

ROCKVILLE reports

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Mayor and Council Adopt King Farm Farmstead Master Plan

A plan for a revitalized King Farm Farmstead unanimously approved by Rockville's Mayor and Council on Dec. 8 envisions the historic property as a hub for community life.

The King Farm Farmstead Master Plan represents a forward-looking vision that blends history and heritage with adaptive reuse and community benefit.

"We unanimously approved the King Farm Farmstead Master Plan following an extensive community engagement process — because investing in expanded youth recreation, senior services, child care and a welcoming community gathering space ensures our historic farmstead will help foster a vibrant, inclusive hub for all," the Mayor and Council said in a joint statement. "We will also continue to nurture and maintain the community garden while telling the story of the land's past and cultivating a healthier, interconnected future for Rockville."

The plan calls for improved accessibility and new and enhanced connections between the historic landmark in King Farm Farmstead Park and the surrounding neighborhood. It envisions multipurpose halls for performances, markets and larger gatherings; flexible rooms for arts, technology and wellness; and specialized spaces for a teaching kitchen, makerspaces and child care.

The plan also aims to preserve the site's history. Additions and modifications will be carefully designed to respect the original character of the buildings while providing the infrastructure necessary for modern use. The community garden and its historic corridor will be preserved and integrated into the overall site.

The Mayor and Council also directed staff to develop programming and interpretative signage to educate visitors about the farmstead's history, including its past ownership and contributions to agriculture in the region.

The plan is the product of sustained public dialogue, technical study and careful design. During an Oct. 20 work session, the Mayor and Council directed staff to revise the plan by removing newly proposed parking lots and a proposed addition connecting the farmstead's two dairy barns, to revise cost estimates and to provide an economic analysis and plan for phasing project implementation.

Find the plan and video of the Mayor and Council vote with the Dec. 8 meeting listing at rockvillemd.gov/agendacenter.

Visit engagerockville.com/kingfarm for more information.

Rockville's Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration Focuses on 'Reclaiming the Dream'

Rockville will honor Martin Luther King Jr.'s life and legacy with a fresh look at justice, equity and action as the city holds its 54th annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration.

"Reclaiming the Dream: Justice, Equity, and Action," from 8:30 a.m.-noon Monday, Jan. 19 at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, 603 Edmonston Drive, will explore what it means to advance equity and justice in communities today.

Hosted by the Mayor and Council and the city's Human Rights Commission, and scheduled for the Monday holiday, the event will include deep and engaging conversations on equitable governance, shared leadership, systemic change and restorative practices. It will highlight the power of collective action, civic innovation and healing justice as attendees reflect, reimagine and recommit to building a future rooted in justice for all.

A continental breakfast will be available while supplies last.

Event presenters include:

Razia F. Kosi, a mental health professional and education leader, focused on advancing equity, elevating trauma-informed practices, championing student voice initiatives and developing strategies to address and mitigate

hate/bias incidents in a highly diverse Maryland public school system.

William N. Flagler Jr., a crisis management consultant and speaker who directs public safety communications and emergency management planning and response for a large local jurisdiction.

Mary Frances Kenion, chief equity officer at the National Alliance to End Homelessness, who has spent more than 18 years helping communities improve their homelessness response systems.

Kyle A. Warfield, a Maryland lawyer and inclusion and compliance specialist in public higher education, monitoring diversity commitments; providing custom training and consultation services; developing recruitment, hiring and retention resources for senior leaders; and collaborating with the campus community to solve problems.

After the city's celebration, attendees are encouraged to participate in a day of service through the Montgomery County Volunteer Center. Visit montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteercenter/volunteers/mlk.html for more information and to register.

Learn more at rockvillemd.gov/mlk.

New Year's and Martin Luther King Jr. Day Bring Closures in Rockville

City Hall and all city facilities will be closed for New Year's Day, Thursday, Jan. 1, and most city facilities will be closed on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Monday, Jan. 19.

The Rockville Swim and Fitness Center and the Rockville Skate Park will be open on Jan. 19. All other city facilities will be closed in observance of the holiday.

During the New Year's holiday week, recycling, trash and yard waste collection will occur Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday as scheduled. Thursday collections will be made on Friday. During the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday week, all collections will occur one day later than usual. For more information, visit rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash or call 240-314-8568.

Parking will be free at city-owned meters on Jan. 1 and 19.

On Wednesday, Dec. 31, the Rockville Swim and Fitness Center will offer limited services and will close at 4 p.m. Visit rockvillemd.gov/swim center for details. The Rockville Skate Park will close at 7 p.m. Thomas Farm and Twinbrook community centers will be open 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Dec. 31. (Lincoln Park Community Center is closed for renovations. Visit rockvillemd.gov/lpcc for details.) Croydon Creek Nature Center will be open 10 a.m.-2 p.m. The Rockville

continued on pg. 7



The Rockville City Police Department's newest officer has four legs and big floppy ears.

Dare, a bloodhound, reported for duty Dec. 22 and is now on patrol on Rockville's

RCPD Welcomes New K-9 Officer

K-9 Dare is Department's First Bloodhound

streets alongside her partner, Cpl. James Shieder Jr. She is the latest in a line of Rockville K-9 officers that spans more than half a century.

Earlier in December, Shieder and longtime K-9 handler Cpl. Ali Zeighani met Dare in Kentucky for bonding and training.

While bloodhounds are known for their acute sense of smell, Dare is the first bloodhound K-9 in the history of

RCPD. Recent K-9 officers have all been German shepherds. All RCPD K-9s past and present were trained in narcotics



and bomb detection, as well as tracking.

"The addition of Dare is a major step forward for the Rockville City Police Department in expanding our operational and lifesaving capabilities," Chief Jason L. West said.

RCPD established its K-9 unit in 1974 with Officer Larry Yates, who later retired as a captain, serving as the depart-

continued on pg. 7

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In This Issue...

2 Employee Awards

3 Meet Your State Reps

4 Radon Reminder

5 Collection Calendar

MAYOR & COUNCIL
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Zoning Ordinance Rewrite, Map Amendment Move Into Adoption Phase

Rockville's Zoning Ordinance Rewrite and Comprehensive Map Amendment project has entered its final phase: the adoption process.

This begins a months-long period of public review expected to shape the final zoning ordinance and map, with adoption anticipated later in 2026.

On Dec. 1, the Mayor and Council authorized staff to file a recommended draft of the zoning text amendment, which would revise and replace the city's zoning ordinance, and a recommended draft of the comprehensive map amendment, which would update the city's zoning map.

This authorization launched the formal adoption process. Over coming months, the Planning Commission will hold public hearings and work sessions to review the draft, recommend revisions, and forward the documents to the Mayor and Council for their review and final action. Community members will have multiple opportunities to provide input throughout the process, which is expected to take about six months.

Staff drafts of the updated zoning ordinance and map are available for review at Engage Rockville, engagerockville.com/zoningrewrite. To help understand the proposed changes, city staff created a summary document, "Highlights: City of Rockville Staff Draft Zoning Ordinance," which outlines key changes and indicates sections of interest.

An interactive version of the draft zoning map allows users to pan across the city, zoom in and out, search for specific properties, compare current and proposed zoning using a slider tool, and view parcel-specific information. Static map files are also available.

To support public understanding and feedback, the Department of Community Planning and Development Services hosted an orientation session on Dec. 4. Video of the session is available at engagerockville.com/zoningrewrite. A second, identical virtual session is scheduled for 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 7, via Webex. Register at the Engage Rockville website to receive a link to the session.

The Planning Commission received its initial briefing on the draft on Dec. 10 and identified topics for discussion at work sessions scheduled for early 2026. Meeting materials, including a video of the meeting and staff report, can be found at rockvillemd.gov/AgendaCenter.

Community members are encouraged to review the drafts and share feedback using the forms available at engagerockville.com/zoningrewrite. Each form includes structured questions and space for additional comments. Submissions will be shared with the Planning Commission and the Mayor and Council during their respective work sessions. Separate forms are available for the staff drafts of the zoning ordinance and zoning map.

Take the Survey and Request a Test: Water Service Line Inventory Efforts Continue

Rockville is continuing efforts to identify materials used in customers' drinking water service lines.

In December, a new notification letter was mailed to customers whose service lines are still classified as being of unknown material or as "galvanized requiring replacement." GRR pipes may have been connected downstream from a lead service line, creating a risk of lead in drinking water. The Environmental Protection Agency's Lead and Copper Regulations require they be replaced.

To create a comprehensive service line inventory, city staff have reviewed historical records and conducted two rounds of customer self-reporting surveys in November 2024 and July 2025. Next steps include data analytics, targeted field verification and door-to-door visits to efficiently confirm pipe materials for hard-to-access

lines.

As of December, no lead service lines have been identified within the City of Rockville's water system. Preliminary customer survey results identified 23 GRR pipes exclusively on the customer-owned portion of the service line.

Rockville encourages all customers with unknown service lines to visit rockvillemd.gov/lcrr to complete a service line inventory survey for their home. The webpage also offers customers with unknown or GRR lines the opportunity to request free water testing. Testing provides essential information for protecting public health and ensuring the inventory is accurate.

To learn more, visit rockvillemd.gov/lcrr, email lcrr@rockvillemd.gov or call the Department of Public Works at 240-314-8500.

Changes Coming to Multifamily Housing Inspections and Licensing

Rockville will implement several changes to its multifamily rental inspection and licensing program beginning Thursday, Jan. 1, including new mold response timelines, a larger inspection sample and an enhanced inspection option tied to inspection results.

The updates will be administered by the City of Rockville Code Enforcement team within the Department of Community Planning and Development Services' Inspection Services Division.

One change aligns the city's process with the Maryland Tenant Mold Protection Act. Landlords are required to conduct a mold assessment within 15 days after receiving written notice regarding suspected mold from a tenant, building occupant or the applicable local agency that enforces housing and livability codes. If the assessment determines mold remediation is required, it must be completed within 45 days after the assessment is completed, or with-

in a reasonable amount of time if 45 days is not feasible.

Beginning with the 2026 renewal cycle, the city will increase the required inspection sample for multifamily rental license renewals from 20% to 25% of units.

Rockville is also incorporating an enhanced inspection program as an additional layer of compliance. Depending on the inspection results and thresholds established by the chief of Inspection Services, the city may require additional units to be inspected before an annual rental license is renewed. The expanded inspection may include as much as 50% of a property's units.

Initial and renewal applications for multifamily rental licenses will be available through MGO Connect, Rockville's online portal for permits, planning and development applications, beginning Jan. 1.

For more information about CPDS and its services, visit rockvillemd.gov/cpds.

More Than a Thousand Hours Dedicated to You

City Honors Employees for Service and Outstanding Performance



Bill Mason Award winners **Donovan Brown** (l) and **Walter Pocasangre** (r) are recognized onstage by (l-r) **City Manager Jeff Mihelich**, and **council members Barry Jackson, Izola (Zola) Shaw and Adam Van Grack**.

Sixty-nine Rockville employees with a combined 1,070 years of service were recognized during the annual City of Rockville Employee Awards Ceremony, held December at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre.

The ceremony, honoring staff with tenures of five to 35 years, included presentation of the Bill Mason Award for Outstanding Performance, which recognizes employees who exemplify exceptionally high-quality service, a strong work ethic and a willingness to go the extra mile. The award is named



Anthony Tilford (third from left) and **Patricia Powell** (fourth from left), with **Frank Lewis** (not pictured), were honored for 35 years of service.

for the late William "Bill" Mason, who served as an example of outstanding performance and dedicated service to the City of Rockville.

The 2025 Bill Mason Award was presented to Walter Pocasangre of the Department of Recreation and Parks and Donovan Brown of the Department of Public Works.

Pocasangre, a maintenance worker with the horticulture crew, has served Rockville for more than 18 years. He plays a key role in maintaining the city's parks and green spaces, contributing to planting projects, landscaping improvements and daily park care. Known for his reliability and attention to detail, Pocasangre also supports

team operations by training new employees and offering suggestions to improve work processes. His commitment has often extended beyond regular hours to ensure projects are completed to a high standard.

Brown was recognized for his consistent professionalism, strong attendance record and positive approach to work. He is known for handling both complex and routine tasks with care and enthusiasm while fostering a collaborative team environment. Brown's reliability and supportive nature have contributed to both indi-

vidual and team success within the public works department.

The city also recognized employees reaching significant service milestones. Three employees were honored for 35 years of service: Frank Lewis and Patricia Powell of Public Works and Anthony Tilford of Recreation and Parks. Together, they represent 105 years of dedicated service to the Rockville community.

The annual ceremony celebrates employees whose commitment and performance help deliver high-quality services and support the city's mission to serve residents effectively.



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mayor council@rockvillemd.gov



Mayor Monique Ashton
240-314-8291
mashton@rockvillemd.gov



Councilmember Kate Fulton
240-314-8293 • kfulton@rockvillemd.gov



Councilmember Barry Jackson
240-314-8295 • b.jackson@rockvillemd.gov



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



Councilmember Izola (Zola) Shaw
240-314-8297 • ishaw@rockvillemd.gov



Councilmember Marissa Valeri
240-314-8296 • mvaleri@rockvillemd.gov



Councilmember Adam Van Grack
240-314-8292 • avangrack@rockvillemd.gov

FY 2025 Financial Reports Highlight Rockville's Finances

Summaries Give Public a Look at the City's Fiscal Health

Two annual reports that are now posted online give the public a closer look at Rockville's financial health during the most recently completed fiscal year.

For Fiscal Year 2025, which closed June 30, the city ended "with an overall net position of \$375.5 million, an increase of 4.3 percent from the prior year," City Manager Jeff Mihelich wrote in the city's Popular Annual Financial Report, a summary document highlighting the city's finances. Net position is a useful indicator of a government's financial health and represents total assets minus total liabilities.

"This growth was driven by higher property and income tax receipts, increased charges for services, and additional tax duplication revenue, paired with thoughtful, conservative spending across all departments," Mihelich wrote.

The city ended the year with a general fund reserve of \$31.8 million, equal to 29.2% of the FY 2025 general fund adopted revenue. The general fund is the main source of funding for the city's day-to-day operations.

The city maintains a triple-A bond rating. Triple-A is the highest possible rating and saves Rockville taxpayers money by allowing the city to borrow at the lowest possible interest rates.

The city created the first PAFR in 2007 to explain, in layman's terms, information contained in Rockville's since-renamed Annual Comprehensive Financial Report. The ACFR is prepared by the Finance Department in accordance with generally ac-

cepted accounting principles and audited by certified public accountants.

The FY25 PAFR describes:

- The city government and services.
- Rockville demographics and statistics.
- The city's financial structure, including governmental funds, such as the general fund and the capital projects fund, and enterprise funds.
- The overall financial health of the city.
- The city's capital investments and debt.
- Property taxes and utility rates, including how to read tax and utility bills.

The report also lists city accomplishments and accolades and spotlights "Rockville's vision for a vibrant, accessible, and welcoming urban core" in its Town Center Master Plan.

The PAFR and ACFR are available at rockvillemd.gov/financialreports.

Rockville Recognized for Excellent Financial Reporting

Rockville was proud to accept, for the 35th year in a row, the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Award from the Government Finance Officers Association for Fiscal Year 2024. The award recognizes the excellence of the documents produced by the city's Finance Department, including the city's operating budget and capital improvements program, as well as the ACFR and PAFR. GFOA evaluates the reports for the information they present, reader appeal, understandability, distribution and other elements. Staff is confident that the FY25 reports will again earn this distinction.

Meet District 17's Delegation in Annapolis



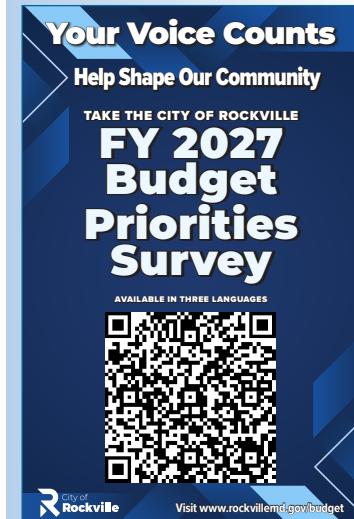
District 17 representatives, pictured left to right: Del. Ryan S. Spiegel; Sen. Cheryl C. Kagan, and dels. Julie Palakovich Carr and Joseph Vogel.

Mix, mingle and chat with the senator and delegates who represent District 17 in the Maryland General Assembly. The Monday, Jan. 26 event, to be held in Annapolis, is

sponsored by the four-person District 17 delegation.

Rockville will provide a bus to transport the mayor, council, city staff and residents who

continued on pg. 7



DO GOOD BY YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD WITH THE CITY'S BUDGET SURVEY ... Public participation in the budget process is a high priority for the Mayor and Council and city staff. That includes having all parts of the city represented in responses to a survey about community priorities for the city's budget.

The community budget priorities survey is available in English, Spanish and simplified Chinese at rockvillemd.gov/budget. Survey responses provide valuable input to the Mayor and Council for their budget discussions.

Public hearings on the Fiscal Year 2027 city budget resume in March, following the introduction of the city manager's budget proposal.

The city manager's FY27 budget proposal will be presented Monday, March 9, followed by public hearings and work sessions on Mondays, March 9 and 23, and a final balancing and Capital Improvements Program work session on Monday, April 13. The budget is scheduled for adoption on Monday, May 4.



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COMPLETE LA ENCUESTA Presupuesto de la Ciudad de Rockville Para el Año Fiscal 2027

DISPONIBLE EN TRES IDIOMAS

The city manager's FY27 budget proposal will be presented Monday, March 9, followed by public hearings and work sessions on Mondays, March 9 and 23, and a final balancing and Capital Improvements Program work session on Monday, April 13. The budget is scheduled for adoption on Monday, May 4.

THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL ARE HOLDING HYBRID MEETINGS. The public is welcome to participate in person or virtually.

Meetings Schedule: Monday, Jan. 5 at 5:30 p.m. and Jan. 12 at 6:30 p.m. Visit rockvillemd.gov/agendacenter for details.

A drop-in session from 5:15-6:15 p.m. with Mayor Monique Ashton and Councilmember Marissa Valeri will precede the Jan. 12 meeting.

Share comments live during community forum. Sign up by calling the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations at 240-314-8280 by 10 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.

If you wish to submit comments in writing, please email mayor council@rockvillemd.gov by 10 a.m. on the day of a community forum or public hearing.

Mayor and Council meetings are broadcast on Rockville 11, channel 11 on county cable, live-streamed at rockvillemd.gov/rockville11 and available a day after each meeting at rockvillemd.gov/videoondemand.

Get Involved with the City

- Send an email** to mayor council@rockvillemd.gov.
- Testify at a hearing** or in writing to mayor council@rockvillemd.gov or by mail to Mayor and Council, Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville, MD 20850.
- Volunteer** Find ways to give of your time and talents at 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 rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions.

See times and dates on the city's calendar: rockvillemd.gov/calendar.

- Jan. 14 and 26**, Planning Commission, 7 p.m. (To participate, visit rockvillemd.gov/agendacenter.)

Vacancies

- Board of Appeals (1)
- Cultural Arts Comm. (2)
- Environment Comm. (2)
- Ethics Comm. (1)
- Historic District Comm. (1)
- Human Rights Comm. (4)
- Human Services Advisory Comm. (1)
- Landlord-Tenant Affairs Comm. (2)
- Planning Comm. (1)
- Recreation and Park Advisory Board (1)
- Transportation and Mobility Comm. (1)

For more information, visit rockvillemd.gov/boardscommissions or call 240-314-8280.



City Hall: **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 rockvillemd.gov/mayor council. Staff reports with background information are included with the agendas, which are posted several days before each meeting.

Protect Our Parks, Streams and Neighborhoods: Put Pet Waste in the Trash

Pet waste belongs in the trash, not on the ground. Pet waste contains twice as much bacteria per gram as human waste. In your yard, in parks, in the dog park – wherever you are, pick up the poop and put it in the trash. Follow these tips to prevent pet waste from contaminating our streams:

- Carry disposable bags and pick up after your pet, even on trails and in the woods. If you hire a dog walker, make sure they pick up after your pet when on their walk.
- Properly dispose of pet waste by bagging the waste and depositing it a trash can or pet waste receptacle.
- Do not throw bagged pet waste into storm drains or the woods, and do not leave it on the ground.
- Be sure to pick up pet waste on your property, too. Anything washed away by rain will end up in streams.
- Reuse bags that would have ended up in the trash to pick up after pets. Ask co-workers, neighbors and friends to collect plastic bags used for bread, newspapers, bagels or produce. Save money by not having to buy pet waste bags or pay the 10-cent fee for bags at grocery stores.

Recycle the Holidays (But Be Careful with Batteries)

As the post-holiday cleanup begins, remember: Rockville collects and recycles electronics, such as cell phones, computers, televisions and holiday lights through requests for special collections.

The city also collects Christmas trees as part of its recycling and trash collection. See the "Recycle Right" article on page 5.

Don't dispose of batteries in your trash or recycling cart, where they could start a fire. Instead, bring batteries of any size to the household hazardous waste drop-off at the county transfer station at 16105 Frederick Road.

Find more information, including locations that accept batteries for recycling, at bit.ly/BatteryDisposal.

For more information about how Rockville recycles, including printable holiday schedule calendars for collection day, or to request a special collection, visit rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash.



RESOURCES FOR FEDERAL WORKERS ... Visit rockvillemd.gov/federalworkers for a list of resources for federal employees and other workers impacted by the federal government transition.

Connect with us on Social Media.

Rockville Urges Testing During National Radon Action Month

January is National Radon Action Month and Rockville is helping residents protect their homes and health with a radon information session and free test kits.

Radon is an invisible, odorless and tasteless radioactive gas. While no immediate symptoms signal its presence, exposure at high levels can cause cancer. Testing is the only way to know a home's radon levels.

The Rockville Senior Center will host a free in-person and virtual information session where participants can learn what radon is, why it can be a hidden health risk in homes and how it affects well-being. The session will also cover simple testing methods and resources for reducing radon exposure. Register with course #38536 at rockvillemd.gov/ registration. The session will be held 10-11 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 14.

Order a discounted radon test kit via the link at rockvillemd.gov/radon.

The test involves placing a small measuring device in the middle of the base-

ment or lowest level of a home, raised 3 feet off the ground for two to four days. Directions included with the kit explain how to mail the device to a laboratory for results.

Rockville's building code requires all new single-family construction to include passive radon mitigation features. These include subfloor preparation, installation of a soil-gas retarder, closure of potential radon entry routes and installation of vent pipes. These elements are verified through required city inspections.

Montgomery County's home energy disclosure and radon testing laws apply to the sale of single-family homes and townhomes in Rockville and require specific rental properties to be tested for radon. The laws provide residents with access to important home health and energy information, supporting the goal of protecting public health from radon exposure and promoting home energy efficiency, an objective of Rockville's Climate Action Plan.

For more information, visit rockvillemd.gov/radon.

REDUCE YOUR RADON RISK

The only way to know is to test!
Find resources about test kits, mitigation methods and questions to ask a professional at the webpage below.



Radon is a colorless, odorless, radioactive gas that can build up inside the home and increase the risk of lung cancer.



Test your home at least every two years. It's easy and inexpensive.



If your radon levels are 4.0 pCi/L or higher, consult a radon mitigation professional.

www.rockvillemd.gov/radon

We Need Your Support!



Rockville Recreation and Parks Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization established to:

- Improve recreational activities, programs, parks and facilities.
- Support the Rockville Youth Recreation Fund.
- Assist with fundraising, and the acquisition and maintenance of new parks and open space.
- Purchase equipment and other amenities for the city's parks and facilities.



Please send your tax deductible gift to:
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Bring Your Own Bag Law Now Applies in Rockville

Exemptions from the Law

- Plastic bags are still allowed in some instances, including medications from pharmacies, fresh produce, meats, seafood or bulk items, farmers markets, yard sales, and dry cleaning and garment bags.
- The 10-cent paper bag tax does not apply to transactions paying with SNAP/EBT (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program/Electronic Benefits Transfer), WIC-FVC (Women, Infants and Children) or other state-approved food assistance benefits at a grocery store.
- Restaurants are not required to collect the tax from customers for paper bags used to carry out prepared or leftover food or drink.

Learn more about the law at montgomerycountymd.gov/bag, where you will also find a "Report a Bag Tax Law Violation" link for reporting a possible carryout bag violation by a retailer.

Winter Salt-eranatives: Environment-Friendly Tips for Deicing

When it comes to winter salt, less is more. Not only is a small amount of salt necessary to melt ice, using too much can damage landscaping, harm pets and local wildlife, and contaminate streams and drinking water. Follow these tips to be salt smart this winter.

Shovel early and often. Deicers work best for melting thin layers of snow or ice. So, shovel first, break up any ice patches you can and then add the deicer.

Use less salt. Sprinkle deicer sparingly and evenly and leave space between the grains. More is not better. A 12-ounce mug of salt is enough to treat a 20-foot driveway or 10 sidewalk squares. Consider organic, salt-free and pet-safe deicers.

Sweep and reuse. After a weather event, sweep and collect any sand, salt

or undissolved deicer. Any excess can be reused for the next storm. Letting it run off into waterways is harmful to drinking water and wildlife.

Interested in doing more to raise awareness about salt pollution? Croydon Creek Nature Center will host a Salt Watch Community Science Initiative from 1-2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 24. Registration is free using course #38557 at rockvillemd.gov/ registration. Get involved with the city's partners at the Izaak Walton League by taking part. Learn more at iwl.org/salt-watch.

Are you a business owner or property manager? Find salt best practices and tips for hiring a winter maintenance professional at montgomerycountymd.gov/salt.

Rockville Recycling and Trash Collections Holiday Schedule 2026

DATE	HOLIDAY	COLLECTION CHANGES
Thursday, Jan. 1	New Year's Day	Thursday collections occur Friday. No other changes this week.
Monday, Jan. 19	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Monday, Feb. 16	Presidents Day	All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Monday, May 25	Memorial Day	All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Friday, June 19	Juneteenth National	No changes. Collections occur as usual this week.
Friday, July 3 (observed)	Independence Day	No changes. Collections occur as usual this week.
Monday, Sept. 7	Labor Day	All collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Wednesday, Nov. 11	Veterans Day	Monday and Tuesday collections as scheduled. Wednesday and Thursday collections occur one day later than usual this week.
Thursday, Nov. 26	Thanksgiving Day	Thursday collections occur Friday. No other changes this week.
Friday, Dec. 25	Christmas Day	No changes. Collections occur as usual this week.

Make Sure Your Cart:

- Does not block sidewalks.
- Does not block mailboxes.
- Wheels are on the curb.
- Does not exceed a maximum weight of 165 pounds.
- Is removed within 24 hours of collection.

Thank you for helping to keep our community and collection crews safe.

Food Scraps Compost Drop-Off

Rockville residents can drop off food scraps in the green bins at the city's maintenance facility, 14625 Rothgeb Drive; Potomac Woods Park, 1380 Stratton Drive; Twinbrook Community Recreation Center, 12920 Twinbrook Parkway; and the Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Drive. The sites are accessible 24/7 and the service is free of charge. Find details at rockvillemd.gov/foodscraps.

No Plastic Bags

The city does not accept plastic bags or film of any type in recycling collections. Find grocery or retail stores that offer plastic bag collection bins near their entrances at bit.ly/howtorecyclebags.

Recycling and Refuse Office

Visit rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash or call 240-314-8568 between 7 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday.

- Schedule a special pickup:
 - Bulk refuse.
 - Scrap metal.
 - Electronics recycling.
- Report a missed collection, ask a question or raise a concern.
- Order, change or return carts.

Find this information at rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash.

Encuentre la información en rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash.

rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash 에서 정보를 얻으실 수 있습니다.

如欲了解更多信息, 请访问 rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash.

Информация предоставлена на rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash.

Hanapin ang impormasyong ito sa rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash.



Find 2026 holiday collection schedule calendars for each collection day at rockvillemd.gov/holiday-collection-schedule.

rockvillemd.gov/recycling-trash • 240-314-8568

When Winter Weather Strikes...



For closure and snow emergency information turn to the city's website at rockvillemd.gov and follow the city on Facebook and X (formerly Twitter). For information about snow emergencies, sign up for Alert Rockville notifications at rockvillemd.gov/alerts.

3 STEPS TO SNOW SERENITY

STEP 1: Check to be sure your address is within the city limits. Find the Address and Residency Check map at rockvillemd.gov/maps.

STEP 2: Removing snow from sidewalks, driveways and entrances is the responsibility of the property and/or business owner or community association. Learn rules about snow removal in Rockville at rockvillemd.gov/snowremoval.

STEP 3: Help a neighbor in need. Find opportunities to help shovel snow for seniors and individuals with disabilities who live near you at rockvillemd.gov/snowremoval.



OH, WOW! HERE COMES THE SNOW PLOW!

Crews treat and plow roads in priority order. First are **primary roads**, including:

- Major arterial roads.
- Emergency routes.
- Central business districts.
- Primary residential roads near schools.

Next are **secondary roads**, including:

- Remaining neighborhood streets.
- Alleyways.
- Cul-de-sacs.



NUMBERS TO KNOW

Emergency.....	911	Report a Downed Tree..	240-314-8700
Dept. of Public Works.....	240-314-8500	Rockville City Hall.....	240-314-5000
Water Main Breaks/ Sewer Line Overflows	240-314-8567	Rockville City Police Department (non-emergency)	240-314-8900
Rec. Programs Cancellation Line	240-314-5023	Report a Power Outage or Downed Wire	1-877-737-2662
Rockville Senior Center (operating status updated by 6:15 a.m.)	240-314-8800		
Montgomery Co. Hypothermia Alerts (report safety concerns for people or pets)	301-279-8000		

Recycle Right in the New Year — and All Year

How to Recycle Christmas Trees, Polystyrene, Needles and Bags

From taking away your Christmas tree to purging your home of plastic bags, the city's recycling and trash collections can help you safely clean up from the holidays and year-round.

Rockville collects Christmas trees as part of its recycling collection. Place trees at the curb for pickup on regular recycling and trash collection days after removing all ornaments and metals, wires, stands and decorations, including tinsel. Trees should not be bagged. There is no deadline for curbside collection of trees.

The county recommends recycling branches and needles at home by using them as ground cover under trees and shrubs or by chopping them up and adding them to a compost pile.

Artificial trees cannot be recycled and should be placed in the gray trash cart for regular weekly collection. Artificial trees that are too large to fit in the cart can be collected by appointment as one of six bulk collections allowed per year or taken to the transfer station.

For bulk-waste disposal information, visit rockvillemd.gov/bulkwaste.

Rockville collects used polystyrene as part of its weekly trash collection and takes it, along with other household refuse, for disposal in the county's waste-to-energy incinerator. Often mistakenly called "Styrofoam," the material, commonly used to protect package contents during shipping, should not be placed in recycling carts. Instead, place it in the gray trash cart.

When disposing of needles, such as medical sharps and syringes, use containers made of heavy-duty plastic that close tightly with a puncture-proof lid. This prevents recycling and trash collection crews from getting stuck. Label the container and place it in the middle of household trash in the gray trash cart or find a disposal program. Learn more about safe disposal at bit.ly/howtorecyclesharps.

Find a grocery store that accepts plastic bags for recycling. Visit bit.ly/howtorecyclebags.

Got a city recycling or trash cart that's falling apart? Damaged lift bars on city recycling or trash carts can cut customers and crew members. Call 240-314-8568. The city will replace it for you.

Volunteer to Shovel Snow

If you're handy with a shovel and don't mind digging out an extra driveway or clearing a walkway or two, you can sign up and volunteer for a city program that pairs volunteers with seniors and individuals with disabilities.

The Rockville Senior Center's home maintenance coordinator organizes the program and can connect you with neighbors in need near your home. What better way to celebrate the season of selfless giving?

To volunteer or request assistance, email Jerry Jones at jones@rockvillemd.gov, call 240-314-8819 or the Senior Center Support Services office at 240-314-8810.

Sign up or volunteer online at bit.ly/rkvsnowvol. For more information about Rockville Senior Services, call 240-314-8800 or email seniorcenter@rockvillemd.gov.

Visit rockvillemd.gov/winterweather for Rockville's snow removal policies.

Portable Heaters Can Help — and Hurt

As temperatures drop, many households turn to portable electric space heaters to supplement central heating or warm a single room. While these heaters are common, they can pose serious fire risks if used improperly.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, two in five deaths caused by space heater fires involve portable electric space heaters. Following basic safety guidelines can help reduce the risk of fire and injury during colder months.

Portable electric space heaters come in several types, including oil or water-filled radiators, fan-forced heaters, ceramic heaters and infrared heaters. While designs vary, safety recommendations apply to all models.

When purchasing a space heater, look for one that has the seal of a qualified testing laboratory. Heaters should include a thermostat, overheat protection and an automatic shutoff feature that turns the unit off if it tips over.

Placement is critical. Space heaters should be kept at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn, including furniture, curtains and people. Heaters should always be placed on a solid, flat surface and kept out of walkways, and should never block an exit.

Electric space heaters should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. Extension cords should not be used. Children should be kept away from space heaters at all times.

Turn off and unplug space heaters when leaving a room or going to bed.

Following these precautions and reduce the risk of fire during the winter season.

Free, Reconditioned Bikes for TERRIFIC Kids Who Do Good Deeds



Rockville has outstanding kids, and every TERRIFIC kid needs a bike.

How do you prove you're TERRIFIC? Show trustworthiness, earnestness, respect, responsibility, involvement, fairness, industriousness and care.

The TERRIFIC Challenge is a program that provides free, refurbished bicycles and helmets to Rockville residents in grades 1-5 who complete six out of 16 good deeds. Examples include volunteering at a local charity, helping a neighbor or keeping a clean school environment.

Registration for the 2026 program opens Tuesday, Jan. 20. Registration is due Tuesday, Feb. 17. Additional information will be sent by email Monday, March 2.

Due to the limited number of bicycles, preregistration is required. Participants who are selected will receive instructions on how to track and submit completed good deeds.

For questions or more information, call 240-314-8620 or email registration@rockvillemd.gov. Information is also available at rockvillemd.gov/terrificbikes.

The program also accepts bicycle donations. Donated bicycles are refurbished and awarded to participants. To donate a bicycle, contact Rockville Bike Hub at rockvillebikehub@gmail.com. Visit rockvillebikehub.org for information.

Evening Talk to Explore History and Future of Croydon Creek Nature Center

Learn more about the history and future of Croydon Creek Nature Center during an evening seminar, part of the Glenview Mansion – Peerless Rockville Speaker Series at Glenview Mansion.

“Croydon Creek Nature Center: Past, Present, and Future” will be held from 7-8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 8, at Glenview Mansion, 603 Edmonston Drive.

Croydon Creek Nature Center supervisor Melinda Norton will present a behind-the-scenes look at the center, including how it began, the philosophy that guides its work and its plans moving forward. Since opening on Earth Day in 2001, the center has served as a resource for families, students and others interested in learning about the natural environment.

The program will explore the center's early development, its educational mission and the goals that continue to shape its role in connecting people with nature.

Space is limited. Registration is required and available at peerlessrockville.org or with course #36327 at rockvillemd.gov/registration.

Connect with us on Social Media.



Art and Family: This Month at the Civic Center

Student art and the ties of family are what's happening this January at the Rockville Civic Center, 603 Edmonston Drive.

Rockville Student Juried Art Exhibit Comes to Gallery

Meet the artists of the Rockville Student Juried Art Exhibit, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 25 at the Glenview Mansion Art Gallery, 603 Edmonston Drive.

Attendees will be able to talk to students about their artwork. The event is free and open to the public.

The students' art, in varied media, will be on display Jan. 25-Feb. 13.

Rockville Little Theatre Presents “Close Ties”

8 p.m. Jan. 30 and 31 and Feb. 6 and 7; 2 p.m. Feb. 1 and 8.

The Frye family gathers at their vacation home in the Berkshires, ruled for three generations by Josephine, their willful matriarch and center of the family. But what happens as the younger Fryes discover their center cannot hold? “Close Ties” celebrates the humor, the truth and the mystery of family. By Elizabeth Diggs; directed by Vanessa Markowitz.

Tickets cost \$24, \$22 for students and seniors. Group pricing available. Call the box office for more information. Visit fscottfitzgerald.showare.com/Ties for tickets.

Public Art Projects Across Rockville Move Into Next Phase

Several public art projects across Rockville are advancing, with artist selection, community engagement and early planning activities scheduled through 2026.

As part of the David Scull Park Improvement Project, public artwork is planned to serve as a gateway entrance and park sign at the main entrance near Taft Street and East Gude Drive.

The city's call for artists outlines a national selection process with an all-inclusive budget of \$140,000-\$200,000 covering design, fabrication, installation and related costs. Two finalists are expected to develop site-specific proposals, including a visit to Rockville and meeting with project stakeholders, before a final recommendation that will be forwarded to the Cultural Arts Commission and Mayor and Council for approval.

The art project is part of broader improvements focused to make the park more accessible while maintaining its role as a community gathering space.

Work is also scheduled to begin this month on the

Memory Walk Park Public Art Project in the Lincoln Park neighborhood. The project will start with a hybrid community engagement workshop, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Croydon Creek Nature Center or via Webex, followed by interviews between Lincoln Park residents and the selected artist, Dina Fisher. Email aodell@rockvillemd.gov to sign up for the workshop.

Memory Walk Park, at 300 Lincoln Ave., is a reflective space that honors the history and legacy of the Lincoln Park community. The public art installation is planned as a permanent feature within the park.

In Twinbrook, a formal dedication is being planned for “Past to Promise,” a mural by Baltimore-based artist LaToya Peoples at the Twinbrook Community Recreation Center Annex, 12920 Twinbrook Parkway. The mural was installed in late 2025 and a public dedication is expected in early 2026. Additional details will be announced once the date is finalized.

For more information, contact Arts and Culture Program Manager Anne O'Dell at aodell@rockvillemd.gov.

Rock the Rockville Senior Center in January

Stay healthy, informed and entertained with seminars and events from the Rockville Senior Center in January.

Register with the course number at rockvillemd.gov/registration.

Learn about 60-plus programs, courses, activities and services at rockvillemd.gov/seniorcenter or by calling 240-314-8800.

See the “Adults 60+” recreation guide at rockvillemd.gov/guide for more information.

Memory Screenings

A quick, safe way to assess memory and thinking skills. Screenings help determine whether further evaluation is needed. Provided by Potomac Courts. Each appointment lasts 15 minutes. Call 240-314-8810 to schedule.

10:30 a.m.-noon, Wednesday, Jan. 7. Free.

National Radon Action Month

Learn what radon is, why it can be a hidden health risk in homes and how it affects well-being. Find out about simple testing methods and resources for reducing radon exposure.

Register with course #38536. 10-11 a.m., Wednesday, Jan. 14. Free. Hybrid.

Better Breather's Club

A monthly club, held on the third Thursday of the month, with helpful information and practical tips for living with respiratory issues. Register with course #38066. Walk-ins welcome.

1:30-2:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 15. Free.

New Year's Rock 'In Around the Senior Center

Visit rooms throughout the center and discover appetizers, drinks and desserts, culminating in a new year's kickoff and other festivities.

Register with course #38545. 1-3 p.m. Friday, Jan. 16. \$12 members/\$15 nonmembers.

SIGN UP FOR THE CITY'S MANY NEWSLETTERS
rockvillemd.gov/newsletters

January CALENDAR

FACILITIES LEGEND:

- CC** Croydon Creek Nature Center, 852 Avery Rd., 240-314-8770.
- GM** Glenview Mansion, 603 Edmonston Dr., 240-314-8660.
- FSF** F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, 603 Edmonston Dr., 240-314-8690.
- LP** Lincoln Park Community Center, 357 Frederick Ave., 240-314-8780.

CH Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., 240-314-5000.

SR Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Dr., 240-314-8800.

SFC Rockville Swim and Fitness Center, 355 Martins Lane, 240-314-8750.

TF Thomas Farm Community Center, 700 Fallsgrove Dr., 240-314-8840.

TC Twinbrook Community Recreation Center, 12920 Twinbrook Pkwy., 240-314-8830.

V Virtual Program/Offering

H Hybrid: Offering both Virtual and In Person

F Facebook Live Event

1 CITY HOLIDAY: NEW YEAR'S DAY City government closed. See article on page 1.

1 FIRST DAY HIKE Enjoy a guided hike to start the new year outdoors. Dress warmly. Register with course #39173. \$5 R/\$6 NR. 10-11 a.m. **CC**

5 MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING 5:30 p.m. **CH**

5, 12, 19, 26 STRESS REDUCTION/MEDITATION Learn techniques to focus, relax and cultivate a calmer sense of being through guided meditation and discussion. See article on page 6. Register with course #38445. \$30 M/\$40 NM. 1-2 p.m. **H SR**

7 MEMORY SCREENINGS A quick, safe way to assess memory and thinking skills. See article on page 6. 10:30 a.m.-noon. **SR**

7 ZONING ORDINANCE REWRITE ORIENTATION SESSION Virtual orientation session via Webex. See article on page 2. 7 p.m.

8 SPEAKER SERIES: CROYDON CREEK NATURE CENTER Learn about the nature center as part of the Glenview Mansion-Peerless Rockville Speaker Series. See article on page 6. Register with course #36327. Free. 7-8 p.m. **GM**

10 SEW ESSENTIALS WORKSHOP Learn basic sewing skills through hands-on projects designed for kids, aged 7-12, at this three-hour session. No experience necessary. Register with course #39111. \$120 R/\$130 NR. Noon-3 p.m. **TF**

12 MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEETING 6:30 p.m. **CH**

14 NATIONAL RADON ACTION MONTH INFORMATION SESSION Learn about radon risks and testing. See article on page 4. 10-11 a.m. **Hybrid**. **SR**

14 COZY CREATURES CRAFTS AND STORIES Enjoy stories and simple crafts inspired by animals and nature. Perfect for toddlers and caregivers. Register with course #38551. \$8 R/\$10 NR. 10-10:45 a.m. **CC**

15 BETTER BREATHER'S CLUB A monthly club offering helpful information and practical tips for living with respiratory issues. Walk-ins welcome. See article on page 6. Register with course #38066. Free. 1:30-2:30 p.m. **SR**

16 NEW YEAR'S ROCK 'IN AROUND THE SENIOR CENTER Ring in the new year with music and social time at the senior center. See article on page 6. Register with course #38545. \$12 R/\$15 NR. 1-3 p.m. **SR**

17 LITTLE EXPLORERS: NATURE ADVENTURES FOR TODDLERS Introduce toddlers to nature and spark curiosity and exploration through guided exploration and activities. Register with course #38548. \$10 R/\$12 NR. 10-11 a.m. **CC**

19 CITY HOLIDAY: MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY City government and some facilities closed. See article on page 1.

19 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. CELEBRATION Annual community celebration honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. See article on page 1. Free. 8:30 a.m.-noon. **CH**

19 MLK DAY OF SERVICE: CARING FOR ANIMALS Volunteer activities at the nature center focused on caring for local wildlife and pets. Register with course #38558. Free. 10 a.m.-noon. **CC**

20 POST WITH PURPOSE: TURN EVERYDAY MOMENTS INTO MEANINGFUL CONTENT Learn how to use social media for connection, storytelling and community building, including what to post, where to share it and how to reduce fear of posting. Presented by Kerri Donnelly, Montcare. See article on page 6. Register with course #38527. Free. 1-2:30 p.m. **H SR**

24 SALT WATCH COMMUNITY SCIENCE INITIATIVE Learn how to monitor and protect local waterways through community science with the Izaak Walton League of America. Ages 14 and older. See article on page 4. Register with course #38557. Free. 1-2 p.m. **CC**

25 ROCKVILLE STUDENT JURIED ART EXHIBIT MEET THE ARTISTS Meet student artists featured in a juried exhibit. See article on page 6. Free. 1:30-3:30 p.m. **GM**

26 MEET AND GREET WITH THE DISTRICT 17 DELEGATION Reception begins 6 p.m. See article on page 3. Maryland General Assembly, Annapolis.

30, 31 ROCKVILLE LITTLE THEATRE PRESENTS "CLOSE TIES" The truth, humor and mystery of family. See article on page 6. 8 p.m. **FSF**

31 NATURE'S BRIGHT SIDE: A FLOWER ARRANGING WORKSHOP FOR ADULTS Learn floral design techniques from Rockville's horticulturist in this hands-on workshop. Register with course #38559. \$20 R/\$25 NR. 10 a.m.-noon. **CC**

22 HONEY, CAN YOU HEAR ME? Learn how improved hearing supports health and quality of life and explore links between hearing loss and conditions such as diabetes, dementia, kidney and heart disease, depression, and fall risk. Presented by Dr. Gary Mendelson and Herbert Coya from the Mendelson Group. See article on page 6. Register with course #38450. Free. 1-2 p.m. **SR**

29 EAT SMART, AGE STRONG Learn practical ways to eat more healthily, build a balanced plate, identify hidden sodium and sugar, and prepare budget-friendly meals. Presented by Suburban Hospital/Johns Hopkins Medicine. See article on page 6. Register with course #38447. Free. 1-2 p.m. **V**

29 STAY STEADY, STAY ACTIVE Learn safe, effective exercises designed to reduce fall risks and support independence. Presented by ReEnvision Physical Therapy. See article on page 6. Register with course #39070. Free. 10-11:30 a.m. **SR**

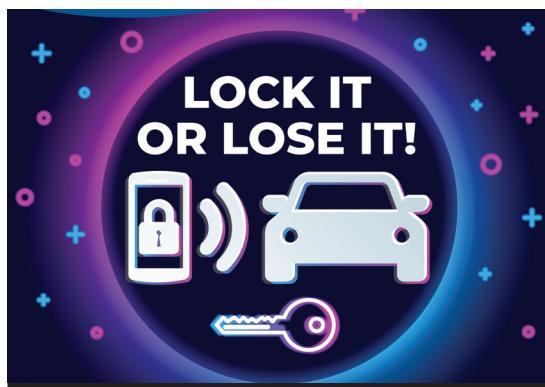
R = Residents • NR = Nonresidents • M = Member • NM = Nonmember

FOR MORE INFO AND UP-TO-DATE EVENT LISTINGS: ROCKVILLEMD.GOV/CALENDAR

December Hours

continued from pg. 1

Senior Center, including the fitness room, will close at 4 p.m. The F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre is closed through Sunday, Jan. 18 for annual maintenance. The theater box office will reopen Tuesday, Jan. 13. Tickets are always available for purchase at fscottfitzgerald.showare.com. For more information, visit rockvillemd.gov or call 240-314-5000.



District 17 Meet and Greet

continued from pg. 3

would like to attend the meet and greet. Seats are available to Rockville residents on a first-come, first-served basis. The buses will leave from and return to the main entrance of City Hall.

All Rockville residents are welcome to attend the event and can use their own transportation.

A reception in Annapolis is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m., followed by a brief tour and attendance at a House or Senate session.

District 17 covers Rockville and Gaithersburg. It is represented by Sen. Cheryl C. Kagan and delegates Julie

Palakovich Carr, Ryan S. Spiegel and Joseph Vogel. The 449th session of the Maryland General Assembly convenes at noon, Wednesday, Jan. 14.

To reserve a seat on the bus, call 240-314-8113 or email tporter@rockvillemd.gov. To register for District 17 night, visit bit.ly/AnnapRecep.

New K-9 Officer

continued from pg. 1

ment's first K-9 handler. Yates and the city's first K-9, a German shepherd named Rommel described in a Jan. 2, 1975 "Montgomery Journal" article as "an excellent tracker," apprehended a subject fleeing the scene of a burglary soon after the K-9 joined the force.

Meet Dare and Cpl. Shieder this month on Rockville 11, channel 11

on county cable, and on the city's YouTube channel. Visit youtube.com/cityofrockville and search "K-9 Dare." For more photos and videos, follow the RCPD and City of Rockville on Facebook and Instagram.

Learn more about the RCPD at rockvillemd.gov/police.

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. Visit integritycounts.ca/org/rockvillemd.

For more information, visit rockvillemd.gov/fraud-waste-abuse.



**LEARN MORE
ON ROCKVILLE 11**

youtube.com/cityofrockville

Make a Difference in Your Community
Join a Rockville Board or Commission!



Boards and commissions in the city provide the Mayor and Council with informed thoughts and ideas that help shape Rockville's future.

Learn more at rockvillemd.gov/boards

