2.9%	14.7%	41.2%	35.3%	34

Q7 | The strategic plan is a resource for local governments during times of crisis. Consider the following questions and select your level of agreement.

Question	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Total
The strategic plan helped prioritize services during the COVID-19 pandemic.	20.6%	11.8%	41.2%	20.6%	5.9%	34
The strategic plan helped to prioritize funding when revenues declined during the pandemic.	23.5%	8.8%	29.4%	26.5%	11.8%	34
The strategic plan is helping to prioritize funding allocation through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).	23.5%	2.9%	32.4%	23.5%	17.7%	34
The strategic plan has helped prioritize resources during economic crisis.	20.6%	5.9%	26.5%	26.5%	20.6%	34
The strategic plan has helped the elected officials make decisions on controversial issues.	11.8%	8.8%	23.5%	26.5%	29.4%	34
The strategic plan has helped prioritize resources as a result of a natural disaster in our community.	17.1%	17.1%	37.1%	20.0%	8.6%	35

Q8 How often does the governing body update or review the strategic plan?					
Answer	Percentage	Number			
Annually	25.7%	9			
Every two years	31.4%	11			
With each election	8.6%	3			
Other	34.3%	12			
Total	100%	35			

Q9 At what stage of the strategic planning process is your local government?					
Answer	Percentage	Number			
Strategic plan is adopted and available.	45.7%	16			
Strategic plan is completed and available and the budget is tied to strategic priorities.	40.0%	14			
Strategic plan is completed, we appropriate funds for strategic priorities and we have developed performance measures to track strategic goals and priorities.	14.3%	5			
Total	100%	35			

Q10 Was your strategic plan developed with in-house staff or with an outside facilitator?				
Answer Percentage Number				
In-house staff	42.9%	15		
Outside facilitator	57.1%	20		
Total	100%	35		

Q11 | Did you conduct any citizen engagement (surveys, town hall meetings, emails) to gather citizen input on the mission, vision or goals for the local government during the strategic planning process?

Answer Percentage Num

Total	100%	35
No, we did not gather citizen input	40.0%	14
Yes, we gathered citizen input	60.0%	21
Answer	Percentage	Number

Q12 | If you did not conduct any citizen engagement to inform the strategic plan process, identfy the reasons below. (select all that apply)

Answer	Percentage	Number
In a small local government, citizen engagement happens daily.	85.7%	12
Our elected officials work closely with citizens because we are small and can communicate their needs sufficiently.	78.6%	11
Not enough time.	28.6%	4
We did not have staff resources to conduct citizen engagement.	64.3%	9
Other	21.4%	3
Total		14

The following questions were answered by local government officials who stated they did not have a strategic plan at all. Not all questions were displayed to each official depending on their answers to previous questions.

Q13 | What are some challenges for your local government to developing a strategic plan?

Question	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Total
Elected officials are not interested in developing a strategic plan.	16.7%	11.1%	33.3%	33.3%	5.6%	18
We do not have the time to do a strategic plan.	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	33.3%	11.1%	18
We do not have the staff expertise to do a strategic plan.	17.7%	17.7%	23.5%	17.7%	23.5%	17
We do not have funding available for a strategic planning process.	11.8%	11.7%	11.8%	29.4%	35.3%	17
We feel the comprehensive plan is sufficient for strategic planning.	17.7%	29.4%	29.4%	17.7%	5.9%	17
We use a priority setting process during the budget process in lieu of a strategic plan.	5.9%	5.9%	29.4%	52.9%	5.9%	17
The elected officials cannot agree to do a strategic planning process.	27.8%	11.1%	33.3%	16.7%	11.1%	18

Q14 If you wanted to do a strategic plan, what resources would you need? (select all that apply)			
Answer	Percentage	Number	
Financial resources - money to do it.	38.9%	7	
Staff resources - staff to help pull the document together.	44.4%	8	
Time resources - dedicated time outside the office to hold a strategic planning workshop.	61.1%	11	
Elected officials buy-in - having the elected officials agree to hold a strategic planning workshop.	50.0%	9	
Outside facilitator - someone neutral to facilitate the process.	50.0%	9	
Other	0.0%	0	
Total		18	

This section was completed by local government officials who identified having some components of a strategic plan or were in the process of developing a strategic plan. Not all questions were displayed to each official depending on their answers to previous questions.

Q15 At what stage of the strategic planning process is your local government?				
Answer	Percentage	Number		
Strategic planning process has been initiated but not complete. (Please note in the box what activities have been initiated.)	42.9%	3		
We have some components of the strategic plan but not all. (Please note in the box below what components are available.)	28.6%	2		
The governing body has not adopted the strategic plan at this time, but they held a strategic planning retreat.	28.6%	2		
Total	100%	7		

Q16 | What are some challenges for your local government to developing a strategic plan?

Question	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Total
Elected officials are not interested in developing a strategic plan.	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3
We do not have the time to do a strategic plan.	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%	3
We do not have the staff expertise to do a strategic plan.	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%	3
We do not have funding available for a strategic planning process.	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	2
We feel the comprehensive plan is sufficient for strategic planning.	0.0%	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%	3
We use a priority setting process during the budget process in lieu of a strategic plan.	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	3
The elected officials cannot agree to do a strategic planning process.	0.0%	66.7%	33.3%	0.0%	0.0%	3

Q17 | Will your strategic plan be developed with in-house staff or with an outside facilitator?

Answer	Percentage	Number
In-house staff	20.0%	1
Outside facilitator	80.0%	4
Total	100%	5

Q18 | Will you conduct any citizen engagement (surveys, town hall meetings, emails) to gather citizen input on the mission, vision or goals for the local government during the strategic planning process?

Answer	Percentage	Number
Yes, we will (or we did) gather citizen input	60.0%	3
No, we will (or we did) not gather citizen input	40.0%	2
Total	100%	5

Q19 | If you will not (or did not) conduct any citizen engagement to inform the strategic plan process, identify the reasons below. (select all that apply)

Answer	Percentage	Number
In a small local government, citizen engagement happens daily.	50.0%	1
Our elected officials work closely with citizens because we are small and can communicate their needs sufficiently.	50.0%	1
Not enough time.	100.0%	2
We will not have staff resources to conduct citizen engagement.	50.0%	1
Other	100.0%	2
Total		2

Q20 Why did your local government engage in the strategic planning process?						
Question	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Total
The strategic plan will provide clear guidance on the goals of the governing body to the manager.	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	4
The strategic plan will help the manager to prioritize the work in the organization.	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	4
The strategic plan will communicate to employees that what they do is important and for a purpose.	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	4
The strategic plan will be used to prioritize budget requests.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	4
The strategic plans will serve as an accountability tool for the governing body during the manager's evaluation.	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	4
The strategic plan will help to prioritize staff and financial resources.	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	40.0%	40.0%	5
The pandemic has changed what we do and how we do it.	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	5
We had an election and new members were elected to the governing body.	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%	40.0%	20.0%	5
The governing body has differing views on the overall direction of the local government.	20.0%	40.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%	5
We needed an overall plan for American Rescue Plan Spending (ARPA funding)	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	25.0%	4
We are in a financial crisis.	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	0.0%	4
We need consensus from the governing body on controversial issues.	0.0%	33.3%	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%	3

Q21 What components of the strategic plan do you currently have? (select all that apply)						
Answer Percentage Number						
Mission Statement	15.4%	2				
Vision Statement	30.8%	4				
Values or values statement	30.8%	4				
Goals	76.9%	10				
Objectives	61.5%	8				
Other (please describe)	15.4%	2				
Total		13				

Q22 | Many small communities use other resources or documents to serve as the local government's strategic plan. What type of document or resource serves as your local government's strategic plan? (select all that apply)

Answer	Percentage	Number
Comprehensive Plan (20 year plan of land use)	69.2%	9
Budget	84.6%	11
Capital Improvement Plan	46.2%	6
Other Plan (please specify)	7.7%	1
Total		13

Q23 | Were the components of your strategic plan developed in-house or using an outside facilitator?

Answer	Percentage	Number
In-house staff	53.9%	7
Outside facilitator	46.1%	6
Total	100%	13

Q24 | Were the components of your strategic plan developed with citizen engagement?

Answer	Percentage	Number
Yes	30.8%	4
No	69.2%	9
Total	100%	13

Q25 | If you did not conduct any citizen engagement to inform the strategic plan components, identify the reasons below. (select all that apply)

Answer	Percentage	Number
In a small local government, citizen engagement happens daily.	44.4%	4
Our elected officials work closely with citizens because we are small and can communicate their needs sufficiently.	33.3%	3
Not enough time.	11.1%	1
We will not have staff resources to conduct citizen engagement.	11.1%	1
It is an internal document for the governing body and the manager.	22.2%	2
Other	44.4%	4
Total		9

Q26 | Why did your local government engage in some level of the strategic planning process? (strategic plan includes components of the plan)

Question	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Total
The strategic plan will provide clear guidance on the goals of the governing body to the manager.	0.0%	7.7%	7.7%	69.2%	15.4%	13
The strategic plan will help the manager to prioritize the work in the organization.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	69.2%	30.8%	13
The strategic plan will communicate to employees that what they do is important and for a purpose.	0.0%	7.7%	15.4%	53.8%	23.1%	13
The strategic plan will be used to prioritize budget requests.	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	53.8%	38.5%	13
The strategic plans will serve as an accountability tool for the governing body during the manager's evaluation.	0.0%	23.1%	23.1%	53.8%	0.0%	13
The strategic plan will help to prioritize staff and financial resources.	0.0%	0.0%	15.4%	61.5%	23.1%	13
The pandemic has changed what we do and how we do it.	15.4%	7.7%	61.5%	15.4%	0.0%	13
We had an election and new members were elected to the governing body.	15.4%	15.4%	38.5%	23.1%	7.7%	13
The governing body has differing views on the overall direction of the local government.	23.1%	7.7%	15.4%	30.8%	23.1%	13
We needed an overall plan for American Rescue Plan Spending (ARPA funding)	15.4%	7.7%	53.8%	15.4%	7.7%	13
We are in a financial crisis.	46.1%	30.8%	15.4%	7.7%	0.0%	13
We need consensus from the governing body on controversial issues.	15.4%	23.1%	30.8%	15.4%	15.4%	13

References

- ¹ List of Interviews
 - Carter, Sara. In person interview. July 27, 2021.
 - Eads, Randall. In person interview. July 19, 2021.
 - Farrar, Joshua. In person interview. July 13, 2021.
 - Hazelwood, Geri. In person interview. July 29, 2021.
 - Johnson, William. In person interview. July 30, 2021.
 - Landford, Jonathon. In person interview. July 23, 2021.
 - Lawless, Matt. In person interview. July 20, 2021.
 - Meredith, Todd. In person interview. July 20, 2021.
 - Mester, Lucinda. In person interview. July 30, 2021.
 - Ramey, Frederick. In person interview. July 14, 2021.
 - Thrower, Brian. In person interview. July 27, 2021.
 - Warner, Bart. In person interview. July 14, 2021.
 - Wheeler, Randall. In person interview. July 12, 2021.
 - Workman, Eric. In person interview. July 26, 2021.
- ² Bryson, J. M. (2018). Strategic planning for public and nonprofit organizations: A guide to strengthening and sustaining organizational achievement. John Wiley & Sons.
- ³ Bryson, J. M., Edwards, L. H., & Van Slyke, D. M. (2018). Getting strategic about strategic planning research.
- ⁴ Gordon, G. L. (2013). Strategic planning for local government. ICMA Publishing.
- ⁵ Government Finance Officers Association. (2005, March, 31). Establishment of Strategic Plans. https://www.gfoa.org/materials/establishment-of-strategic-plans
- ⁶ Government Finance Officers Association. (2022, January). *Defining the Problem: The Missing Piece to Local Government Planning*. https://www.gfoa.org/materials/defining-the-problem
- Mitchell, D., Huizenga, S., Novak, J. (2016). Success and Failure in Implementing Strategic Plans. https://icma.org/sites/default/files/308479_2016%20ICMA%20Presentation_Strategic%20Plans.pdf
- ⁸ Dimitrijevska-Markoski, T., Breen, J. D., Nukpezah, J. A., & Mobley, R. (2021). Strategic Planning and Management in Small Municipalities in Mississippi-Implementation, Perceived Benefits, and Determinants of Use. Public Organization Review, 1-16.
- ⁹ Nelson, K. L., & Stenberg, C. W. (2017). Managing local government: An essential guide for municipal and county managers. CQ Press.
- ¹⁰Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Incorporated Places in the United States: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019 (SUB-IP-EST2019-ANNRES) Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division Release Date: May 2020.
- ¹¹Wang, Kel, and Sambir, M. (2019). Strategic Planning Revisited, Public Management Magazine.
- ¹² Wang, Kel, and Sambir, M. (2019). Strategic Planning Revisited, Public Management Magazine.
- ¹³ Trent, Sheryl (2021). How to Facilitate Inclusive Community Outreach and Engagement. *Public Management Magazine*.
- ¹⁴Center for Community Health and Development. (n.d.). *Community Toolbox*. University of Kansas. https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents
- ¹⁵ Government Finance Officers Association. (2022, January). Defining the Problem: The Missing Piece to Local Government Planning. https://www.gfoa.org/materials/defining-the-problem
- ¹⁶Government Finance Officers Association. (2022, January). *Defining the Problem: The Missing Piece to Local Government Planning*. https://www.gfoa.org/materials/defining-the-problem

- ¹⁷Stenberg, C. W., & Austin, S. L. (Eds.). (2007). Managing local government services: a practical guide. ICMA Press.
- ¹⁸ Kavanaugh, S. and Ludwig, K. (2020) Strategic Planning and Program Budgeting Help the City of Indian Wells Improve Its Financial Foundation. https://www.gfoa.org/materials/strategic-planning-program-budgeting-indian-wells
- ¹⁹ Getting Started: Performance Management for Local Government. (2019). https://icma.org/sites/default/files/ Getting%20Started%20Performance%20Management%20for%20LG.pdf
- ²⁰ Hall, J. L. (2017). Performance management: Confronting the challenges for local government. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 43-66.
- ²¹DiNapoli, T. (2003) Local Government Management Guide Strategic Planning https://www.osc.state.ny.us/files/local-government/publications/pdf/strategic_planning.pdf
- ²² Ammons, D. (2015). Leading Performance Management. ICMA Press.

Photo Credits

- Cover: Courtesy of the Town of Rolesville, North Carolina
- Page 2: Courtesy of Stephanie D. Davis, Ph.D.
- Page 4: Courtesy of Sara McGuffin
- Page 28: Courtesy of Mariposa County, California
- Page 29: Courtesy of the Town of Vinton, Virginia
- Page 30: Courtesy of the City of Stevenson, Washington
- Page 31: Courtesy of the Village of Lindenhurst, Illinois
- Page 32: Courtesy of the Town of Rolesville, North Carolina

ABOUT ICMA

ICMA, the International City/County Management Association, advances professional local government management worldwide through leadership, management, innovation, and ethics. Through partnerships with local governments, federal agencies, nonprofits, and philanthropic funders, the organization gathers information on topics such as sustainability, health care, aging communities, economic development, cybersecurity, and performance measurement and management data on a variety of local government services—all of which support related training, education, and technical assistance.

ICMA provides support, publications, data and information, peer and results-oriented assistance, and training and professional development to more than 13,000 city, town, and county experts and other individuals and organizations throughout the world.

icma.org



INTERNATIONAL CITY/COUNTY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION 777 N. Capitol St. NE, Ste. 500, Washington, DC 20002 202.962.3680 | icma.org



Agenda Item Summary Report

Meeting Date: February 10, 2025 Submitted by:

Michelle Bailey Hedgepeth, Town Administrator

Item Title: Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG) Update | February 2025

The quarterly update on Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG) Meetings and activities.

Work Session Item [X] Council Meeting Item [X]

Documentation Attached:

2025 COG Legislative Priorities Report

Recommended Action:

INFORMATION ONLY: This has been provided to the Council and community informed of Council and staff actions.

Council and Public Update: Town of Bladensburg's Engagement with the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG)

The Town of Bladensburg proudly continues its active membership in the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG), ensuring our community has a strong voice in regional decision-making. This membership allows Bladensburg to participate in vital discussions and initiatives that impact the entire region, including transportation, housing, climate change, and emergency preparedness.

I attended the Chief Administrative Officers Meeting on **Wednesday**, **February 5**, **2025**| During this meeting, we talked about the Transportation Planning Board, Technical Assistance Program. We also, received an update on the Regional Crime Dashboard and they provided an update report on the After-action report from Table Top Exercise that was conducted in November 2024. The meeting closed with a discussion on the CAO Roundtable. This was a productive meeting.

2025 COG Legislative Priorities

The COG Board of Directors recently approved its 2025 Legislative Priorities, focusing on key areas that benefit Bladensburg and the surrounding communities:

- Transportation funding
- Affordable housing
- Water quality improvements
- Climate and energy innovation
- Air quality enhancements
- Human services
- Emergency preparedness
- Infrastructure investment

A copy of the 2025 Legislative Priorities Report is attached for your review. These priorities align with Bladensburg's goals for sustainable growth, enhanced public safety, and improved quality of life for our residents.

Winter Storms and Regional Alerts

Over the past several weeks, the Town Administrator and Police Chief have actively participated in numerous online meetings and briefings related to winter weather events and regional updates. These sessions, facilitated by COG, provided:

- Detailed weather forecasts tailored to the Capital Region.
- Road condition updates to ensure resident safety.
- Security updates during the evolving transition in federal and regional administration.

COG has proven to be an invaluable resource for information sharing and collaboration during these critical times, enabling Bladensburg to remain proactive and prepared.

Committee Representation

Bladensburg remains actively engaged in COG committee work. In December 2024, Town Council members were reappointed to their respective committees, ensuring continued representation and advocacy for our community's interests in regional initiatives.

Ongoing Support and Engagement

The Town of Bladensburg remains committed to leveraging its COG membership to bring regional resources and opportunities to our community. Together, we continue strengthening Bladensburg's voice in the Washington Metropolitan region while working toward a better future for all.

The town administrator is available to provide further insights if you have any questions or would like additional details.

Budgeted Item: Yes [] No [] NA	Continued Date:
Budgeted Amount:	
One-Time Cost: NA	
Ongoing Cost: NA	
Council Priority: Yes [] No []	Approved Date:

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Supporting the region's transportation funding, housing, water quality, climate resiliency, air quality, human services, public health preparedness, homeland security, food security, infrastructure investment and incorporating local government input and equity considerations across all sectors

January 2025









LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Adopted by the COG Board of Directors on January 15, 2025

ABOUT COG

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is an independent, nonprofit association that brings area leaders together to address major regional issues in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia. COG's membership is comprised of 300 elected officials from 24 local governments, the Maryland and Virginia state legislatures, and U.S. Congress.

CREDITS

COG 2025 Legislative Committee Editor: Monica Beyrouti Nunez

Photo Credits: Fire Truck (Flickr); Potomac River (Chesapeake Bay Program/Flickr); Housing

(BeyondDC/Flickr); Bike Lane (BeyondDC/Flickr)

ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

Alternative formats of this document are available upon request. Visit www.mwcog.org/accommodations or call (202) 962-3300 or (202) 962-3213 (TDD).

TITLE VI NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) operates its programs without regard to race, color, and national origin and fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes and regulations prohibiting discrimination in all programs and activities. For more information, to file a Title VI related complaint, or to obtain information in another language, visit www.mwcog.org/nondiscrimination or call (202) 962-3300.

El Consejo de Gobiernos del Área Metropolitana de Washington (COG) opera sus programas sin tener en cuenta la raza, el color, y el origen nacional y cumple con el Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964 y los estatutos y reglamentos relacionados que prohíben la discriminación en todos los programas y actividades. Para más información, presentar una queja relacionada con el Título VI, u obtener información en otro idioma, visite www.mwcog.org/nondiscrimination o llame al (202) 962-3300.

Copyright @ 2025 by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING, PLANNING, & CONNECTIVITY

Support DMV*Moves* Initiative's Funding Recommendations on State and Local Payments to Metro

In FY2025 the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia compact jurisdictions came together to recognize the need to reset the base subsidy payments to Metro to account, in part, for the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on operating costs. The region is currently collaborating on the DMVMoves initiative to develop a shared vision for transit in the region, including dedicated funding for Metro and the region's transit systems. Recommendations coming out of the DMVMoves initiative will include funding recommendations such as resetting the subsidy levels to be carried forward into the future and consensus to annually increase these payments at a sustainable and predictable level in all three jurisdictions. With this new funding, there will need to be consistency and consensus among the three funding partners and a commitment from Metro to year-over-year growth limits. Given the importance of state funding in Maryland and the District of Columbia, and the existing shared funding responsibilities in Virginia, the states should continue to play a large role in contributing to the adjusted levels of subsidy payments. Additionally, while the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia have been matching the federal Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) funds, these funds have not been indexed to account for the impact of inflation. State matching funds for PRIIA should be indexed to a sustainable and predictable level.

Support DMV*Moves* Initiative on Stronger Coordination and Efficiency for the Region's Transit Providers

Over several decades there have been consistent recommendations made by a variety of commissions and groups to better coordinate and achieve efficiencies amongst our region's numerous transit providers. Through the DMVMoves effort, recommendations not yet achieved by the region though still considered priorities and deserving of implementation have been grouped into six categories: Integrate and align fare policies to provide consistent customer experience (e.g., transfers, youth fares, etc.); adopt shared service guidelines for when and how often transit operates and measure performance; improve wayfinding, customer information, and amenities at transit stops; implement bus priority strategies to get best value from high-frequency routes; explore shared use of resources and assets and grouped procurements; and make training, certification, and inspection programs more consistent across the region. Specific, implementable recommendations will come out of these workgroups that will likely necessitate legislative action at the local, state, and federal levels.

Support an Indexed Federal Funding for the Region's Metro System

The Metro system is the centerpiece of the metropolitan Washington transportation system and forms the backbone of its economy. Almost half of all federal employees use the Metrorail and bus system to commute to work. The federal government should act to permanently provide a larger share of both operating and capital funding for the Metro system, which its employees and the region depend on. Specifically, support making the federal government's annual appropriations for

the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act (PRIIA) permanent and index the funding amount to a sustainable and predictable level.

Support Fixing the Deficit in the Federal Highway Trust Fund

For more than two decades the federal Highway Trust Fund (HTF) revenue has been insufficient to fund the congressionally authorized surface transportation program. These shortfalls have been closed with transfers from general fund and other short-term measures, including in the recent reauthorization for federal transportation spending through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The Congressional Budget Office projects that the balance in both the highway and transit accounts of the Highway Trust Fund will be exhausted in 2028. Support addressing this structural deficit and systemic imbalance of the HTF revenues as a top priority to provide certainty of federal funding for the surface transportation program and ensure that any fix to the HTF revenue structure retains all the programs included in the 2021 IIJA and fully funds them at levels authorized or previously envisioned.

Support Equitable Transportation Access & Mobility Solutions

The region continues to strive to better understand the nature of transportation inequities through its analyses in areas such as Equity Emphasis Areas (EEAs) or disadvantaged communities identified under the federal Justice40 initiative. As part of the preceding priority to support the Visualize 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan, particular support is needed for those solutions that address disparities in disadvantaged communities throughout the region.

Support Funding for Next Generation Transportation Systems

The need for a more efficient and safer means of surface transportation is imperative to help achieve the nation's safety, energy-efficiency, and environmental goals. Automated and autonomous vehicles and clean fuel vehicles including electric and hydrogen fuel vehicles, are critical elements of delivering safe, efficient, and environmentally sustainable mobility. The private sector has made significant investments to advance deployment of vehicles using alternative modes of energy and technology. Significant public sector investments are needed to prepare transportation infrastructure to facilitate the operations of these advanced technology vehicles to realize the energy, environment, and safety benefits they offer. Support and expand the continuation of federal funding for building electric vehicles and other advanced technology infrastructure, beyond the term of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Support Roadway & Pedestrian Safety

Safety on our roadways and for our pedestrians and bicyclists constitutes a longstanding and unfortunately worsening challenge for our region, especially the recent tragic increase in pedestrian deaths. Increased regional support and collaboration for the "E's" of safety is needed: engineering, education, enforcement, emergency medical services, and equity, in accordance with the Federal Highway Administration's "Safe System Approach". Additional resources, innovative practices and technology, and enhanced safety laws are needed to combat this crisis. Specific initiatives should include regional ticket reciprocity between Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia in order to improve the ability to hold drivers accountable for their actions across state lines; more effective traffic enforcement and penalties; and consideration of the safety of people outside of vehicles in vehicle designs, standards, and ratings. Vision Zero-supportive laws and practices across the country and around the world have shown success in reducing fatalities and should be emulated and adopted here.

CLIMATE RESILIENCY & AIR QUALITY PROTECTION

Support Policies to Meet the Region's Climate Goals

Expand policies, programs, and funding at federal, state, and local levels to help meet the region's medium- and long-term objectives in climate change mitigation. Ensure that local governments are recognized and given opportunities to provide timely and meaningful input on climate and clean energy policies and programs.

Support Accelerated Multi-Sector Actions to Reduce Greenhouse Gases and Criteria Pollutants

The region and its member jurisdictions are committed to addressing the adverse impacts of climate change including reducing the amount of harmful greenhouse gases (GHG) released in the atmosphere. Support accelerated actions across all sectors to help meet the region's 2030 climate and energy goals. Support engagement and continued funding at all levels of government to monitor the impacts of climate investment programs and GHG performance measures. Emphasize priority investments in Equity Emphasis Areas.

Ensure Sustainable Secure Energy Access for All

Advocate for state and federal actions to enhance access to secure, affordable clean energy. Prioritize and protect funding for energy-sector infrastructure to improve affordability, resilience and reliability. Support policies, funding, and incentives for energy efficiency and security improvements such as microgrids, district energy systems, and clean energy storage technology. Prioritize funding for upgrading energy infrastructure to withstand extreme weather events and to protect investments in grid technologies that improve energy efficiency and system performance. Emphasize the need for deployment and workforce development in low-income, energy-burdened, and vulnerable communities to ensure a just and equitable climate future for all.

Support Solar Deployment and Aggressive State Renewable Portfolio Standards

State requirements for a clean grid and aggressive Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) and support for local efforts to deploy distributed solar on government facilities and in the community at scale are effective methods of increasing the amount of renewable electricity generated within a grid system driving greater deployment of renewable energy projects to meet the region's 2030 solar goals. Protect existing and advocate for more aggressive policies, including state RPS and other innovative policies and programs, business models, and funding opportunities that support meeting the RPS, such as supporting a strong Renewable Energy Credit (REC) market, solar carve-outs in RPS policies, reasonable solar interconnection standards, offshore wind, community choice aggregation, and community solar opportunities for energy-burdened households.

Expand Clean Energy Innovation, Technology & Finance

Encourage and support investment in energy innovation across sectors to increase energy efficiency and transition to clean and distributed energy sources. Expand options for and improve access to clean energy finance at the state and local levels, including advocating for further investment in and deployment of capital through green banks. Foster cost effective and efficient market frameworks, reasonable regulatory frameworks, business model innovation incentives and partnerships that

expand the adoption of energy efficient and zero energy building codes, building benchmarking, clean energy technologies and infrastructure, and low or zero-emission vehicles.

Support Aggressive Energy Efficiency Goals

Encourage and support federal, state, and local energy efficiency programs to reduce energy usage, costs, and associated greenhouse gas emissions. Advocate for aggressive initiatives to target households with high energy burdens. Prioritize support and incentives for weatherization, deep energy retrofits, building electrification and retro-commissioning programs to achieve the highest possible energy performance and preferably zero energy buildings within Equity Emphasis Areas and climate vulnerable communities of concern. Support policies and programs to address energy demand growth from high electricity use sectors such as data centers.

Enhance Incentives & Financing Mechanisms for Climate Resiliency

Support legislation, incentives, financing, and funding mechanisms to support deployment of grey blue, and green infrastructure resilient to extreme heat, flooding, and other climate hazards. Priority resilient infrastructure initiatives include the establishment of resilience hubs in climate vulnerable communities, improving the resilience of critical infrastructure (transportation, communication, energy and water system assets), equitably addressing urban heat island, enhance green infrastructure networks, providing for tree planting and preservation on privately owned lands, and implementing measures to reduce flood risk in climate vulnerable communities, such as restoring wetlands and enhancing green infrastructure to augment and improve stormwater management.

Support Policies that Preserve & Protect Regional Air Quality and Public Health

Support strong policies, regulations, and funding necessary to preserve improvements in air quality and strengthen the region's ability to meet current and future air quality standards that are protective of public health and welfare. Advocate for federal policies that support measures to mitigate the effects of wildfire risks on regional air quality. Consider environmental justice when implementing air quality policies, programs, and initiatives. Support funding for local member efforts to identify and implement initiatives to reduce air pollution. Support regulatory actions to monitor and reduce air pollution transport into the region.

WATER QUALITY PROTECTION

Support Investments in Water Infrastructure & Water Quality Protection

Support appropriating the full authorized funding levels for water, wastewater, stormwater, and water reuse programs, including the Clean Water and Drinking Water SRFs, the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program, the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA), Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA) and for state programs including grants for local governments and water utilities, and stormwater local assistance funds. Specifically, COG supports full federal funding for the Washington Metropolitan Area Backup Water Supply Feasibility Study authorized in Public Law 117-263, Division H, Section 8201(a)(14). In addition, COG supports funding state revolving funds (SRFs) at the maximum authorization in federal law and making sure that funding for congressionally directed spending projects is in addition to the authorized SRF funding levels. Ensure that local water infrastructure investments to meet water quality permit load allocations and handle future population and economic growth are protected, specifically in revisions to the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement in 2025. Invest in workforce training and development to ensure the availability of skilled workers to fill water sector jobs. Support funding for agricultural conservation programs.

Support Climate & Resiliency Initiatives

Support funding and policy to address robust scientific climate change analysis, adaptation and resiliency planning and coordinated local best practices for flood control, drought, and water storage and reuse. Support drinking water security and resiliency through research, planning, programs and funding to ensure a resilient, reliable, and clean drinking water supply for the region.

Ensure Regulatory Feasibility & Flexibility

Support actions that provide for flexible implementation and a feasible pace for future stormwater, water, and wastewater permits and other regulatory requirements, including reasonable reporting requirements. Support cost-effective scheduling and financing of water quality programs including streamlining permits, flexibility to achieve nutrient and sediment reduction across wastewater, stormwater, and other sectors to protect affordability of water. For PFAS regulation, COG supports policies that enforce the "polluter pays" principle for PFAS cleanup, ensuring those responsible for contamination are held accountable. In addition, COG supports an explicit legislative exemption from liability under CERCLA (Superfund) for water and wastewater systems, which are passive receivers of these pollutants.

Ensure Local Government Input

Ensure that local governments and wastewater and drinking water utilities are given opportunities to provide timely and meaningful input on revisions to the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement in 2025, as well as legislation and management decisions affecting the Chesapeake Bay and local water quality.

HOUSING AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES

Support Efforts to Equitably Increase the Supply of Housing & Promote Housing Affordability

Support legislation and programs (such as the 2023-2024 provisions of the Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act and Neighborhood Homes Investment Act) to preserve and increase the supply of housing and housing choices to address the full spectrum of need in our region. Ensure that a sufficient supply of housing is preserved and produced as outlined in COG's 2030 Regional Housing Initiative targets including a diverse range of housing unit types, sizes and price points that are affordable (both rental and homeownership) for our residents in the region's identified Activity Centers and Equity Emphasis Areas. Support efforts to eliminate barriers to the production of fair and affordable housing by encouraging new financing tools (for builders and buyers), streamlining development processes, and creating innovative regulatory reforms, such as adaptive re-use of commercial space, that results in the production of a greater variety of housing types and eliminate exclusionary zoning practices. Support legislation, policies, and practices that increase access to opportunity, reverse segregation, and create inclusive communities in concert with efforts to increase supply overall.

Support Efforts to Prevent & End the Experience of Homelessness

Work with federal, state, and local Continuums of Care throughout the region to ensure that the experience of homelessness is rare, brief, and nonrecurring through implementation of a racial equity - informed "Housing First" approach. Support increasing the supply of deeply affordable and supportive housing with wrap-around services that promote housing stability and independent living, including strategies listed above. Voice the need for additional HUD funding for Housing Choice Vouchers to meet the need for permanent housing options as well as robust state and federal resources for local governments to provide necessary supports, such as case management, housing counseling, and navigator services to protect vulnerable residents. Support legislation such as the Housing Alignment and Coordination of Critical and Effective Supportive Health Services Act (ACCESS) to align housing and health care resources and clarify how federal funds can be used by homeless services providers to build their infrastructure to bill Medicaid for reimbursement. Support funding for financial rental assistance and legal aid to tenants, landlords, and moderate-income homeowners to prevent a significant increase in evictions and people experiencing homelessness.

Support Alignment of Workforce Development & Job Creation

Support federal legislation to focus on workforce development and job creation at the local level, and efforts to develop industry standard credentialing and skills programs for sectors experiencing job growth in the region. Support legislation and programs that fund local job development, career and technical education, and overall, more closely align education and job creation.

Support Local Governments & Activity Centers

Work with local governments to support sound land use planning which focuses on employer retention and new job growth in the region's mixed-use Activity Centers.

HOMELAND SECURITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Support Funding for Public Health Response

Support funding for public health to prevent, prepare for, and respond to public health emergencies and pandemics. Leverage new and existing funding mechanisms that would provide resources to carry out public health surveillance, reporting, infection control, vaccine distribution, laboratory testing, mass care, planning and exercises, communications and other public health activities. Invest in an adequate workforce capacity and capability to support public health infrastructure. Enact and support the development of more secure supply chain networks, with a focus on vulnerable populations, as it relates to personal protective equipment (PPE) and other life safety equipment used in the response of pandemics.

Support Cybersecurity Preparedness Initiatives

Support cybersecurity programs and initiatives that advance and improve cyber preparedness and response to current and emerging threats. Work with local and state partners to develop resiliency against future cybersecurity attacks and other virtual threats targeted at our citizens and the information technology infrastructure of our communities.

Support Regional Emergency Preparedness

Continue to support emergency response preparedness programs that advance and improve response preparedness to existing and emerging threats. Work with local and state partners to maximize the region's share of federal grant funds and use these funds to promote value added outcomes that continue to increase capacity, capability, and developed standards for regional response in the National Capital Region.

Increase Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Funding

The National Capital Region (NCR) receives UASI funding for efforts to address the multi-discipline planning, organization, equipment, training, and exercise needs of high-threat, high-density urban areas, and to assist in building and sustaining capabilities to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from threats or acts of terrorism using the whole community approach. As funding allocations are assessed, policy makers should recognize the complexity of challenges in the NCR that directly impact Federal government operations and security and support an increase in UASI funding to our region to effectively address the unique nexus of U.S. Federal, state, local, and international operations.

Support Resources for Violent Crime Reduction

Provide resources at the local, state and federal level to support the development, implementation and evaluation of strategies to prevent, intervene in, and respond to violent crime. Specifically, gun violence and the associated trauma inflicted on communities. Continue to provide Department of Justice grant funding to support violent crime reduction efforts at the local level.

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Support Efforts to Combat Substance Use Disorders

Work with local, state, and federal partners to increase resources to combat substance use disorders for all ages throughout the region which may include improving access to treatment and recovery services, promoting prevention education, reducing the stigma of drug disorders, supporting research on pain management, protecting harm reduction strategies, and ensuring awareness of overdose-reversing drugs.

Support Health Equity and Health Disparity Reduction

Support ongoing system reform that advances health equity and reduces health disparities, especially in maternal health outcomes. Health equity is the goal that every person is equally able to live a healthy life regardless of their background or circumstances. Health disparities are preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health that are experienced by socially disadvantaged racial, ethnic, and other population groups and communities. Ensure timely access to care for the health of all residents and the reduction of disparities in maternal morbidity and mortality by enacting policies that will assist counties in improving maternal health outcomes.

Increase Availability of and Access to Mental Health Services

Work with local, state, and federal partners to increase access to and availability of mental and behavioral health services, especially for youth, throughout the region. Include psychiatric hospital beds, counseling, telehealth, and other outpatient services; support culturally competent providers from diverse backgrounds; develop communication strategies to combat mental health stigma and promote mental wellness throughout communities. Continue expansion of crisis intervention, mental health courts, and diversion programs, where treatment is indicated rather than incarceration, especially for at-risk youth; and re-entry programs to reduce recidivism rates of mental health consumers.

Promote Family Preservation and Avoid Family Separation Due to Citizenship Status

Work with local partners to prioritize efforts that prevent family separation due to deportation or citizenship status. Advocate for policies that safeguard families of varying citizenship status by promoting alternatives to family separation and ensuring their placement within supportive family or community settings when separation is unavoidable. Emphasize strategies to strengthen family preservation services. Collaborate with child welfare systems to maximize funding and resources to address the increased caseload resulting from family separations, ensuring children have access to critical support services and stable placements during these challenging transitions.

Increase Recruitment and Support for Foster Children and Resource Parents

Support initiatives to address the critical shortage of resource parents by enhancing recruitment efforts and providing adequate support and resources to retain them. This includes offering targeted community outreach efforts to raise awareness of the need for foster families. Increase recruitment tools by promoting collaboration among jurisdictions to share events, resources, and best practices that effectively engage potential resource parents.

FOOD SECURITY & HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS

Strengthen Programs that Support Childhood Nutrition & Wellbeing

Use federal, state, and local legislative efforts to make access to school meals free for all students. Extend, expand, and simplify programs such as Summer EBT and the Summer Meals Program. Enhance and expand the Women Infants and Children (WIC) Program. Support supplemental, non-diversionary funding for other policies which reduce childhood poverty and food insecurity, including local, state, and federal Child Tax Credits. Strengthen farm-to-school programs and investments to connect the region's farmers with schools and childcare facilities. Support policies to provide and promote healthier food and drink options for children in retail and institutional settings.

Improve Food Security & Healthy Food Access

Support federal, state and local initiatives/investments to increase food and flexible cash assistance to residents in need, including children and their families, college students, adults, and seniors. Increase participation in federal benefit programs, streamline program administration and promote regional collaboration. Support and evaluate innovative initiatives to serve residents not eligible for federal programs to address the gap between cost of living and wages. Make permanent funding increases to SNAP to address food inflation and participants' nutritional needs, including reauthorization of the Farm Bill. Support culturally responsive policies and practices that protect the dignity and safety of food assistance recipients from immigrant communities. Support revenue generation policies to fund supplemental benefits for SNAP recipients at the local and state level, including leveraging tax policies such as an extreme wealth tax. Support the on-going modernization of SNAP to include increasing information security for SNAP participants and decreasing the incidence of SNAP outages. Create a means to replace funds for participants experiencing fraud or theft. Enhance SNAP acceptance among small and or local vendors through technology innovation and dissemination. Support policies and investments that address disparities in wealth and rates of food insecurity in people of color, including Black and Hispanic/Latino households. Increase investments in programs that improve access to local and regional healthy food, including access on college campuses, at food banks and pantries, farmers markets and CSAs, food hubs, grocery, pointof-choice initiatives, and in food as medicine programs. Promote the use of publicly owned lands for community food production, including food forests and community gardens. Recognize the hunting and fishing rights, as well as other food security priorities of indigenous people.

Support Small Farmers & Food System Resilience

Address issues such as Heirs Property which contributes to loss of land and intergenerational wealth among low-income individuals through advocacy and stakeholder education. Support local government efforts to increase farmland preservation, protect agricultural soils, and support programs that facilitate land transition to the next generation of small farmers. Promote and expand successful new and beginning farmer training programs and access to resources to support new farm businesses. Center the unique experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) in legislative proposals, and policy and program development to facilitate greater access to land ownership, capital, and markets. Support resources and policies that promote values-based group purchasing and institutional procurement initiatives from the region's farms. Invest in farmland protection and access, regional food system infrastructure, research, and capacity to increase resiliency. Prioritize funding and simplify processes to streamline payment and processing of benefit programs for farmers.

Support Local Food Entrepreneurs, Businesses, & Workforce Development

Strengthen programs that support entrepreneurialism, cooperative development, workforce development, and living wages in the regional food economy. Invest in local business development and ownership and target those investments to help address long-standing food system inequities faced by communities of color. Create career pipelines for food and agriculture workers and improve the health and safety of work environments. Invest in regional food production and distribution infrastructure to support small businesses including subsidized regional commercial kitchen space.

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Legislative Priorities: Monica Beyrouti Nunez, mbeyrouti@mwcog.org, (202) 962-3212

Transportation: Kanti Srikanth, ksrikanth@mwcog.org, (202) 962-3257

Water & Food Security: Steven Bieber, sbieber@mwcog.org, (202) 962-3219

Climate & Energy: Jeff King, jking@mwcog.org, (202) 962-3238

Housing and Human Services: Hilary Chapman, hchapman@mwcog.org, (202) 962-3346

Emergency Preparedness: Scott Boggs, sboggs@mwcog.org, (202) 962-3268