



# Rockville Reports

SEPTEMBER 2020 • VOL. 66 #7



• FIND MORE CITY NEWS AT [WWW.ROCKVILLEMD.GOV](http://WWW.ROCKVILLEMD.GOV) •

## COVID-19: Making Your Safety Our Priority

Montgomery County remains in the second of three reopening phases, as of late August, with reopening guidelines limiting office use and encouraging telework.

With these guidelines in mind, the city is not able to welcome visitors back to City Hall or many city facilities, and no definitive date for reopening can be established at this time.

Information about the city's response to the pandemic is available at [www.rockvillemd.gov](http://www.rockvillemd.gov), on social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Nextdoor), and on Rockville 11 (channel 11 on county cable). Visit [mailchi.mp/rockvillemd/covid19updates](http://mailchi.mp/rockvillemd/covid19updates) to sign up for city's email newsletter featuring city, state and county news about COVID-19. For general inquiries about city operations, call 240-314-5000.

### Food Distribution

Need food during the COVID-19 emergency? Visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/covid19-food](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/covid19-food) for a list of food resources around the county and other important information. Rockville seniors can call the senior center at 240-314-8800, from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday, for assistance with food.

### Find a COVID-19 Testing Site

While Montgomery County-administered COVID-19 testing was suspended in August, most private testing sites in Montgomery County remain in operation.

For a list of testing sites in Montgomery County, visit [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/covid19/testing.html](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/covid19/testing.html). Or, visit [coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/symptoms-testing#siteapp](http://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/symptoms-testing#siteapp) to find a testing site near you.

For more about the suspension of county-administered testing, visit [www2.montgomerycountymd.gov/mcgportalapps/Press\\_Detail.aspx?Item\\_ID=25707](http://www2.montgomerycountymd.gov/mcgportalapps/Press_Detail.aspx?Item_ID=25707).

### Protecting Housing

The Mayor and Council took action to protect residential renters during the COVID-19 emergency, passing an ordinance to temporarily suspend rent increases at licensed rental properties through July 31. From Aug. 1, until 180 days after the state of emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is lifted, rents may be raised by no more than 2.6%. The Mayor and Council also suspended recertification requirements for the city's moderately priced dwelling unit program until Wednesday, Sept. 30. Landlords may renew the resident lease term for one year without completing the MPDU recertification requirements.

### Mental Health and Wellness

The coronavirus pandemic is causing increased stress and anxiety. The Mental Health Association of Maryland has curated a list of trusted resources to help during this unusual, and potentially difficult, time. Visit [www.mhamd.org/coronavirus](http://www.mhamd.org/coronavirus).

### Swim and Fitness Center and Recreational Facilities Open for Limited Use

The Rockville Swim and Fitness Center's outdoor pools will remain open through September.

The center is open to members and city residents only, with reservations required for limited services and activities, including lap swimming at its indoor and outdoor pools, outdoor family recreational swimming, and fitness room use. Visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/swimcenter](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/swimcenter) for full details.

Rockville's basketball, tennis and pickleball courts, the dog park at King Farm, and playgrounds, are open. Bathrooms at outdoor facilities will remain closed except for city-sponsored programs. Fitness stations, volleyball courts and athletic fields that are not locked can be used by the public.

*continued on pg. 4...*

## Help Shape Rockville's Future: Census 2020 Deadline Approaches

Sept. 30 is the New Deadline for Responses

Have you completed your census questionnaire? If not, now is the time to do so.

The deadline to complete the questionnaire is Wednesday, Sept. 30, after the U.S. Census Bureau recently moved up the date by more than a month.

You can complete the questionnaire at [my2020census.gov](http://my2020census.gov) in 10 minutes or less. Customize the online questionnaire in one of more than 50 languages or respond by phone at 844-330-2020.

The census will not ask you about citizenship status. Responses are safe, secure, and protected by federal law. They can only be used to produce statistics and cannot be used against you by any government agency or court in any way — not by the FBI, CIA, DHS or ICE.

Census takers are now visiting homes that have not yet responded, to help households complete the questionnaire. If you respond online or by phone, a census taker will not need to visit you at home.

Completing the census will help inform how more than \$675 billion in federal funding is distributed each year for things like housing assistance, jobs, hospitals, schools and public transportation. It is es-

timated that each person not counted by the census costs the state of Maryland about \$18,250 over a 10-year period, for a total of \$26.6 billion statewide. Census data is also used to define representative boundaries for congressional districts, state legislative districts and voting precincts, and for enforcing voting rights and civil rights legislation.

The Census Bureau is still hiring part-time census takers to knock on doors of households that have not yet responded. Visit [2020census.gov/en/jobs.html](http://2020census.gov/en/jobs.html).

Montgomery County is seeking volunteers to visit food distribution and other community events to encourage census participation. This volunteer opportunity to serve as a Census Ambassador is open to all, but multilingual volunteers, particularly Spanish speakers, are particularly needed. Visit [montgomerycountymd.galaxydigital.com/need](http://montgomerycountymd.galaxydigital.com/need) and search for "census."

Learn more about the importance of the census to Rockville at [www.rockvillemd.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/2009](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/2009) and [www.rockvillemd.gov/RockvilleCounts](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/RockvilleCounts). ✚

## Rockville Goes Purple in September with Events to Raise Opioid Addiction Awareness

Campaign Aims to Reduce Stigma of Addiction

September is National Recovery Month, and the city will hold several events as part of Rockville Goes Purple, a continuing campaign to shine a spotlight on the impact of opioid addiction and educate the community about the epidemic.

The theme of this year's Rockville Goes Purple campaign is "Opioids: Let's Talk About It," which encourages dialogue about, and openness around, the problems of opioid addiction, and to create awareness about the dangers of stigmatizing

addiction.

Events planned for the month will include a virtual Race 4 Recovery 5K on Saturday, Sept. 26, where participants will be invited to walk, bike or run a 5K course of their choosing; virtual training, Tuesday, Sept. 22, in the use of the life-saving opioid overdose reversal drug, Narcan (sign up at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/NarcanTraining1](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NarcanTraining1)); and a Rockville 11 interview with Rona Kramer, secretary of the Maryland Department of Aging.

*continued on pg. 3...*

## Check Once, Check Twice

State, county and city actions to slow the spread of COVID-19 mean uncertainty for activities, programs and facility hours in the City of Rockville. Please check our online resources to see if any information contained in this edition of "Rockville Reports" has changed.

City Hall and most city facilities will be closed Monday, Sept. 7 in observance of Labor Day. The Rockville Swim and Fitness Center will be open to residents and facility members only, with limited services and activities. Visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/swimcenter](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/swimcenter) for details.

Recycling, trash and yard waste collection will be made one day later throughout the holiday week. Find more information at [www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash).

Parking will be free at city-owned meters on Sept. 7.

For more information, visit [www.rockvillemd.gov](http://www.rockvillemd.gov) or call 240-314-5000. ✚

## In This Issue...

- 2** Hearings Set for I-270/I-495 Project
- 3** New Ways to Park and Pay Water Bills
- 4** Taking Action on Climate Change



MAYOR & COUNCIL  
111 Maryland Ave.  
Rockville, Maryland  
20850-2364

PRESORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
SUBURBAN, MD.  
PERMIT NO. 63

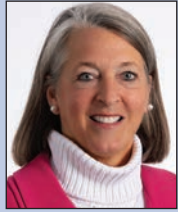
ECR WSS  
LOCAL  
POSTAL CUSTOMER

Puede encontrar esta información en su idioma. Visite [RockvilleReports.com](http://RockvilleReports.com) y abra el menú de «Selección Idioma» de Google Translate, situado en la esquina superior derecha de la página.

如果您希望以您的语言查找此信息，至网站[RockvilleReports.com](http://RockvilleReports.com)，打网页右上方的谷歌翻“选言”选单。

Bénéficiez de ces informations dans votre langue. Allez sur le site [RockvilleReports.com](http://RockvilleReports.com) et ouvrez le menu « Select Language » (choisir la langue) de Google Translate, situé en haut à droite de la page.

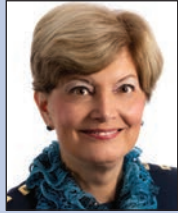
이 정보를 한국어로 보실 수 있습니다. [RockvilleReports.com](http://RockvilleReports.com)을 방문하여 페이지 오른쪽 위 Google Translate의 "Select Language" (원하는 언어) 메뉴를 여십시오.



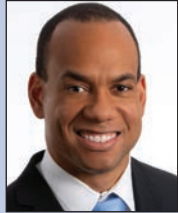
**Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton**  
240-314-8291  
bnewton@rockvillemd.gov



**Councilmember Monique Ashton**  
240-314-8295  
mashton@rockvillemd.gov



**Councilmember Beryl L. Feinberg**  
240-314-8293  
bfeinberg@rockvillemd.gov



**Councilmember David Myles**  
240-314-8294  
dmyles@rockvillemd.gov



**Councilmember Mark Pierzchala**  
240-314-8292  
mpierzchala@rockvillemd.gov

**VIRTUAL MEETINGS ARE BEING HELD ONLINE. Meetings are closed to in-person attendance and are livestreamed at [www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11).**

**Meetings Schedule: Mondays, Sept. 14 at 6 p.m. and Sept. 21 at 7 p.m. Visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter).**

The Sept. 14 meeting will be preceded by a drop-in session by telephone with Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton and Councilmember Mark Pierzchala from 5:30-6 p.m. To participate, sign up by 2 p.m. Sept. 14 at [www.rockvillemd.gov/FormCenter/City-Clerk-11/Sign-up-for-Dropin-Meetings-227](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/FormCenter/City-Clerk-11/Sign-up-for-Dropin-Meetings-227).

If you wish to submit comments in writing for community forum or public hearings, please email [mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov) by 2 p.m. on Mondays prior to meeting.

Share comments live during community forum. Sign up by calling the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations at 240-314-8280 by 9 a.m. the day of the meeting.

All comments will be acknowledged by the Mayor and Council at the meeting and added to the agenda for public viewing on the website. To practice responsible social distancing, Mayor and Council meetings will be conducted by teleconference and broadcast on Rockville 11, channel 11 on county cable, livestreamed at [www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11), and available a day after each meeting at [www.rockvillemd.gov/videoondemand](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/videoondemand).

## Public Hearings Set for I-270/I-495 Widening Project

The I-495 and I-270 Managed Lanes Study Draft Environmental Impact Statement, released in July, is available for public comment now until Thursday, Oct. 8.

The Federal Highway Administration, State Highway Administration and the Maryland Department of the Environment are holding in-person hearings from noon-9 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 1, at the Homewood Suites by Hilton, 9103 Basil Court in Largo; and Thursday, Sept. 10, at the Hilton Washington, D.C./Rockville Hotel & Executive Meeting Center, 1750 Rockville Pike. The final of four virtual/online public hearings is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 3.

Learn more at [495-270-p3.com/your-participation/upcoming-events](http://495-270-p3.com/your-participation/upcoming-events).

Staff from the city's Traffic and Transportation Division will work with Rockville's Mayor and Council to draft the city's response to the DEIS. The Mayor and Council are scheduled to discuss the city's response during their meeting on Monday, Sept. 14.

The Mayor and Council recently sent a letter urging the Maryland Department of Transportation to put the brakes on the project, which would widen interstates 270 and 495. Learn more at [RockvilleReports.com/mayor-and-council-call-on-state-to-slow-its-roll-on-i-270-i-495-widening](http://RockvilleReports.com/mayor-and-council-call-on-state-to-slow-its-roll-on-i-270-i-495-widening). ❖

## Mayor and Council to Consider Water and Sewer Rate Structure Changes

The Mayor and Council will consider a new rate structure for city water and sewer service this fall.

The city hired a consultant to develop the new structure, under which the Mayor and Council would set customers' water and sewer rates based on property type, such as single-family, multi-family or nonresidential.

If approved, the new rate structure would become effective for Fiscal Year 2022, which begins July 1, 2021. The actual water and sewer rates will be considered and approved during the FY 2022 budget process.

The city's current water and sewer rates are tiered based on meter size, with no differentiation between property types. Fees go toward payments to repair and replace aging water and sewer pipes and other infrastructure vital to providing these services, and for required payments to the Washington Suburban Sanitary

Commission related to a regional wastewater treatment plant. For more on water and sewer rates, see page 371 of the FY 2021 budget, at [www.rockvillemd.gov/budget](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/budget). ❖

The Mayor and Council are scheduled to consider the water and sewer rate structure during the following public meetings:\*

- **Monday, Oct. 5:** Presentation of the new proposed rate structure.
- **Monday, Nov. 9:** Public hearing.
- **Monday, Dec. 7:** Discussion and possible adoption of the new rate structure.

\*These meetings will focus on the rate structure. Actual water and sewer rates will be considered as part of the FY 2022 budget process, with adoption in May 2021.

## Mayor and Council Adopt the Park Road and North/South Stonestreet Avenue Area Plan Amendment

The Mayor and Council at their July 13 meeting, adopted the Park Road and North/South Stonestreet Avenue Area Comprehensive Master Plan Amendment, one of the key opportunity areas identified in the 2018 Stonestreet Corridor Study.

The plan amendment promotes a walkable, transit-oriented mix of residential and commercial development imme-

diately across Park Road from the Rockville Metro Station and sets policies to permit additional housing types in the residential areas closest to the station across South Stonestreet Avenue.

The adopted plan amendment, the Stonestreet Corridor Study and project updates can be viewed on the city's website at [www.rockvillemd.gov/2004/Stonestreet-Corridor](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/2004/Stonestreet-Corridor). ❖

## City to Mark Sept. 11 With Virtual Ceremony

Rockville's Mayor and Council will mark the anniversary of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 with an on-line remembrance ceremony.

Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton will deliver remarks that will be broadcast on Rockville 11 (channel 11 on county cable) and the city's Facebook page and YouTube channel on Friday, Sept. 11, to mark the 19th anniversary of the attacks. Newton recorded her remarks at the 9/11 Memorial at Courthouse Square Park, at the corner of East Jefferson Street and Maryland Avenue in Rockville's downtown.

Eleven Montgomery County residents who lost their lives on Sept. 11 are remembered through a memorial in the park, featuring benches and a plaque: William Edward Caswell, Dr. Gerald Paul Fisher, Capt. Lawrence D. Getzfred, Michele M. Heidenberger, Angela Marie Houtz, Teddington Hamm Moy, Lt. Darin H. Pontell, Scott A. Powell, Todd Hayes Reuben, Patricia J. Statz and Ernest M. Willcher. ❖

## Mayor and Council Declare Juneteenth a City Holiday

The Mayor and Council voted unanimously July 20 to recognize Juneteenth as an annual holiday in the City of Rockville.

The holiday commemorates June 19, 1865, when the Union army arrived in Texas bearing federal orders proclaiming the end of slavery. The orders arrived nearly 2 1/2 years after President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation declared that enslaved people living in the secessionist Confederate states were now free.

The adopted resolution designating June 19 as a municipal holiday states "that the City will mark this date with special events and celebrations to encourage Rockville staff and community to learn and share stories, recognize and commemorate the end of slavery in the United States, elevate and celebrate African American history and contributions, and take action to actively promote equity."

The Mayor and Council also discussed social justice, racism and bias, and agreed that the city will design a strategy for community dialogue and future actions surrounding the issues of equality.

For more info, including video discussions, visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter) and select the July 20 meeting agenda, or visit the city's YouTube channel at [youtube.com/cityofrockville](http://youtube.com/cityofrockville) and search "Juneteenth." ❖

## Get Involved with the City

- **Send an email** to [mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:mayorcouncil@rockvillemd.gov).
- **Testify at a hearing** or in writing to [cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov) or by mail to the City Clerk's Office, Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850.
- **Volunteer** to be on a board or commission. Find ways to give of your time and talents at [www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer).

## Boards and Commissions

Anyone interested in serving on a board or commission may write to: Mayor and Council, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850, call 240-314-8280, or fill out and submit an expression of interest form at [www.rockville.md.gov/boardscommissions](http://www.rockville.md.gov/boardscommissions).

While some meetings are canceled, other boards and commissions meetings will take place virtually in September. See times and dates, and ways to participate on city's online calendar: [www.rockvillemd.gov/calendar.aspx](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/calendar.aspx).

- **Sept. 9 and 23 Planning Commission** 7 p.m. (May be held by teleconference. Visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter) for details closer to the meeting dates.)

## Vacancies

The Mayor and Council are seeking applicants for the following boards and commissions:

- Board of Supervisors of Elections (3)
- Historic District Comm. (2 reg., 1 alt.)
- Landlord-Tenant Affairs Comm. (1 tenant alt.)
- Planning Comm. (1)
- Senior Citizens Comm. (1)

For more, visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions) or call 240-314-8280.

## Connect with us on Social Media.



**LEARN MORE ON ROCKVILLE 11**

[www.youtube.com/cityofrockville](http://www.youtube.com/cityofrockville)

## ► SPEAK UP ◀

Report potential fraud, waste and abuse related to City of Rockville government services and employees.

**Call 1-866-921-6714**

Email [rockvillemd@integritycounts.ca](mailto:rockvillemd@integritycounts.ca)  
Visit [www.integritycounts.ca/org/rockvillemd](http://www.integritycounts.ca/org/rockvillemd)  
For more information, visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/fraud-waste-abuse](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/fraud-waste-abuse).

**IMPORTANT NUMBERS:** Main: 240-314-5000

Police Non-emergency: 240-314-8900

24-Hour Utility Emergency Report Hotline: 240-314-8567



**STAY INFORMED:** The Mayor and Council meeting schedule and agendas can be found at [www.rockvillemd.gov/mayorcouncil](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/mayorcouncil). Staff reports with background information are included with the agendas, which are posted several days before each meeting.

## Planning Commission to Hold Public Hearing on the Draft Comprehensive Plan Update

Rockville's Planning Commission will hold a virtual public hearing on Sept. 9 and 23 for the community to provide comments on the Planning Commission's draft of the neighborhood-specific planning areas section of the comprehensive plan update. Details on how to pre-register for and participate in the public hearing are available online at [www.rockvillemd.gov/Rockville2040](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/Rockville2040).

Written comments continue to be accepted until the Planning Commission closes the public record after the conclusion of the public hearing. Comments can be submitted online at [www.rockvillemd.gov/forms.aspx?FID=65](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/forms.aspx?FID=65) or by email to [planning.commission@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:planning.commission@rockvillemd.gov).

A virtual information session will be held on Wednesday, Sept. 2, from noon-1:30 p.m. and from 6-7:30 p.m. to answer questions about the draft plan and to explain how to provide written and oral testimony. Preregistration is not required and attendees may join at any time during the scheduled sessions. Details on how to join the virtual information session are online at [www.rockvillemd.gov/Rockville2040](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/Rockville2040).

Planning staff is also available by request via email or virtual meeting to answer questions and talk with community associations, residents, businesses, employees and other organizations, so that community members can learn more about the draft's

contents and how to provide feedback.

The Planning Commission's Comprehensive Plan draft of Volume II: Planning Areas consists of policy recommendations and proposed city projects for each of the city's 17 neighborhood-scale planning areas.

These recommendations build on citywide policies of the draft "Volume I: Elements" — which the Planning Commission reviewed over the past year — by focusing on issues and opportunities unique to each planning area.

Both draft volumes are based on feedback gathered throughout the Rockville 2040 process, which included numerous listening sessions, citywide forums, open houses and other meetings, as well as analysis and discussion by the Planning Commission and city staff.

The Planning Areas component will help guide neighborhood, or planning area, policies and projects throughout the next two decades.

Rockville's comprehensive plan sets a vision and goals for the future of the city, with practical policies and actions to achieve those goals.

For more information, and to review the Planning Commission's draft Comprehensive Plan, visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/Rockville2040](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/Rockville2040) or contact principal planner Clark Larson at [clarson@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:clarson@rockvillemd.gov) or 240-314-8225. ❖

Department will collect leftover, unwanted or expired prescription drugs for safe disposal.

Follow the City of Rockville on Facebook, Twitter and Nextdoor, and watch the city's online calendar at [www.rockvillemd.gov/calendar.aspx](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/calendar.aspx) to find more details about the events as they develop.

See the Mayor and Council's proclamation of September as National Recovery Month at [www.youtube.com/cityofrockville](http://www.youtube.com/cityofrockville).

To learn more about the Rockville Goes Purple campaign, visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/rockvillegoespurple](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/rockvillegoespurple). ❖

## ParkMobile to Provide for Contactless Parking Payments in Rockville

### Replaces MobileNOW! App, Which Stopped Operating in May

Motorists will be able to use the ParkMobile app to pay for parking at the more than 500 publicly metered spaces throughout the City of Rockville, beginning this month.

ParkMobile, the leading provider of smart parking and mobility solutions in the U.S., is an option for paying for parking at over 21,000 spaces in in Montgomery County, as well as in Washington, D.C.; Arlington and Alexandria, Virginia; and over 400 cities across the U.S.

Amid the ongoing COVID-19 emergency, Rockville is encouraging motorists to use the app instead of the meter to help slow the spread of the virus.

"We are happy to continue offering a contactless payment option in our city," said Chief Victor Brito of the Rockville City Police Department. "ParkMobile is the leading mobile parking app and is widely available in

the Washington metropolitan area, making this an easy transition for our residents."

ParkMobile replaces MobileNOW! as the parking app for city meters. MobileNOW! stopped operating in May due to factors related to the COVID-19 emergency. City meters will continue to accept quarters.

To pay for parking with the ParkMobile app, a user enters the zone number posted on the stickers and signs posted around the meter, selects the amount of time needed and touches the "Start Parking" button to begin the session. The user can also extend the time of the parking session on their mobile device without having to go back to the meter. ParkMobile provides 24/7/365 customer service and additional payment options like PayPal and ApplePay.

For more information about parking in Rockville, visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/parking](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/parking). ❖

## Flashing Beacons and Adjusted Signals Provide Safer Crossings for the Community

The city's Department of Public Works installed flashing beacons at the intersection of Great Falls Road and Monument Avenue in August, to provide a safer crossing for schoolchildren and community members along a heavily traveled road.

The pedestrian-activated flashing beacons accompany new concrete pedestrian ramps at the key crossing for children walking to and from Julius West Middle School.

Meanwhile, the city worked with the Montgomery County Department of Transportation to improve safety at another busy crossing, near the pedestrian bridge over MD 355 (Rockville Pike) at the Rockville Metro station. In June, Metro closed access to the bridge, which needs

structural repairs. The city and county adjusted signal timing at MD 355 and E. Middle Lane/Park Road, and MD 355 and Monroe Place/Church Street, by adding five seconds to the crossing time. A leading pedestrian interval phase was also added at each intersection, giving pedestrians a head start when entering an intersection where vehicles traveling in the same direction have a green light.

The pedestrian bridge remains closed. A free shuttle is available between the station and Town Center. Look for signs, including at Monroe Street near East Montgomery Avenue. Learn more at [www.wmata.com/service/status/details/rockville-pedestrian-bridge-closure.cfm](http://www.wmata.com/service/status/details/rockville-pedestrian-bridge-closure.cfm). ❖

## Public Works and Planning Launch Customer Bill of Rights

Customers will now know exactly what to expect when they deal with Rockville's departments of Planning and Development Services and Public Works under a new customer bill of rights.

The bill of rights is based on a document from the City of San Diego's Department of Development Services. The bill of rights is a public statement of the departments' commitment to providing the best possible service.

The bill of rights outlines the kind of service customers can expect from the departments, including prompt and courteous interactions and transparency, as well as the opportunity to provide feedback on service and request a second opinion of decisions.

See the full customer service bill of rights at [www.rockvillemd.gov/2324/Customer-Bill-of-Rights](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/2324/Customer-Bill-of-Rights).

## Water Customers to Get a New Way to Pay

Paying a water bill is about to get easier for City of Rockville water customers.

A new payment system, debuting in November, will allow customers to conveniently view and pay their water bill online, set up automatic payments, and view their billing history at any hour of any day.

The new system, which will also include the option to pay by phone or by text message, is a simple, safe and secure way to pay. It will also offer email and optional text message reminders.

Be on the lookout for a mailer in November with new utility account information and instructions on how to register.

Customers will not incur late fees and are not expected to experience service interruptions during the transition to the new system. For more information about city water service, visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/water](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/water).

## Applications Being Accepted for Community Development Block Grants

The City of Rockville is now accepting applications for an anticipated \$263,000 in federal Community Development Block Grant funding for the fall of Fiscal Year 2022.

The CDBG program is a federal grant for housing and community development projects that benefit low- and moderate-income individuals, and provides grants to housing providers for housing and community development projects that benefit low- and moderate-income households or neighborhoods.

The Mayor and Council will hold a public hearing on community needs for CDBG projects at 7 p.m. Monday, Sept. 14. Applicants are encouraged to attend.

Fiscal Year 2022 grants will fund projects from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

Application instructions and an application form can be downloaded at [www.rockvillemd.gov/942/Community-Development-Block-Grant](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/942/Community-Development-Block-Grant).

Contact rehabilitation specialist Martin Dasler at 240-314-8208 or [mdasler@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:mdasler@rockvillemd.gov) for more information.

## Powell Appointed to Represent Sister Cities International

Drew Powell, president of Rockville Sister City Corporation, has been appointed by Sister Cities International to be its official liaison for the state of Maryland.

Powell's responsibilities will include representing SCI at in-state functions, assisting all Maryland sister city organizations to sustain and grow their sister city, sister county and sister state programs, as well as coordinating with municipal, county and state elected officials to promote Maryland sister city activities.

To find out more about the Rockville Sister City Corporation, visit [www.rockvillesistercities.org](http://www.rockvillesistercities.org).



**ALL ABOUT BATTERIES ...** Put batteries on your shopping list this month so that you can be ready in case of an emergency. September is National Preparedness Month. Find tips for building a disaster supplies kit and ensuring your family is ready at [ready.gov/september](http://ready.gov/september). Getting rid of old batteries? Don't dispose of them in your regular trash. The Household Hazardous Waste drop-off at the Shady Grove Processing Facility and Transfer Station now accepts all batteries. For more about battery disposal, visit [bit.ly/BatteryDisposal](http://bit.ly/BatteryDisposal).

## Volunteer Opportunities Not Totally on Pause During Pandemic

While many volunteer opportunities are on hold during the ongoing pandemic, others, which allow for social distancing, are seeking support.

Community members looking to keep our city streams clean and our city weed-free can apply to adopt a stream ([www.rockvillemd.gov/636/Adopt-a-Stream](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/636/Adopt-a-Stream)) or join the city's Weed Warriors ([www.rockvillemd.gov/639/Weed-Warriors](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/639/Weed-Warriors)). Stream clean-up and weed-pull events are being planned for fall and qualify for Student Service Learning credit hours.

Montgomery County is seeking volunteers to serve as Census Ambassadors, visiting food distribution and other community events to encourage census participation. See the census article on page 1.

Students in 10th-, 11th- and 12th grade can apply by Friday, Sept. 11 to help the city's Human Rights Commission as a Student Ambassador. See the red box below for more.

Find a full list of ways to give of your time and talents to serve your city at [www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/volunteer). For additional opportunities from around the county, visit the [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteercenter](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteercenter).

## Literary Festival to Honor Kingsolver

The F. Scott Fitzgerald Literary Festival will present its annual Award for Achievement in American Literature to acclaimed author Barbara Kingsolver.

Because of the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, the festival's events on Thursday, Sept. 24, Friday, Oct. 2 and Saturday, Oct. 3 will be online. The theme of this year's Fitzgerald festival is "Literature and Social Justice."

Kingsolver will accept the award on Oct. 3 and conduct a masterclass. Special guest, writer Clint Smith, will deliver a keynote address at 1 p.m.

For more on the festival, visit [www.fscottfestival.org](http://www.fscottfestival.org).

## COVID-19

continued from pg. 1...

Visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/recreation](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/recreation) for over 300 virtual recreation programs and activities.

## Rocktoberfest and Car Show Canceled

The city's Rocktoberfest, scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 3, has been canceled. For details about virtual festivities, follow the Rocktoberfest page on Facebook. The Antique and Classic Car Show, scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 17, has also been canceled. ✚

**Rockville Town Center is**  
**OPEN**  
for outdoor dining!



Rockville restaurants can now take advantage of an expedited permitting process that allows local eateries to temporarily create or expand outdoor spaces for dining.

**Hispanic Heritage Month**  
is Sept. 15-Oct. 15  
*Celebrate with us!*

Follow the city's social media, watch Rockville 11 and search "Hispanic Heritage" on the city's YouTube channel.



**Questions, Concerns or Ideas?**  
Reach out to Rockville City Manager Rob DiSpirito at [rdspirito@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:rdspirito@rockvillemd.gov) or 240-314-8102.

# Election Info: Be In the Know By Nov. 3

Gov. Larry Hogan announced recently that the general election will take place as scheduled on Tuesday, Nov. 3, with early voting centers and all polling locations open.

Hogan directed the Maryland State Board of Elections to send an absentee ballot request application to every registered Maryland voter. To receive an absentee ballot application, you must be registered to vote.

(Visit [voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/OnlineVoterRegistration/InstructionsStep1](http://voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/OnlineVoterRegistration/InstructionsStep1) to register online.)

If you believe you're already registered to vote, check your registration at [voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/VoterSearch](http://voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/VoterSearch), or text "check" to 77788 to confirm.

If you've moved, be sure to update your mailing address by Tuesday, Oct. 13, to ensure that you receive an absentee ballot application and important notifications. ✚

### Here's how to request an absentee ballot:

**Online:** Access the online application at [voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/OnlineVoterRegistration/InstructionsStep1](http://voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/OnlineVoterRegistration/InstructionsStep1). You must have a Maryland driver's license or other MVA-issued card to apply online. The online process is also used for voter registration, so by using it you will make sure your voter registration is correct. The online application can also be accessed by texting VBM to 77788.

**By Mail:** Print out the form in English ([elections.maryland.gov/voting/documents/Absentee\\_Ballot\\_Application\\_English.pdf](http://elections.maryland.gov/voting/documents/Absentee_Ballot_Application_English.pdf)) or Spanish ([elections.maryland.gov/voting/documents/Absentee\\_Ballot\\_Application\\_Spanish.pdf](http://elections.maryland.gov/voting/documents/Absentee_Ballot_Application_Spanish.pdf)), fill it out, and return by mail, email, fax or in person to the Board of Elections.

**By Phone:** Call the Montgomery County Board of Elections at 240-777-8550.

## Learn Online to Stay Healthy in September

Stay home but also stay well with online seminars from the Rockville Senior Center in September. For details, visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/recreation](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/recreation).

You can register online, call 240-314-8800 or email [seniorcenter@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:seniorcenter@rockvillemd.gov) for more information.

### Blood Pressure Series with Adventist HealthCare

**Session 1: Blood Pressure 101**  
This high-level online overview from 1-2 p.m. on Tuesdays will cover what blood pressure numbers mean, the effects of high blood pressure on the body, and risk and lifestyle factors. (Class is part of a series but can be taken individually.) Begins Sept. 8. Register with course #14979.

### Fall Risks

Worried about a fall or have you fallen recently? In a free virtual seminar at 1 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 9, Adventist Healthcare Rehabilitation will discuss falls, recommend changes you can make at home, and determine your risk of falling based on a standardized questionnaire. Scores can help determine your need for outpatient physical therapy. Review at-home exercises to reduce the risk of falls. Register with course #14972.

### Flu Shot Clinic

An outdoor flu-shot clinic, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 22, in the senior center's back parking lot at 1150 Carnation Drive.

Only Medicare insurance will be accepted (otherwise, pay cash). Bring your Medicare Insurance card: Quadrivalent (regular), \$30; preservative-free, \$32; high dose, \$70 (recommended for seniors); egg-free, \$70.

Visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/seniorcenter](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/seniorcenter) for more info. ✚

## Got Good Neighbors? Let Us Know!

Rockville is a city of good neighbors. The city is seeking nominations, through 5 p.m. Friday, Oct. 16, for its Good Neighbor Awards. The program recognizes community members who are unselfishly giving back and improving quality of life in their neighborhoods through good deeds or community service.

The program is designed to honor those who make a difference in our community without seeking or receiving recognition for their service. Nominees are sought in two divisions: adult and youth.

Past honorees have included community members who beautified their

neighborhoods, cleared snow and looked out for neighbors, and volunteered for community organizations. To learn more about them, visit [RockvilleReports.com](http://RockvilleReports.com) and search "good neighbor."

Award nominees cannot be employed by the City of Rockville, must be a City of Rockville resident and must have made a significant contribution to an individual or their community during the 2020 calendar year. Recipients will be honored at a Mayor and Council meeting on a date to be determined.

For nomination forms and more information, visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/goodneighbor](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/goodneighbor). ✚

## Help Rockville on Climate Change Action

The City of Rockville is embarking on a process to develop its first Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare the community to adapt to a changing climate. The city is striving to reflect the viewpoints, priorities and needs of Rockville's residents, communities and businesses. Share your vision by taking the climate action survey at [www.rockvillemd.gov/climate](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/climate). Information will

be posted there by Monday, Sept. 21, when the Mayor and Council are scheduled to discuss the climate action planning process. Sign up for the Environment and Sustainability News email newsletter at [www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/newsletters) to receive regular updates about environmental news and tips for living greener, including Climate Action Plan news and events. ✚

### Get a Tree for Free! (Two, Actually!)

The City of Rockville will give away a limited number of native trees during a no-contact pickup event.



**Saturday, Oct. 10 • 9 a.m.-2 p.m.**  
Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Drive



Preregistration required at [www.rockvillemd.gov/environment](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/environment). No walkups. Rockville residents only. Limit two trees per household. Large shade and small flowering trees available while supplies last. Face coverings and social distancing of 6 feet will be required.

### Serve Your City: Volunteer for a Board or Commission

**Rockville resident?** Lend your expertise to a city board or commission. Boards and commissions provide the Mayor and Council with informed public opinions, thoughts and ideas that shape the city.

Find a list of boards and commissions, vacancies and an Expression of Interest Form at [www.rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions), or contact the City Clerk's Office at [cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov) or 240-314-8280.



Get Into It

**City Manager:** Rob DiSpirito  
**Deputy City Manager:** Jennifer Kimball  
**Director of Communication:** Marylou Berg  
**Public Information Specialists:** Cliff Cumber, Sean Sedam

**Web and Digital Manager:** Tatum B. Walker  
**Graphics and Printing:** Eric Ferrell, Erin Fincher, Lori Russler  
**Rockville 11:** Hagop Balekjian, Craig Buchanan, Kathy Dantzler

**Rockville Reports** is the official publication of the City of Rockville, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850. It is delivered to all homes and businesses within Rockville's city limits. Any individuals with disabilities who would like to receive the information in this publication in another form may contact the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator at 240-314-8100; TTY 240-314-8137. Have an idea for "Rockville Reports"? Email [pio@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:pio@rockvillemd.gov).



**STUDENT AMBASSADORS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ...** Rockville's Human Rights Commission is seeking students to serve as HRC Student Ambassadors. Students in 10th, 11th and 12th grade will serve from Sept. 23-June 23, participating in HRC meetings, acting as liaisons to schools, and assisting with planning, executing and improving HRC programs and initiatives. Apply, online through 5 p.m. Friday, Sept. 11, at [www.rockvillemd.gov/humanrights](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/humanrights).