

**City of Rockville**  
**Leadership Planning Team Meeting Notes**  
**February 2, 2026**

**Meeting Participants:**

Mayor Ashton  
Councilmember Jackson  
Councilmember Shaw  
Councilmember Van Grack  
Jeff Mihelich, City Manager  
Robert Dawson, City Attorney  
Doris Stokes, Interim City Clerk/Director of Council Operations  
Barack Matite, Deputy City Manager  
Dave Gottesman, Assistant City Manager  
Linda Moran, Associate City Manager  
Judy Penny, Executive Assistant to the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations

**Agenda Review**

**February 2, 2026 Meeting Agenda**

**Comment:** Mayor Ashton requested that the public be reminded that they may volunteer to help remove snow, especially around schools, and they should alert the city about any crosswalks that may require a machine to remove snow (i.e. too difficult to clear with just a shovel)

**Response:** City Manager Mihelich concurred

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**February 9, 2026 Meeting Agenda**

**Comment:** Mayor Ashton asked if REDI would also provide an update on commercial office space, job numbers, and the “broader economy”

**Comment:** Doris Stokes said a Consent Item was added to the agenda, to award a contract for leaf collection

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**Review and Comment on the Six Month Agenda Planning Calendar**

**Comment:** City Manager Mihelich confirmed that the joint meeting with the City of Gaithersburg has been added to the 6-month calendar (June 29)

**Comment:** Mayor Ashton asked for the following:

- A schedule of the ZOR topics that will be coming before the body
- A date for the next Climate Action Plan update
- If there is anything the city needs to do regarding accessible housing projects that were sent to MCPS
  - **Response:** The City Manager asked if specific examples could be shared offline and mentioned that staff will highlight housing and daycare projects in the budget process
- If there are any Boards or Commissions reports coming up
  - **Response:** the City Manager said he would discuss this with the Interim City Clerk

**Comment:** Councilmember Van Grack requested that the *Engage Rockville* website be updated with any ZOR-related dates

**Response:** the City Manager said staff will make these updates in a number of places and he will also inform the body how the topics and timeline of the process will be laid out

**Comment:** Councilmember Shaw asked if there will be any additional community engagement/outreach around the JEDI Plan updates so that communities can come and watch

**Response:** The City Manager will ask the city's JEDI Director to provide an update that includes community engagement efforts

## Legislative Review Team Meeting

February 2, 2026

Mayor Ashton  
Councilmember Barry Jackson  
Councilmember Shaw  
Councilmember Van Grack  
Jeff Mihelich, City Manager  
Robert Dawson, City Attorney  
Doris Stokes, Acting City Clerk/Director of Council Operations  
Barack Matite, Deputy City Manager  
Dave Gottesman, Assistant City Manager  
Linda Moran, Associate City Manager

### **Review of Legislation**

#### **HB 601 (MC 5-26) - Stop Sign Monitoring Systems Pilot Program - Gaithersburg and Rockville**

**Position** – Support.

**Next Steps** – Staff will update the Mayor and Council when the hearing is scheduled. This bill will be highlighted again next week, given that not all elected officials were present at the meeting.

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#### **HB 80 - Landlord and Tenant - Residential Leases - Fee Disclosures**

**Position** – Support

**Next Steps** – Staff will share testimony for Councilmember Shaw’s in-person remarks on 2/5 in the House Economic Matters Committee at 1 pm and Rockville’s lobbying firm will register her to speak.

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#### **HB 168 - Housing and Community Development - Affordable Housing - Educator Workforce Housing and Municipal Corporations**

**Position** – Support

**Next Steps** – Staff will share testimony with Mayor Ashton, who will testify at the 2/5 House Economic Matters Committee hearing at 1 pm and Rockville’s lobbying firm will register her to speak.

## **HB 434 - Residential Leases - Use of Algorithmic Device by Landlord to Determine Rent, Occupancy, and Lease Terms – Prohibition**

**Position** – Support

**Comment** – Councilmember Shaw asked if there is any difference between what City staff is proposing for the Code and this legislation and HB 80. There could be opportunities for amendments.

**Response** – The City Manager noted that the Director of Housing and Community Development will prepare a response to the inquiry. This information will be included in the 2/23 Chapter 18 Code Update (Rental Facilities/Landlord/Tenant Relations) worksession.

**Next Steps** – Staff will share testimony for Councilmember Jackson’s in-person testimony on 2/19 at 1 pm in the House Economic Matters Committee. Rockville’s lobbying firm will register him to speak.

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## **SB 36/HB 329 Land Use - Zoning Limitations - (Silver Starter Homes Act)**

**Position** – Monitor for amendments (MML in the lead).

**Comment** – City Manager noted that while the legislation intends to create more housing, the bill restricts local zoning authority. He recommended that the City monitor and let MML take the lead.

**Comment** – Mayor Ashton noted that in her role as MML Montgomery Chapter President, she heard concerns from members, including the preemptive components, with some lot size restrictions conflicting with local tree and stormwater management regulations. She noted it would be good to see what amendments are made to the bill.

**Response** – City Manager fully agrees with monitoring the legislation for amendments and seeing how the bill progresses.

**Next Steps** – Monitor legislation and share an update on amendments when available.

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## **SB 325/HB548 - Maryland Housing Certainty Act**

**Position** – Monitor for amendments (MML in the lead).

**Comment** – The City Manager noted that while vesting is important for developers, this legislation preempts local authority by imposing vesting requirements. He recommended that the City monitor the legislation for amendments and let MML take the lead, as it impacts multiple jurisdictions.

**Comment** – Mayor Ashton and Councilmember Jackson requested more detail on the legislation, including what is the staff’s perspective and what the City would lose if enacted.

**Next Steps** – Community Planning and Development Services will prepare information in response to the request. Staff will monitor the legislation for amendments and share an update when available.

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**SB - 267 - Land Use - Residential Housing - Oversight, Regulation, and Taxation (Building Affordably in My Back Yard Act)**

**Position** - Monitor for amendments (MML in the lead).

**Next Steps** - Monitor legislation and share an update on amendments when available.

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**SB 385 - The Vax Act**

**Position** – Support.

**Next Steps** – Staff will share testimony for Mayor Ashton’s in-person testimony (schedule permitting) at the Senate Finance Committee on 2/10 at 1 pm. If there are scheduling issues, written testimony will be submitted. Rockville’s State lobbying firm will register the Mayor to speak at the hearing, should her schedule permit her to do so.

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**HB466 - Civil Actions - Motor Vehicle Accidents Involving Vulnerable Individuals - Comparative Negligence**

**Position** – Support

**Next Steps** – Staff will email Councilmember Valeri if she is interested and available to testify in support of the legislation at the 2/11 hearing at 2 pm. Staff will prepare remarks for written or in-person or virtual testimony, depending on availability.

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**HB 177/SB 155 - Vehicle Laws, Bicycles, Play Vehicles, and Unicycles – Crosswalk**

**Position** – Support

**Next Steps** – Staff will request that the City’s State lobbying firm register a check the box position in support of the bill for the 2/5 House Environment and Transportation Committee

**HB 35/SB 266 - Local Government - Regulatory Powers - Regulation of Tree of Heaven**

**Position** – Support

**Comment** – Councilmember Van Grack noted that both he and Councilmember Valeri are very interested in legislation related to the regulation of invasive species.

**Next Steps** – Staff will coordinate with Councilmember Van Grack and Councilmember Valeri to see if they are available to share the House and Senate duties. If not, the City will register a check-the-box support for the legislation. The House hearing is on 2/4 at 1 pm in the Environment and Transportation Committee. The Senate hearing is on 2/10 in the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee.

### **SB 288 - Transportation - Highway User Revenues - Capital Grants Calculations**

#### **Position – Support**

**Next Steps** – The check the box position of support was submitted by the City's State lobbying firm for the 2/3 hearing at 1 pm in the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee.

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### **SB 389 - Maryland Transit and Housing Opportunity Act**

**Position** – Monitor the legislation and any related MML activity.

**Comment** – Mayor Ashton requested information on how this legislation compares with what the City is doing with the Zoning ordinance and how it relates to the City's efforts. This information can be used for consideration of the bill at next week's LRT meeting.

**Next Steps** – Community Planning and Development Services will prepare a response to the requested information.

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### **General Comments**

- The City Manager asked staff to send the legislative review team bill tracker to the Mayor and Council. Staff emailed the spreadsheet to the Mayor and Council.
- Mayor Ashton noted the Governor introduced an Economic Development bill. Staff referred the request to the State lobbying firm to include in the next legislative update report.
- The Mayor noted the bill that Gaithersburg Councilmember Emil Hernandez sent to the Mayor and Council. She requested that it be added to the bill tracker. Staff will add the bill to the tracker for the 2/2 LRT meeting.
- Mayor Ashton requested that while bills are still being introduced, that legislative update reports be provided on a weekly as opposed to a bi-weekly basis. Staff notified the State lobbying firm. The report will be provided on a weekly basis for the period in which bills continue to be introduced.