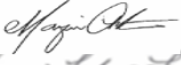
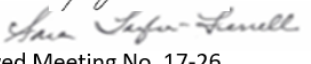


City of Rockville

City Hall
111 Maryland Ave
Rockville, MD 20850

Approved: 
Attest: 
Approved Meeting No. 17-26
June 29, 2026



Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 1, 2026

5:30 PM

Meeting No. 15-26

WebEx

Mayor and Council

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Monique Ashton	Mayor	Present
Kate Fulton	Councilmember	Present
Barry Jackson	Councilmember	Present
David Myles	Councilmember	Present
Izola Shaw	Councilmember	Present
Marissa Valeri	Councilmember	Present
Adam Van Grack	Councilmember	Present

1. Convene

Mayor and Council convened in a Hybrid Open Meeting at 5:33 p.m. on Monday, June 1, 2026, in the Mayor and Council Chambers, City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland, and via Webex.

Staff Present: City Manager Jeff Mihelich, Acting City Attorney Cynthia Walters, and City Clerk/Director of Council Operations, Sara Taylor-Ferrell.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Monique Ashton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Proclamation and Recognition

- A.** Proclamation Declaring July 17, 2026, as Mattie J. T. Stepanek Peace Day in Rockville, Maryland

Councilmember Izola Shaw moved the proclamation declaring July 17, 2026, as Mattie J. T. Stepanek Peace Day in Rockville, Maryland, and presented to Dr. Jeni Stepanek, President of the Mattie J.T. Stepanek Peace Foundation.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Izola Shaw, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Marissa Valeri, Councilmember
IN FAVOR:	Mayor Ashton, Councilmember Fulton, Councilmember Jackson, Councilmember Shaw, Councilmember Valeri, Councilmember Van Grack
ABSENT:	Councilmember Myles

COUNCILMEMBER DAVID MYLES JOINED THE MEETING AT 5:45 PM.

- B.** Proclamation Declaring June 5, 2026, as National Gun Violence Awareness Day, June 5-7, 2026, as Awareness Weekend, and June 2026 Awareness Month in Rockville, Maryland

Councilmember Adam Van Grack moved the proclamation declaring June 5, 2026, as National Gun Violence Awareness Day, June 5-7, 2026, as National Gun Violence Awareness Weekend, and June 2026 as National Gun Violence Awareness Month in Rockville, Maryland, and presented to Maria Pekala, Maryland Chapter, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America.

RESULT: **APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER: Marissa Valeri, Councilmember
SECONDER: Kate Fulton, Councilmember
IN FAVOR: Mayor Ashton, Councilmember Fulton, Councilmember Jackson, Councilmember Myles, Councilmember Shaw, Councilmember Valeri, Councilmember Van Grack

F. Proclamation Declaring June 20, 2026, as World Refugee Day

Councilmember Marissa Valeri moved the proclamation declaring June 20, 2026, as World Refugee Day in Rockville, Maryland.

RESULT: **APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER: Marissa Valeri, Councilmember
SECONDER: Kate Fulton, Councilmember
IN FAVOR: Mayor Ashton, Councilmember Fulton, Councilmember Jackson, Councilmember Shaw, Councilmember Valeri, Councilmember Van Grack
ABSENT: Councilmember Myles

G. Proclamation Declaring June 2026 as Caribbean-American Heritage Month

Councilmember Izola Shaw moved the proclamation declaring June 2026 as Caribbean-American Heritage Month in Rockville, Maryland, and presented it to Althea Grey-McKenzie, Chair, National Caribbean American Heritage Month Steering Committee, and Gillian de Souza, owner and founder of Caribbean Caterers.

RESULT: **APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]**
MOVER: Izola Shaw, Councilmember
SECONDER: Marissa Valeri, Councilmember
IN FAVOR: Mayor Ashton, Councilmember Fulton, Councilmember Jackson, Councilmember Myles, Councilmember Shaw, Councilmember Valeri, Councilmember Van Grack

H. Proclamation Declaring June 2026 as LGBTQ+ Pride Month in Rockville, Maryland

Councilmember David Myles moved the proclamation declaring June 2026 as LGBTQ+ Pride Month in Rockville, Maryland, and presented to Gabrielle Zwi, Co-Chair of the Rockville Human Rights Commission.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: David Myles, Councilmember
SECONDER: Marissa Valeri, Councilmember
IN FAVOR: Mayor Ashton, Councilmember Fulton, Councilmember Jackson, Councilmember Myles, Councilmember Shaw, Councilmember Valeri, Councilmember Van Grack

- I. Proclamation Declaring July 26, 2026, as the 36th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Councilmember David Myles moved the proclamation declaring July 26, 2026, as the 36th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 in Rockville, Maryland, and presented to Vincent Sabol, a Rockville Resident.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Marissa Valeri, Councilmember
SECONDER: Izola Shaw, Councilmember
IN FAVOR: Mayor Ashton, Councilmember Fulton, Councilmember Jackson, Councilmember Myles, Councilmember Shaw, Councilmember Valeri, Councilmember Van Grack

- J. Proclamation Declaring July 2026 as Park and Recreation Month in Rockville, Maryland

Councilmember Adam Van Grack moved the proclamation declaring July 2026 as Park and Recreation Month in Rockville, Maryland, and presented to Jack Thirolf, Recreation and Park Advisory Board Chair.

RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Adam Van Grack, Councilmember
SECONDER: David Myles, Councilmember
IN FAVOR: Mayor Ashton, Councilmember Fulton, Councilmember Jackson, Councilmember Myles, Councilmember Shaw, Councilmember Valeri, Councilmember Van Grack

THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL WENT INTO A BRIEF RECESS AT 6:20 PM. THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL RECONVENED AT 6:41 PM.

4. Agenda Review

City Clerk/Director of Council Operations Sara Taylor-Ferrell reported no changes to the agenda.

5. City Manager's Report

City Manager Jeff Mihelich thanked City staff for all their hard work during the past weeks. Public Works had their Equipment Show. Hometown Holidays and Memorial Parade were well attended despite the rain. City Manager Mihelich thanked the Public Works, Recreation and Parks, and City Police

Departments for their hard work at recent events. The interactive fountain at Town Square, and the Maryvale Splash Pad is set up and ready to be used. The Rockville Pride event will be held on Sunday, June 7, from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

6. Boards and Commissions Appointments and Reappointments – NONE

7. Community Forum

**Community Forum
In-Person/Virtual Speakers and Written Comments List
(June 1, 2026)**

NAME	TOPIC
In-Person Ken Liu	Supports Deer Fencing
In-Person Leah Larson-Rabin	Rockville Presbyterian Church Nursery and Rainbow Place Women’s Shelter Need New Locations
In-Person Mark Pierzchala	Zoning Rewrite
In-Person Anusha Dharmasena	Thanked the City of Rockville
In-Person Marty Reiss	Zoning Rewrite
In-Person Julia Binder	Zoning Rewrite
In-Person Pat Reber	Zoning Rewrite
In-Person Ana Astrid Molina	Zoning Rewrite
In-Person JD Kumar	Statements
In-Person Kathleen Kleinmann	Zoning Rewrite, Accessibility Challenges
In-Person Amanda Bosland	Explore Rockville Global Bites; June 1-30

8. Special Presentations

A. Presentation of Board of Appeals 2025 Annual Report

Chair of the Rockville Board of Appeals, Alan Frankle provided the Mayor and Council with an overview of the Board's 2025 Annual Report.

Staff recommend the Mayor and Council receive the 2025 Annual Report.

As a quasi-judicial board tasked with acting on variances, special exceptions, and appeals of certain staff decisions, the Board conducts regular public hearings allow staff, applicants, and members of the public to testify. The Board is therefore deliberate in its meeting procedures and, in most cases, renders a decision on the evening of the hearing. The Board also allows for reconsideration of its decisions for good cause or if some irregularity has been noted in its proceedings. This allows applicants or members of the public the opportunity to request such reconsideration when there is merit, in their view.

The Board meets on an as-needed basis when applications have been filed requiring their action. Accordingly, the Board met three times during Calendar Year 2025 and acted on three variance applications during the year. All applications were approved.

Looking to the future, the Board expects to continue its practice of conducting public meetings open to anyone who wishes to provide testimony, and to consider all application requests objectively, fairly, and based on the information, evidence, and testimony presented or available. The Board will ensure all decisions are made in a timely manner and are based on findings the Board is required to make as specified in the Zoning Ordinance.

In 2025, the Board received three applications for variances from setback requirements on residential properties, which were reviewed and approved. The Board received regular updates and a briefing on the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite (ZOR) and Comprehensive Map Amendment (CMA) during the year.

The current Board would like to see more diversity within its membership in the future.

Goals for 2026 include:

- Consider all application requests objectively, fairly, and based on the information and evidence presented and/or available.
- Allow applicants to present application requests fully and completely.
- Provide maximum opportunities for the public to participate in and testify at Board proceedings.
- Ensure all actions on applications are based on required findings and made promptly.
- Learn about the revised Zoning Ordinance, once adopted, to ensure seamless consideration of applications.

FURTHER DISCUSSION

June 1, 2026, Agenda Item 8A.

[Mayor and Council Meeting - June 1, 2026 \(Meeting No.15-26\)](#)

Timestamp 1:24:37

9. Consent Agenda

- A.** Approve and authorize the City Manager to execute the Fiscal Year 2027 agreements that extend resident community performing arts organization status to Rockville Little Theatre, Rockville Musical Theatre, and Victorian Lyric Opera Company to enable these organizations to provide performances at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre & Social Hall and use storage units located at Rockville Civic Center Park
- B.** Authorize the City Manager to Execute the Youth and Teen Swim Team Support Agreement with the RMSC Parents Club, Inc. to formalize the City's long-standing arrangement to receive support for the City's competitive swim team program
- C.** Approve and Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Project Agreement with the State of Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requesting Program Open Space funding in the amount of \$153,000 to fund a portion of the renovation of David Scull Park Improvements project
- D.** Authorize the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Montgomery County Department of Police to assign a sworn member of the Rockville City Police Department to the Vice and Intelligence Unit
- E.** Approval of, and authorization of the City Manager to Execute the Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit Homeownership Program Agreement; and Approval of, and authorization of the City Manager to Execute the Declaration of Restrictive Covenants for Rockshire Project between the Mayor and Council of Rockville and EYA Development LLC, Subject to Approval as to Legal Form by the Acting City Attorney
- F.** Award and Authorize the City Manager to Execute a Contract with T.Y. Lin International for Planning and Engineering Services for the Twinbrook Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge Study Project, Responsive to RFP #05-26, in an Amount Not to Exceed \$381,296.00
- G.** Approval of Minutes

May 11, 2026 (Regular Meeting No. 13-26)

May 18, 2026 (Regular Meeting No. 14-26)

Councilmember Marissa Valeri requested to pull consent agenda items 9A and 9F for discussion.

Councilmember Izola Shaw moved to approve Consent agenda items B, C, D, E, and G.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Izola Shaw, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Marissa Valeri, Councilmember
IN FAVOR:	Mayor Ashton, Councilmember Fulton, Councilmember Jackson, Councilmember Myles, Councilmember Shaw, Councilmember Valeri, Councilmember Van Grack

Councilmember Marissa Valeri moved to approve Consent agenda items A and F.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Marissa Valeri, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Izola Shaw, Councilmember
IN FAVOR:	Mayor Ashton, Councilmember Fulton, Councilmember Jackson, Councilmember Myles, Councilmember Shaw, Councilmember Valeri, Councilmember Van Grack

10. Public Hearing - NONE

11. Action Items

A. Consider Approval of Proposed 2027 MML Legislative Action Requests

Assistant to the City Manager, Linda Moran, provided the Mayor and Council with an overview of the three Legislative Action Requests.

Consideration of proposed Maryland Municipal League (MML) Legislative Action Requests (LAR) is the first step in the Mayor and Council’s development of the City of Rockville’s comprehensive 2027 State legislative program. MML has invited each member municipality to submit as many as three LARs for consideration to be included in the League’s priority program. MML members are required to have their elected officials approve the LARs by July 1, 2026.

LARs are issues that are resolved through State legislation and have a broad impact on the MML membership.

The recommended 2027 LARs are based on high-priority issues of interest to the Mayor and Council, including legislation the body supported in the 2026 Session. Three proposed LARS are provided for the Mayor and Council’s consideration.

Proposed 2027 Legislative Action Requests

1. Legislation Supporting the Findings and Recommendations of the Task Force to Modernize County and Municipal Revenue Sources, and Protect Municipal Highway User Revenue and State Aid for Police Protection

This legislative action request contains two related components:

- Support any related Legislation based on Task Force Recommendations that MML would advocate for in the 2027 Session to modernize municipal revenue structures; and
- Preserve full funding for Municipal Highway User Revenue and State Aid for Police Protection funding.

Task Force to Modernize County and Municipal Revenue Sources

HB 1142, MML's priority legislation, and a Rockville 2026 State legislative priority, passed. The legislation establishes the Task Force to Modernize County and Municipal Revenue Sources and to make recommendations regarding the authority of County and municipal governments to increase sources of revenue.

Preserving Full Funding for Municipal Highway User Revenue and Police Aid Funding

Highway User Revenues are the share of the gas tax and vehicle titling tax dedicated to the construction and maintenance of local roadways and bridges. All the revenues are levied by the State, as there are no local gas taxes in Maryland. Since local governments maintain most roads in Maryland, the State has historically shared a portion of these revenues through a formula with County and municipal governments.

Municipal Highway User revenues help to fund municipal transportation projects, including street and sidewalk maintenance and pedestrian safety initiatives. In the 2026 Session, FY27 Municipal HURs were preserved. Rockville's projected FY27 Highway User Revenue allocation is \$4.7 million. In FY28 and beyond, according to State law, Municipal HUR is scheduled to be reduced from 3.0% to 2.4%. According to MML, this "cliff" will result in a \$12 million reduction per year in the Municipal Highway User Revenue allocation to municipalities.

The State Aid for Police Protection Fund is a formula-driven funding program used to supplement resources for police protection in counties and municipalities. The State funds provide additional revenue to support the operational costs of local and county police agencies by providing additional funds for salaries, equipment, and other resources. Rockville's FY27 Police aid allocation from the State is \$1.1 million.

2. Legislation Exempting Municipalities from the FAMLI Program Requirements

While Rockville supports the State's goal of expanding access to family and medical leave, the FAMLI program, as currently configured, places significant operational and financial burdens on local governments. This LAR request focuses on Rockville requesting that the Maryland Municipal League advocate in 2027 for the State to reconsider applying the FAMLI program to municipal governments due to its significant fiscal and operational impacts.

It would be beneficial for Rockville to partner with MML and its member municipalities to advocate for the State to reconsider the mandatory application of FAMLI to local governments and explore alternatives that recognize the unique fiscal and operational needs of local governments.

3. Legislation Requiring Boards of Education to Consult with Municipalities and Incorporate Municipal Data into their Annual Student Residency and School Zones Report

In the 2026 Session, the Mayor and Council supported this concept in an amendment added by Senator Kagan to SB 31- School Construction and Housing – School Zones and Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances sponsored by Senator Lam. While the bill primarily impacted Counties, the Mayor and Council supported SB 31, as amended, which would have required County Boards of Education in their annual student residency and school zones report to the Maryland Department of Planning and the Interagency Commission on School Construction to consult with each municipality located in the County that exercises planning and zoning authority, and incorporate data provided by the municipalities into the plan's enrollment projections and analysis of future facility needs. This LAR has broad applicability. According to the Maryland Department of Planning, there are 108 municipalities in Maryland with planning and zoning authority.

Advocating for this request through a 2027 MML LAR would heighten MML's awareness of this issue and, if selected by MML, would strengthen Rockville's advocacy in support of potential 2027 legislation. Given that 108 municipalities have planning and zoning authority, a significant number of MML members are impacted by this issue, which is a key element that MML looks for when considering potential priorities to adopt for the next State legislative Session.

The Mayor and Council directed staff to adjust the language for the 2027 MML LAR - State's FAMLI Program requirements (Family and Medical Leave Insurance) that will take effect in January 2028.

The body approved this priority with adjusted language that includes:

- Rockville's support for the State's goal of expanding access to family and medical leave;
- Rockville has a generous leave and benefits program, which includes paid parental leave; and
- Rockville supports a locally appropriate approach that aligns with municipal budgets and operational capacity.

Staff will update the Mayor and Council on the 2027 priority issues approved by the MML Board of Directors. The Mayor and Council will consider and approve Rockville-specific priorities in its discussion of the City's comprehensive 2027 State legislative priorities program in the early fall of 2025 (TBD), after MML's priorities are adopted.

FURTHER DISCUSSION

June 1, 2026, Agenda Item 11A.

[Mayor and Council Meeting - June 1, 2026 \(Meeting No.15-26\)](#)

Timestamp 1:35:13

12. Worksession

- A.** Work Session #4 on Zoning Text Amendment Application TXT2026-00271, for the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite and Map Amendment Application MAP2026-00126, for the Comprehensive Map Amendment; Mayor and Council of Rockville, Applicants - Articles 9-13: Nonconformities, Signs, Historic Preservation, and Plats and Subdivision

Deputy Zoning Manager Holly Simmons provided the Mayor and Council with an overview of the Zoning Text Amendment Application TXT2026-00271, for the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite and Map Amendment Application MAP2026-00126, for the Comprehensive Map Amendment; Mayor and Council of Rockville, Applicants - Articles 9-13: Nonconformities, Signs, Historic Preservation, and Plats and Subdivision.

In 2023, the City began a comprehensive rewrite of the City's Zoning Ordinance. This project, known as the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite (ZOR), kicked off shortly after the adoption of the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The Zoning Ordinance Rewrite project will produce a new Zoning Ordinance for the City of Rockville. In conjunction with the ZOR, the City's zoning map will be updated through a comprehensive amendment to the zoning map.

On December 1, the Rockville Mayor and Council authorized applications for the staff's recommended drafts of the Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) and Comprehensive Map Amendment (CMA) to be filed with the City Clerk. This authorization to file initiated the formal adoption process for both documents.

The Planning Commission concluded its review of the staff drafts on February 25 and transmitted its recommendations to the Mayor and Council. The Mayor and Council began their review on April 13. During the review process, community members can also review, comment on, and testify regarding the staff drafts before adoption, which is scheduled for June 29, 2026.

This worksession is the fourth in a series of worksessions the Mayor and Council will hold during the adoption process. The Mayor and Council discussed Articles 9 through 13 of the staff draft zoning ordinance, focusing on the "key changes" between the current and proposed ordinances.

Article 9. Nonconformities

This article addresses uses and structures were lawful when established, but which no longer conform to the requirements of the zone in which they are located. The goal in amending the article was to simplify and clarify the requirements for such uses and structures to continue and to be brought into compliance with the Zoning Ordinance.

Article 10. Signs

The updated sign ordinance modernizes and reorganizes regulations to improve clarity, usability, and consistency across zoning districts while ensuring compliance with content-neutral requirements.

Article 11. Historic Preservation

Beyond the overarching objectives for the ZOR, the Historic Preservation Work Plan, endorsed by the Historic District Commission (HDC) and Mayor and Council in 2023, laid out a series of recommended Zoning Ordinance updates to modernize Rockville's historic preservation program and practices.

Article 12. Plats & Subdivision

This article provides the regulations for subdividing land in the City, including approval of preliminary plans of subdivision, record plats, and ownership plats. The new Zoning Ordinance reorganizes and simplifies the article and authorizes administrative approval of minor subdivisions.

Article 13. Enforcement

This article describes the enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance, including penalties associated with Zoning Ordinance Violations. Currently, violations are addressed through notices of violation, typically followed in the case of noncompliance with a municipal infraction citation, although other remedies are available. The new Zoning Ordinance does not propose any substantive changes to this article.

Adoption Process

The following schedule outlines the Mayor and Council adoption process, including three public hearings each for the ZOR and CMA, and four work sessions.

The schedule includes two updates to the Staff Draft Zoning Ordinance and zoning map, as follows:

1. On April 20, Revised Staff Drafts of the Zoning Ordinance and zoning map were produced and posted to the Engage Rockville project page. Both reflect direction from the Mayor and Council received on April 13, along with technical corrections, minor policy changes, and plain language revisions.
2. By June 15, Final Staff Drafts of the Zoning Ordinance and zoning map will be produced and posted to the Engage Rockville project page. Both will reflect direction from the Mayor and Council received on or before June 1, along with technical corrections and minor policy changes.

Adoption is planned for June 29, 2026.

FURTHER DISCUSSION

June 1, 2026, Agenda Item 12A.

[Mayor and Council Meeting - June 1, 2026 \(Meeting No.15-26\)](#)

Timestamp 2:00:41

B. JEDI Strategic Plan Update

Director of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Jeanne Booth and the consultant from the Executive Learning Lab, Dr. Patricia Morgan, provided the Mayor and Council with an overview of the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Strategic Plan Update.

Staff recommend the Mayor and Council receive the JEDI Strategic Plan update and provide feedback on the following questions.

1. Do you support the proposed additional outreach?
2. Are there specific groups you would like prioritized in the outreach?

Following the March 2, 2026 worksession with Mayor and Council, The Executive Learning Lab launched a comprehensive assessment and collaborative engagement, utilizing structured facilitation with City staff, nonprofit partners and community members.

The comprehensive assessment is designed to include the following:

- Policy Audit and Foundational Review
 - Policy Review
 - Best Practices Research
- Collaborative Engagement
 - Internal Employee Survey
 - Internal Employee Focus Groups
 - Community Listening Sessions
- Data-Driven Analysis
 - Quantitative Analysis
 - Qualitative Analysis

Plan-Do-Check-Act Model

The strategic planning process includes the Plan-Do-Check-Act continuous improvement model. The DO phase began in March with comprehensive data collection from employees and community partners as well as policy and best practice review.

The policy audit and foundational review encompassed two complementary components: a structured review of existing City policies and programs, and a review of national best practices in municipal equity work.

Key Survey Findings

The survey revealed several meaningful areas of strength in the City's workplace culture:

1. Hiring & Workforce Diversity (75%)
2. Dedicated JEDI Office & Leadership Visibility
3. Equity Impact Statements
4. Leader Confidence in Core Competencies
5. Internal Communication (62%)
6. Leadership Support (82%)
7. Interpersonal Respect (81%)

Critical gaps were revealed in program areas and in strategic direction, indicating a need for action. These gaps focus on training gaps, bias exposure, and communication consistency.

1. JEDI Training
2. Data Use to Identify Disparities
3. External Communication & Resident Awareness
4. Accountability
5. Strategic Clarity
6. Organizational Leadership Barriers
7. Department-Level Inconsistency
8. Accommodation Request Process
9. Language Access Systems

Responses assessed by intersectional identities reveal unique employee experiences and impacts. Significant disparities in JEDI program awareness, inclusion, and workplace equity are not equally distributed across the workforce. Citywide, 25% of employees report personally experiencing or witnessing discrimination, bias, or harassment in the past year, and 36% report microaggressions — rates are significantly higher among women, Black/AA, and Hispanic employees.

Survey results reflect a workforce broadly supporting the City's JEDI mission and recognize real progress, particularly in workforce diversity, community programming, and leadership visibility. It also reveals where the work must go next: toward a structured plan with defined goals, meaningful training, strengthened accountability, and a community-facing presence matches the quality of internal programming.

Employee Focus Groups were designed and facilitated by TELL. This participatory process ensures all perspectives have meaningful opportunities to contribute to long-term vision development. Strategic group configuration allowed participants to build community with others engaged in similar work and included 7 groups labeled operations, programming, RCPD, internal and administrative staff, supervisors and leads, deputies and senior leadership, and executive leadership. Discussions centered on core questions on the impact of JEDI programming on day-to-day work within the organization at all levels, workplace climate and culture, accessibility and inclusion, training and resources, and communication and transparency. All findings were reported in aggregate to protect participant confidentiality.

Key Focus Group Findings

Four themes were identified from feedback gathered in focus groups.

Theme 1: Need for a Shared Organizational Definition of JEDI

Theme 2: Equitable Workplace Culture Is Localized, Not Organizational

Theme 3: Training Exists But Is Not Effective

Theme 4: Leadership Intent Does Not Match Operational Reality

Additional Cross-Cutting Themes

1. Psychological Safety Varies by Department
2. JEDI Seen as Compliance, Not Culture: Described in terms of training and external mandates, not understood as integrated into hiring, performance, and supervision. Must be embedded in core operating systems.
3. Federal Climate Creating Uncertainty: Grant applications are avoiding DEI terminology. Immigration enforcement is causing documented community members to disengage from City services. Leadership needs legal and communications guidance for navigating compliance versus mission integrity.

External Stakeholders

External Listening Sessions were designed to gather community perspectives to assess how the City can better serve all residents and create a more inclusive, accessible, and equitable Rockville. Questions explored resident experiences with City services, programs, and engagement opportunities. Outreach was conducted through public flyers at all City facilities, Engage Rockville, targeted email outreach to public partners, and through staff liaisons to all Boards, Commissions, and Task Forces. Personal contacts were made to over 250 organizations and/or individuals. Seven sessions were conducted in April 2026.

Key Preliminary Listening Session Findings

Mayor and Council Interviews

1. Geographic Equity
2. Language & Communication Access
3. Training for Elected Officials and Boards
4. Accountability & Measurement
5. Federal Climate

Housing and Economic Development

Faith-Based and Community Service Organizations

Education and Youth (Individual Interview)

Seniors and Special Populations (Full Session)

Key themes:

- Digital Accessibility
- Physical Accessibility
- Transportation
- AAPI & Immigrant Community Barriers
- Jurisdictional Confusion
- What's Working

Business and Civic Organizations / Small Business (Separate sessions)

Two to four participants across both sessions, primarily civic insiders with existing City relationships. From this vantage point, Rockville is seen as 'genuinely trying.' Key concerns: Twinbrook and low-income apartment residents feel left behind in City decisions; award programs and advisory boards skew toward white residents; renter and apartment communities are systematically excluded from outreach designed around homeowner associations; notification failures on zoning and land-use changes prevent civic participation.

Cross-Cutting Themes Across All Sessions

- The People Most in Need Are the Hardest to Reach
- Language Access Is a System, Not a Translation
- Geographic Equity Is Rockville's Most Visible Gap
- The City's Best Is Genuinely Good, But Unevenly Distributed
- Measurement and Accountability Are Non-Negotiable

Staff will do additional outreach and engagement with the external stakeholders and the internal program staff. Following these sessions, the team will complete data collection, integrate survey data, focus group outcomes, and community input, and begin drafting the strategic plan with a roadmap for the first year.

FURTHER DISCUSSION

June 1, 2026, Agenda Item 12B.

[Mayor and Council Meeting - June 1, 2026 \(Meeting No.15-26\)](#)

Timestamp 4:17:10

13. Mock Agenda

There were no changes to the Mock Agenda.

14. Old / New Business

There was no Old/New Business.

15. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:51 p.m.

	RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Adam Van Grack, Councilmember
SECONDER:	Marissa Valeri, Councilmember
IN FAVOR:	Mayor Ashton, Councilmember Fulton, Councilmember Jackson, Councilmember Myles, Councilmember Shaw, Councilmember Valeri, Councilmember Van Grack