



## **MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

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**Meeting No. 19-25**  
**Monday, July 21, 2025 - 6:30 PM**

### **AGENDA**

**Agenda item times are estimates only. Items may be considered at times other than those indicated.**

#### **Ways to Participate**

If you require a reasonable accommodation, for community forum or a public hearing and need reasonable accommodations, please contact the City Clerk's Office by the Wednesday before the Monday meeting at 240-314-8280 or [cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov) or by filling this form: <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/FormCenter/City-Manager-2/Request-a-Reasonable-Accommodation-50>

#### **Translation Assistance**

If you wish to participate in person at a Mayor and Council meeting during community forum or a public hearing and may need translation assistance in a language other than English, please contact the City Clerk's Office by the Wednesday before the Monday meeting at 240-314-8280, or [cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov), or by using this form: <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/FormCenter/City-Clerk-11/Sign-Up-for-Translation-Assistance-at-Co-368>

#### **In-Person Attendance**

Community members attending in-person who wish to speak during Community Forum, or a Public Hearing, should sign up using the form at the entrance to the Mayor and Council Chamber. In-person speakers will be called upon in the order they are signed to speak and before virtual speakers.

**Note: In-Person Speakers will be called upon to speak before those who have signed up to speak virtually for Community Forum and Public Hearings.**

#### **Viewing Mayor and Council Meetings**

The Mayor and Council are conducting hybrid meetings. The virtual meetings can be viewed on Rockville 11, Comcast, Verizon cable channel 11, livestreamed at [www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11), and available a day after each meeting at [www.rockvillemd.gov/videoondemand](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/videoondemand).

#### **Participating in Community Forum & Public Hearings:**

If you wish to submit comments in writing for Community Forum or Public Hearings:

- Please email the comments to [mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov) no later than 10:00 am on the date of the meeting.

If you wish to participate in-person or virtually in Community Forum or Public Hearings during the live Mayor and Council meeting:

1. Send your Name, Phone number, For Community Forum and Expected Method of Joining the

Meeting (computer or phone) to [mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov) no later than 10:00 am on the day of the meeting. Each speaker will receive 3 minutes.

2. Send your Name, Phone number, the Public Hearing Topic and Expected Method of Joining the Meeting (computer or phone) to [mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov) no later than 10:00 am on the day of the meeting.

3. On the day of the meeting, you will receive a confirmation email with further details, and two Webex invitations: 1) Optional Webex Orientation Question and Answer Session and 2) Mayor & Council Meeting Invitation.

4. Plan to join the meeting no later than approximately 20 minutes before the actual meeting start time.

5. Read for <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/38725/Public-Meetings-on-Webex> meeting tips and instructions on joining a Webex meeting (either by computer or phone).

6. If joining by computer, Conduct a WebEx test: <https://www.webex.com/test-meeting.html> prior to signing up to join the meeting to ensure your equipment will work as expected.

### Participating in Mayor and Council Drop-In (Mayor Ashton and Councilmember Van Grack)

The next scheduled Drop-In Session will be held by phone or in-person on Monday, July 21 from 5:15-6:15 pm with Mayor Ashton and Councilmember Van Grack. Please sign up by 10 am on the meeting day using the form at:

<https://www.rockvillemd.gov/formcenter/city-clerk-11/sign-up-for-dropin-meetings-227>

1. **Convene - 6:30 PM**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Proclamation and Recognition - NONE**
4. **Agenda Review - 6:35 PM**
5. **City Manager's Report - 6:40 PM**
6. **Boards and Commissions Appointments and Reappointments - NONE**
7. **Community Forum - 6:45 PM**
8. **Special Presentations - NONE**
9. **Consent Agenda - 8:15 PM**
  - A. Approval of Final Design for Twinbrook Community Recreation Center Annex Mural
  - B. Authorize the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Maryland Transportation Authority Police (MDTA Police) granting jurisdictional authority in the City of Rockville.
10. **Public Hearing - NONE**
11. **Action Items - NONE**
12. **Worksession - 8:20 PM**

A. Rent Stabilization

B. Worksession #2-Election Consultants Recommendations on City Election Reform-Gant Group

C. Economic Development

**13. Mock Agenda - 11:20 PM**

A. Mock Agenda

**14. Old / New Business - 11:25 PM**

**15. Adjournment - 11:45 PM**



MAYOR AND COUNCIL Meeting Date: July 21, 2025

Agenda Item Type: CONSENT

Department: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE (CMO)

Responsible Staff: ANNE O'DELL

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## **Subject**

Approval of Final Design for Twinbrook Community Recreation Center Annex Mural

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## **Department**

City Manager's Office (CMO)

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## **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Mayor and Council approve the final design for the Twinbrook Community Recreation Center Annex Mural by Artist, LaToya Peoples.

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## **Discussion**

Artist LaToya Peoples was awarded the contract to design and paint the Twinbrook Community Recreation Center Annex Mural. At the Council Meeting on July 29, 2024, the Mayor and Council were presented with the mural design for their approval. The Mayor and Council approved the preliminary design and requested additional community engagement. To fulfill this request, an in-person community engagement session with the artist and Twinbrook residents, and a second community engagement survey were conducted.

The rendering for the final design of the mural is attached (see Attachment 1: TCRC Annex Final Mural Design). The mural will be painted on Polytab in Peoples' studio and then installed on the side of the Annex.

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## **Mayor and Council History**

Artist LaToya Peoples was awarded the contract to design and paint the Twinbrook Community Recreation Center Annex Mural. At the Council Meeting on July 29, 2024, the Mayor and Council were presented with the mural design for their approval. The Mayor and Council did not approve the design based upon the approach to community engagement for the project and requested additional community engagement.

The July 2024 Staff Report may be found using the following link: [07292024-7242](#)



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## Public Notification and Engagement

On Wednesday, February 19, 2025, a community engagement session was held so that LaToya Peoples could meet with residents of Twinbrook. The Arts and Culture Program Manager worked with the Communication and Community Engagement Department to notify the community through Rockville Reports and distributed flyers and posters at the Twinbrook Community Recreation Center. The Arts and Culture Program Manager also directly emailed members of the Artist Selection Committee for this project, the Twinbrook Community Association, and attended the January 2025 Twinbrook Community Association meeting to encourage people to attend. Attendance at the community engagement session included three Twinbrook residents, one resident from another Rockville neighborhood, two Cultural Arts Commissioners, and the Arts and Culture Program Manager.

During the community engagement session, Peoples shared her experience and design process with residents and talked about how her research of Twinbrook's history informed the mural's initial design. Peoples shared that the figures of children in the mural could be changed to depict important residents of Twinbrook, and flowers could be changed to depict flowers important to the neighborhood. Residents gave feedback about the initial design and suggested changes in the landscape. Peoples and workshop attendees decided together that another survey would be helpful in the mural's final design. An electronic survey was created and shared with the Twinbrook Community Association, and a poster with a QR code to access the survey was posted in Twinbrook Community Recreation Center. The survey was open from February 24 through March 21, 2025, and 38 people participated.

The majority of survey respondents expressed favorable views of the mural and a need for the mural to depict the generation of veterans and houses that formed Twinbrook after World War II. Of those who responded, 53.57% expressed that they wanted people in the mural to be more diverse in age and 78.57% expressed that the figures needed to be more diverse in ethnicity. The resulting figures depict an African American child, an older Caucasian Military Veteran, and a Hispanic female in her twenties or thirties. These ethnicities were specifically listed by survey respondents as those that should be represented in the mural because, according to the survey, they are the largest ethnicities in Twinbrook. The Piscataway People are represented by the print on the lower left of the mural and the ear of corn in the child's hands. There was a request to add Black Eyed Susans, and they were added. Twinbrook residents were asked to email pictures and biographies of important residents as possible people who would be depicted in the mural to the Arts and Culture Program Manager. Of those who responded, 60.71% of respondents said they did not have anyone they would like to be depicted, and 39.29% said they had no opinion. At the time the survey closed, no pictures were received. It was requested at the In-Person Workshop in February that the mountains be removed, and they were. The resulting final design depicts Twinbrook's history from when Indigenous People inhabited it, to when it was a farm, to post-World War II development, and to today.

The summary of community engagement activities since 2023 is:

- November 2023 to January 2024: Online community survey.
    - Number of respondents: 42.
  - January 2025: Staff presentation at Twinbrook Community Association meeting.
  - February 2025: In-person community engagement session with LaToya Peoples.
    - Number of attendees: 6 (Twinbrook residents: 3; Cultural Arts Commissioners: 2; Rockville residents outside of Twinbrook: 1).
  - February 2025 to March 2025: Online community survey.
    - Number of respondents: 38.
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### **Boards and Commissions Review**

The Cultural Arts Commission has received regular updates on the project's progress. Because the community engagement and additional design was requested by the Mayor and Council and final approval rests with the Mayor and Council, Commission review of the design is not needed.

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### **Fiscal Impact**

The budget for the project was \$12,500.

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### **Next Steps**

Following the Mayor and Council approval of the mural design, the artist will proceed with installation of the mural.

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### **Attachments**

Attachment 1: TCRC Annex Final Mural Design

Final Design Twinbrook Community Recreation Center Annex Mural by LaToya Peoples.





MAYOR AND COUNCIL Meeting Date: July 21, 2025  
Agenda Item Type: CONSENT  
Department: POLICE  
Responsible Staff: CHIEF JASON WEST

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## **Subject**

Authorize the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Maryland Transportation Authority Police (MDTA Police) granting jurisdictional authority in the City of Rockville.

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## **Department**

Police

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## **Recommendation**

Staff recommends the Mayor and Council authorize the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Maryland Transportation Authority Police granting jurisdictional authority in the City of Rockville to increase the capabilities of the Rockville City Police Department.

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## **Change in Law or Policy**

None

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## **Discussion**

The Maryland Transportation Authority Police (MDTA Police) is a police agency of the State of Maryland that has primary law enforcement jurisdiction on property owned, leased or operated by the Maryland Transportation Authority, the Maryland Aviation Administration and the Maryland Port Administration, some of which are in Montgomery County, Maryland. The MDTA Police operate in Montgomery County from a location near the City of Rockville. MDTA police officers operate in and around the City of Rockville during their assigned duties. MDTA police officers have full police powers and are certified by the State of Maryland.

The MDTA Police Department is a robust law enforcement agency that can provide additional personnel, training and specialized resources to the Rockville City Police Department upon request. MDTA police officers may exercise police powers in the City of Rockville upon request and permission of the Chief Executive Officer or the Chief of Police. Requests for assistance from the MDTA Police have historically been made on a case-by-case basis. The assistance provided has been limited to community engagement activities and the City of Rockville's Independence Day celebration. The Rockville City Police Department plans to include MDTA Police in all future traffic safety initiatives as part of the Vision Zero strategy.

The Rockville City Police Department increased collaboration with MDTA Police at the end of 2024 and has determined a formal Memorandum of Agreement granting the Maryland Transportation Authority Police full law enforcement jurisdiction in the City of Rockville is in the best interest of the City of Rockville. Formalizing the coordination of law enforcement services between the Rockville City Police Department and the Maryland Transportation Authority Police by way of an agreement will enhance law enforcement services in the City of Rockville and the capabilities of the Rockville City Police Department.

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### **Mayor and Council History**

A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with MDTA Police has never come before the Mayor and Council.

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### **Fiscal Impact**

None

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### **Next Steps**

Upon Mayor and Council approval, the City Manager will enter into an agreement with the Maryland Transportation Authority Police granting that agency law enforcement jurisdiction in the City of Rockville.

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### **Attachments**

Rockville City Police MOA with Maryland Transportation Authority Police

MARYLAND TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY POLICE AND  
THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF ROCKVILLE  
on behalf of the Rockville City Police Department  
MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT CONCERNING  
LAW ENFORCEMENT JURISDICTION AND COORDINATION OF SERVICES

THIS MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT ("Agreement") is made and entered into this 15th day of July, 2025, between the Mayor and Council of Rockville, a body corporate and politic and municipal corporation of the State of Maryland on behalf of the Rockville City Police Department ("Rockville City Police Department"), and the Maryland Transportation Authority ("MDTA"), an agency of the State of Maryland, on behalf of the Maryland Transportation Authority Police ("MDTA Police"), pursuant to the authority granted by Maryland Code Annotated, Transportation Article§ 4-208.

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest that police throughout the State of Maryland cooperate to the greatest extent possible to provide prompt, effective and professional police services; and

WHEREAS, the Rockville City Police Department is responsible for the preservation of the public peace, prevention of crime, protection of the rights of persons and property and enforcement of laws and the rules and regulations made in the furtherance thereof; and

WHEREAS, the MDTA Police is established by the Maryland Code Annotated, Transportation ("TR") Article§ 4-208; and

WHEREAS, the officers of both the Rockville City Police Department and the MDTA Police are trained in current law enforcement techniques, have completed the course of training prescribed by the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission, and are certified law enforcement officers; and

WHEREAS, MDTA Police Officers have all the powers granted to peace officers or police officers of this State, but may exercise those powers only on property owned, leased or operated by or under the control of the MDTA, the Maryland Aviation Administration ("MAA"), and the Maryland Port Administration ("MPA"), some of which are located contiguous to and within Montgomery County, Maryland; and

WHEREAS, MDTA Police Officers may not exercise police powers on any other property unless:

- 1) Engaged in fresh pursuit of a suspected offender;
- 2) Specifically requested or permitted to do so in a political subdivision by its chief executive officer or its chief police officer: or
- 3) Ordered to do so by the Governor; and

WHEREAS, the parties to this Agreement acknowledge that the provisions outlined herein will assure the safe, efficient, and cooperative management of law enforcement services under Maryland law and applicable local ordinances and that the MDTA Police has been, as memorialized in this Agreement, specifically requested, pursuant to TR §4-208(b)(4)(ii), to exercise police powers on the properties described in this Agreement,

Now THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants contained herein, it is agreed as follows:

**A. PRIMARY JURISDICTION ON MAA, MPA, AND MDTA PROPERTIES**

1. Pursuant to Md. Code Ann., TR Article, Title 4, the MDTA Police have primary law enforcement jurisdiction within the boundaries of MAA, MPA and MDTA properties and surrounding areas owned, operated or under control of the MAA, MPA or MDTA, including any and all facilities and structures thereon.
2. MDTA Police is the primary agency responsible for all requests for police services, enforcement of traffic laws, investigation of all traffic collisions and all crimes, and for conducting follow-up investigations of all incidents occurring on MAA, MPA, and MDTA properties where MDTA has statutory jurisdiction. The Rockville City Police Department agrees to assist the MDTA Police in follow-up investigations, upon request by the MDTA Police, to the extent practicable.
3. MDTA Police and Rockville City Police Department agree to ensure proper coordination for reporting crimes to the Maryland State Police, in compliance with National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS)

**B. AREAS OF CONCURRENT JURISDICTION**

1. Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed to limit the authority granted to either party or to individual MDTA Police Officers or Rockville City Police Officers under Md. Code Ann., Criminal Procedure Art. § 2- 102 or other applicable law.
2. Under the terms of this Agreement and pursuant to Md. Code Ann., TR Art. § 4-208, MDTA Police Officers are further authorized and permitted to exercise full concurrent law enforcement jurisdiction in the City of Rockville on all roads and all other property, without limitation.
3. The parties hereto agree that in the areas of concurrent jurisdiction specified in this Paragraph B.:
  - a. Rockville City Police Department is the primary law enforcement agency.
  - b. MDTA Police shall provide all law enforcement services necessary on all Airport Facilities, Port Facilities, Railroad Facilities, and Transit Facilities, as defined in Transportation Article, § 3-101, if any.
  - c. If, in the areas of concurrent jurisdiction, the MDTA Police is the first to arrive at any incident requiring immediate law enforcement intervention, action, or investigation, they shall provide the *initial* law enforcement services necessary and notify the Rockville City Police Department. The Rockville City Police Department, as the primary law enforcement agency, shall, at its discretion, have the authority to direct, control and coordinate any law enforcement

action and/or investigation thereafter.

- d. The primary law enforcement agency shall maintain authority to direct, control, and coordinate the investigation of all Part I crimes (Homicide, Robbery, Rape, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Theft, and Stolen Auto). This provision does not apply to MDTA property as defined by Maryland Code Annotated, Transportation Article § 4-208.
- e. The MDTA Police are authorized to exercise their police powers within the area of concurrent jurisdiction for violations of the Maryland Vehicle law which occur in their presence. The MDTA Police will receive approval through the Rockville City Police Department before engaging in any high-profile traffic initiatives, such as checkpoints, saturation patrols, etc. within the concurrent jurisdiction areas.

#### **C. POINTS OF CONTACT**

- 1. The Rockville City Police Department point of contact is the Field Services Bureau Commander.
- 2. The MDTA Police point of contact is the Commander of the Patrol Division.

#### **D. LIABILITY**

To the extent provided by law, each of the parties to this Agreement agrees to save and hold harmless the other party, its officers, agents, and employees, from and against any and all claims, demands, actions, suits and proceedings, as to all liability by third parties for property damage and/or personal injury arising out of each party's respective activities performed under this Agreement; and each of the parties agrees to waive any and all claims against the other party that may arise out of the activities performed under this Agreement. Each party shall remain liable for acts or omissions of its own employees within the limits of applicable law. Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed to waive any immunities, defenses, or privileges afforded by law.

#### **E. TERM OF AGREEMENT**

This Agreement will remain in effect until such time that either party terminates the agreement upon thirty (30) days advance written notice to the other party. Changes in names of the parties to this agreement, including any executives, Sheriff's, Chiefs of Police, points of contacts, elected officials, etc., shall not affect the enforceability, efficacy or authority of this agreement.

#### **F. DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS**

The parties agree that it is their intent to act cooperatively and support each other as appropriate in pursuing their law enforcement objectives. Nothing herein shall impose legal rights or obligations of either party to the other.



## **G. NOTICE**

All notices required or permitted hereunder to be in writing shall be delivered by hand or sent by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, postage prepaid to the parties, at the respective address as set forth below:

To Rockville City Police Department

Rockville City Police Department  
2 W. Montgomery Ave.  
Rockville, Maryland 20850  
Attn: Office of the Chief

To the MDTA and MDTA Police:

Maryland Transportation Authority  
2310 Broening Highway  
Baltimore, Maryland 21224  
Attn: Executive Director

Maryland Transportation Authority  
Police 4330 Broening Highway  
Baltimore, Maryland 21222  
Attn: Chief of Police

## **H. PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS NOT A DEFENSE**

Nothing in this Agreement that describes notifications from one agency to the other, or requires internal administration practices or procedures by either agency of the terms of this Agreement shall be deemed to invalidate any law enforcement action taken by the Maryland Transportation Authority Police in an area of primary, concurrent or additional concurrent jurisdiction. It is further acknowledged and agreed that any officer of the Maryland Transportation Authority, wherever assigned, shall have authority to take any law enforcement action permitted under the terms of this agreement and under the laws of the State of Maryland.

## **I. AMENDMENTS**

This Agreement shall not be amended, changed or modified except by a written instrument duly executed by the parties.

## **J. GOVERNING LAW**

The laws of the State of Maryland govern the validity, interpretation, performance, and construction of this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto, acting through their duly authorized agents, hereby execute this Agreement to be effective on the day and year first above written.

**Rockville City Police Department**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Jason L. West, Chief of Police

**Mayor and Council of Rockville**

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Jeff Mihelich, City Manager

Approved for form and legal sufficiency:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert Dawson, City Attorney - Rockville

**Maryland Transportation Authority Police**

By: Colonel Joseph F. Scott  
Colonel Joseph F. Scott, Chief of Police

Approved for form and legal sufficiency:

Kimberly Millender  
Assistant Attorney General - MDTA



MAYOR AND COUNCIL Meeting Date: July 21, 2025

Agenda Item Type: WORKSESSION

Department: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE (CMO)

Responsible Staff: JEFF MIHELICH

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## **Subject**

Rent Stabilization

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## **Department**

City Manager's Office (CMO)

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## **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Mayor and Council discuss rent stabilization in this work session and direct staff accordingly following the discussion.

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## **Change in Law or Policy**

If directed to develop a hard-capped rent stabilization program, the program's structure may require changes to the respective city code chapters.

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## **Discussion**

At the June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Mayor and Council meeting, two councilmembers requested a work session for the body to consider a rent stabilization framework that includes:

1. Capping rent increases
2. Banning junk fees
3. Providing exemptions
4. Providing a petition process for requested waivers and
5. Strong enforcement

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## **Mayor and Council History**

On July 8, 2024, the Mayor and Council discussed rent stabilization. A copy of the July 8<sup>th</sup> staff report and presentation can be found by clicking [here](#).

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## **Fiscal Impact**

A detailed fiscal impact analysis of the rent stabilization program would be conducted if direction is provided to staff to pursue its development.

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## **Next Steps**

Following the work session discussion, staff will follow up with any direction received from the body.

## **Attachments**

Rent Stabilization Work Session PPT



# Rent Stabilization

## Mayor and Council Work Session

July 21, 2025





## City Council Request

- ❖ At the June 16th , 2025 Mayor and Council meeting, two councilmembers requested a work session for the body to consider a rent stabilization framework.



## Previous Consideration

- ❖ On July 8, 2024, the Mayor and Council discussed rent stabilization.
- ❖ A link to that staff report was provided



## **Mayor and Council Feedback**

**Does the body want staff to further analyze a rent stabilization framework that includes:**

- 1. Rent caps**
- 2. Banning junk fees**
- 3. Providing exemptions/waivers**
- 4. Providing a petition process for requested waivers**
- 5. Strong enforcement**





MAYOR AND COUNCIL Meeting Date: July 21, 2025

Agenda Item Type: WORKSESSION

Department: CITY CLERK/DIRECTOR OF COUNCIL OPERATIONS OFFICE

Responsible Staff: SARA TAYLOR-FERRELL

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## **Subject**

Worksession #2-Election Consultants Recommendations on City Election Reform-Gant Group

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## **Department**

City Clerk/Director of Council Operations Office

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## **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Mayor and Council have a facilitated discussion with the election consultant, Gant Group, and provide input on the following topical areas to enable the consultant to complete the final report. The topical areas include:

1. Campaign Finance
  2. Public financing of local elections
  3. Campaign Finance Reporting
  4. Election procedure
  5. Enforcement mechanism (curing violations and dispute resolution)
  6. Role of the Board of Supervisors of Elections (BSE)
  7. Rank Choice Voting
  8. 2023 Ballot Measures
    - a. Voting age – Should Rockville allow 16-17-year-olds to vote in city elections?
    - b. Non-citizens voting – Should Rockville allow residents who are not US citizens to vote in city elections?
    - c. Term limits – Should Rockville limit Mayor and Councilmembers to 3 consecutive terms?
    - d. Representative Districts – Should some or all of the 6 council members be elected by representative districts?
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## **Discussion**

### **Background**

On Monday, May 19, 2025, the Mayor and Council held their first work session on city election reform. The discussion was facilitated by Jason Gant, the election consultant, during which members of the body provided feedback on various aspects of the City of Rockville's elections and election code that should be subject to reform, including campaign financing, campaigning practices, and enforcement of election code violations, among other things. Following this initial discussion with the Mayor and Council, the consultant held two public engagement

sessions (June 5<sup>th</sup> and June 7<sup>th</sup>) to solicit community feedback on city election reform. In addition to these events, the consultant met with members of the BSE, the City Manager, the City Clerk, and the City Attorney to solicit their thoughts on the City's election process. Some of the feedback received from these engagement activities may be incorporated into the final report and help inform the recommendations.

### **Topical Areas**

As the consultant works on the final report, he needs guidance on topical areas to assist him in finalizing the report. The topical areas are meant to keep the discussion succinct, thus utilizing the body's time effectively. Within each topical area, the consultant outlines:

- i. The city's current practice and/or pertinent context as background
- ii. A few best practice principles and
- iii. The consultant's approach thus far

Following this, the consultant asks the policy question or questions for the Mayor and Council's consideration.

## **1. Campaign Finance**

### *Background*

The purpose of local government campaign finance laws is to ensure transparency, accountability, and fairness in the financing of political campaigns. The city of Rockville's current campaign finance laws are in [Chapter 8, Article IV, Division 2 – Campaign Financing](#).

In Chapter 8 of the city code, the section discussing campaign financing, campaign practices, and remedies creates confusion, especially for new candidates. Among other things, definitions and language included in the code have not kept up with the changes in technology, communication methods, or campaign tools. These sections will also need to be updated to account for online fundraising, digital advertisements, and other modern practices.

### *Best practice principles*

Transparency and clear guidelines are essential for any campaign finance regulatory structure. The public should easily be able to identify who funds political campaigns; how funds are spent, and how they are allocated, i.e., advertisement, events, staff salaries, etc. This creates trust in the system.

### *Consultant approach*

Preliminary recommendations include the city redrafting the campaign finance section of Chapter 8 of the city code to make it current and succinct for all stakeholders. This includes first-time candidates who might, at times, feel overwhelmed by the regulations they need to comply with. The challenge will be making the much-needed code revisions comprehensive while simplifying them.

## *Policy question for consideration*

Should the campaign finance section include transparent and clear guidelines?

## **2. Public Financing of Local Elections**

### *Background*

Public campaign finance programs provide candidates with public funds for campaign expenses – often by matching contributions raised by candidates with public funds to multiply the effect of individual contributions. Public finance programs are voluntary, and candidates who do not want to participate follow a jurisdiction’s traditional campaign finance laws.<sup>1</sup>

The City of Rockville does not have a public campaign finance program. A public financing program has the potential to encourage a wider range of candidates to run for elected office, limit the power of special interest groups, and put more focus on voter engagement and policy, instead of fundraising.<sup>2</sup>

The Montgomery County and Maryland's public financing system gives some context for what's worked in the region. These models have spent millions (\$5.3 million in 2018 and \$3.7 million in 2022, respectively) on elections, so understanding how to scale these systems for smaller cities like Rockville will be important. However, it will require careful planning to avoid confusion or administrative overload should Rockville pursue establishing a public campaign finance program.

### *Best practice principles*

Leveraging experiences of cities like [Seattle](#) (with its voucher system) and [New York](#) (with its small-donor matching) could offer models for Rockville. When designing a Rockville program, it is best to follow the [State](#) law, if any, and guidelines and learn from [Montgomery County's](#) process and practices.

### *Consultant approach*

If the Mayor and Council wish to proceed with a public campaign financing program, the preliminary recommendation is a phased approach where the Mayor and Council place an advisory question on the ballot, then study the various models, develop guidelines, and proceed with implementation. A potential tentative schedule of actions could be as outlined below:

- a. 2027 – Place an advisory question on the ballot
- b. 2028 – Thoroughly study the systems
- c. 2029 – Draft program guidelines

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/BONDS/Resources/Files/PEF%20OLO%20Report%202024-16.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/BONDS/Resources/Files/PEF%20OLO%20Report%202024-16.pdf>

- d. 2030 – Implement program
- e. 2031 – Program would be available to candidates

The phased approach (advisory question, study, guidelines, implementation) is practical and would be beneficial to the stakeholders. It would allow ample time to evaluate public sentiment, study various models, and carefully craft the program. Many voters and candidates might not be familiar with public financing or its benefits. A thorough education campaign will be crucial to avoid confusion.

#### *Policy question for consideration*

Does the Mayor and Council support developing a public campaign financing program for the City of Rockville?

### **3. Campaign Finance Reporting**

#### *Background*

Currently, Rockville limits contributions to \$1,000. However, reporting requirements for political action committees, other campaign committees, and independent expenditures are lacking in clear reporting guidelines. A detailed reporting structure is required, but it seems the regulations might be too burdensome for many candidates and volunteers. For contribution and reporting systems, the balance between transparency and reducing administrative burdens for candidates is crucial.

#### *Best practice principles*

Clear and simple reporting is key. Having categories for expenditures can make things more digestible for candidates and the public. Ensuring clear and precise rules and regulations to limit the need for interpretations.

#### *Consultant approach*

The preliminary recommendation is to simplify reports (e.g., grouping smaller donations). This will immediately ease the reporting burden. Similarly, categorizing expenses can provide clearer insights into how campaigns are spending their money. The idea of limiting the requirement to list contributors under \$100 is possible. It could allow campaigns to focus on more significant donors while still capturing a broad base of small donors. Striking the right balance between regulation and flexibility seems challenging, especially for Political Action Committees(PACs) and [independent expenditures](#). Transparency is only achieved through reporting guidelines. Large contributions, whether directly or indirectly, need more regulation. The new reporting regulations ought to include regular reviews of contribution limits to account for inflation and changes to the political landscape.

#### *Policy question(s) for consideration*

- a) Should Political Action Committees (PACs) and independent expenditures be required to report additional activities?
- b) How often should contribution limits be reviewed?

#### **4. Election Procedure**

##### *Background*

Rockville has extensive policies and procedures on areas of election administration, from ballot delivery to conducting a canvass to ballot collection to provisional ballots. These encompass most of the election activities.

##### *Best practice principles*

As a best practice, the city ought to develop a clear and concise election handbook. Expanding to a complete election handbook would not only help the candidates, but it would ensure continuity of elections institutional knowledge when there is staff or BSE member turnover or even a system change. The handbook should be reviewed annually based on election-related events throughout the state and the region. This ensures the handbook is always up to date after each election cycle.

##### *Consultant approach*

Preliminary recommendations include making minor modifications to the existing policies and procedures, adding new policy language in categories of Pre-Election, Election Day, and Post-Election. In addition to the above, it is important that changes to the election code not be made in the twelve months leading up to an election.

##### *Policy question for consideration*

Should a detailed Election Handbook be created that is reviewed annually and updated as necessary?

#### **5. Enforcement Mechanism**

##### *Background*

The enforcement of campaign violations has not been an issue in the city over the years until the 2023 election. The need to update the code was evident in 2023. Currently, the city code allows the Board of Supervisors of Elections (BSE) to issue municipal infraction citations when it determines that a violation of the Elections Code has occurred. Prosecution of the citation falls to the Office of the City Attorney.

In contrast to the other chapter of the City Code, which establishes clear procedures for the issuance of Notices of Violations (NOVs) and citations for municipal infractions, the Election Code provides the BSE no guidance on the evidentiary and procedural standards that the City is typically held to when it issues and prosecutes municipal infraction citations. In 2023, this lack of clarity and guidance resulted in disputes

between the BSE and the Office of the City Attorney over whether certain incidents constituted violations of the City Code and whether such incidents could be successfully prosecuted in court.

### *Best practice principles*

There are wide-ranging options for creating an election/campaign violations enforcement structure. Simplicity in structure is best. A simple procedure might be: a complaint is received and referred directly to the Office of the City Attorney for a decision. Another example is that city staff would receive the complaint, review it, investigate the violations, and then refer the offense to the Office of the City Attorney for a decision. Alternatively, city staff make recommendations to the BSE, and the BSE issues penalties.

### *Consultant approach*

A clear system for managing election/campaign violations is desperately needed. As a preliminary recommendation, if things remain as is, the BSE should have the authority and budget to address violations of the Election Code pursuant to an administrative hearing, in lieu of asking the Office of the City Attorney to prosecute such violations in District Court.

### *Policy question for consideration*

Should election/campaign finance violation policies and procedures be updated to include administrative hearings?

## **6. Role of the Board of Supervisors of Elections (BSE)**

### *Background*

Pursuant to the [City Charter](#), the Board of Supervisors of Elections (BSE) is a volunteer body whose members are appointed by the Mayor and Council. The BSE administers and supervises city elections in accordance with Article III and Chapter 8 of the City Code. The current BSE is comprised of five members appointed by the Mayor and Council for four-year staggered terms. Some of their responsibilities include overseeing registration of voters, nominations, and as well as other administrative duties. The BSE, as part of its duties, may make policy recommendations to the governing body on ways to enhance voter participation.

### *Best practice principles*

A Board of Supervisors of Elections or Board of Elections is used at all levels of government. Depending on the state and local jurisdiction, the responsibilities of boards vary; overseeing the implementation of policies is typically a primary role, while the administration of elections is not common, as the Boards generally just approve policies. The actual administration of elections is conducted by staff.

### *Consultant approach*

As set forth in the Charter and City Code, the BSE is critical to the overall election process and administration. The BSE's responsibilities are set in the City Code and Charter. Currently, the BSE serves more as an administrative board and less as a policy board. The preliminary recommendation is to move the BSE into more of a policy board versus an administrative board. To achieve this, numerous changes will need to be made to the code and Charter.

The BSE should be involved during election-related policy discussion and decisions with the Mayor and Council, and be readily available during the election season, but should not be involved in the administration and conduct of the elections. The administration and conduct of elections should be the role of professional staff. BSE's role and duties seem to be limited in the non-election season. If no changes are made to the BSE's current role and responsibilities, then just compensation is required. The city is asking too much of a volunteer board not to be compensated for their work and responsibilities.

### *Policy question for consideration*

Should the BSE's responsibilities be updated in the Charter and Code to reflect the BSE as a policy-recommending body, versus also being administrators of the elections?

## **7. Rank Choice Voting**

### *Background*

Ranked choice voting (RCV) is an election method in which voters rank candidates for an office in order of their preference (first choice, second choice, third choice, and so on).<sup>3</sup> In RCV, candidates who receive above the minimum threshold are declared winners. Candidates who receive the least number of votes are withdrawn, and those ballots are then runoff and count their 2nd choices, and so on until all winners are determined. RCV is used in a number of cities across the nation, including [New York City](#), [San Francisco](#), [Minneapolis](#), and [Takoma Park](#), to name a few.

Rockville does not currently use Ranked Choice Voting. However, during the community meetings, there were many voices supporting RCV.

### *Best practice principles*

Ranked Choice Voting of [Maryland](#) and [Fair Vote](#) have extensive information about the process of RCV. With all six council positions open, the threshold to win and to be withdrawn would need to be considered. [Cambridge](#) has a voting system where proportional representation is used, which may be a model to consider as they elect nine councilmembers at each election.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/ranked-choice-voting/>

### *Consultant approach*

Implementing an entirely new voting system will have tremendous challenges. Voter and candidate education alone will take a considerable amount of time and energy. Rockville was extremely successful in implementing vote-by-mail over the past two elections. Which leads to the possibility that a transition to RCV is possible. The biggest hurdle to implementing RCV could be the State. If the State is not going to or is not able to support RCV, then Rockville may not be able to utilize the State's resources in City elections. This would cause major problems with the administration of elections and possibly delay election night results by many hours.

### *Policy question for consideration*

Should the City of Rockville consider moving forward with changing from a winner-takes-all system to a ranked-choice voting system?

## **8. 2023 Ballot Measures**

### *Background*

During the 2023 Election, four advisory questions were proposed to the public for their consideration. The results were as follows:

- a) Voting Age – Yes 28% - No 69%
- b) Non-Citizen – Yes 33% - No 63%
- c) Term Limits – Yes 74% - No 22%
- d) Districts – Yes 40% - No 51%

During the community sessions, there was overwhelming support for allowing 16 and 17-year-olds to vote. Even though that advisory question received the least amount of support of the four questions.

The administration of implementing this change would be relatively simple by working with the State to receive an additional list of voters. The opportunity to increase voter participation is always a positive endeavor.

Non-citizen voting ballot question received mixed results with the large immigrant population in Rockville; perhaps further exploring this option may be worthwhile.

Term Limits received the highest support among the votes cast. Moving forward on term limits is possible. At the May 19<sup>th</sup> work session, a majority of the body expressed support for this.

### *Best Practices*

Many cities in the US, including in the state of Maryland, have implemented lowering the voting age for their local elections, and have not had issues. The state of Maryland has



a process and resources to help local jurisdictions that allow 16-and 17-year-olds to vote.

Term Limits have been utilized in all government entities. The challenge is finding a balance in preserving elected officials' institutional knowledge. Some jurisdictions have adopted staggered terms.

### *Consultant approach*

Proceeding with allowing 16- and 17-year-olds to vote could and should be completed in the next six months in preparation for the 2027 election. Further study is needed on the administrative resources that will be needed to make this successful. However, it should move forward. A public education campaign should be implemented in September/October of 2027 in the local high schools.

### *Policy Question for Consideration*

Should the Election Code be changed to allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in city elections?

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## **Mayor and Council History**

This is the second work session with the election consultant on City election reform. The first work session was held on May 19, 2025.

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## **Public Notification and Engagement**

There were two community engagement sessions. The first session was held on Thursday, June 5, 2025, 7 – 9 pm, and the second session was held on Saturday, June 7, 9-12 pm. About thirty-five (35) people attended the first session and twenty-five (25) the second session. If members of the community were unable to attend either session, they were also encouraged to submit their comments to the City Clerk/Director of Council Operations.

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## **Boards and Commissions Review**

The consultant met with the Board of Supervisors of Elections (BSE) on April 24, 2025, where the board members provided input.

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## **Next Steps**

Following this work session, the consultant will incorporate the guidance as he drafts the final report with recommendations. The final report, inclusive of the final recommendations, will be presented to the Mayor and Council on September 8, 2025.

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## **Attachments**

Election Reform Work Session PPT\_2025.07.16\_v6.pptx, Election Reform Public Comments  
Received Through 6.15.25.pdf

# City Election Reform

## Mayor and Council Work Session #2

July 21, 2025





## Outline

- ❑ **Background**
- ❑ **Topical Areas**
- ❑ **Requested Feedback**
- ❑ **Next Steps**



## Background

- ❑ **May 19<sup>th</sup>, Mayor and Council work session**
- ❑ **Community engagement sessions – June 5 & June 7**
- ❑ **General community feedback**



# Campaign Finance

## Background

- Chapter 8, Article IV, Division 2 – Campaign Financing
- Election law and Campaign Finance regulations are confusing

## Best practice principles

- Clear and transparent guidelines
- Concise for all stakeholders
- Reflective of current technologies and modern practices

## Consultant approach

- Succinct for all stakeholders
- Comprehensive code revisions

**Should the Campaign Finance section of the code include transparent and clear guidelines?**



# Public Financing of Elections

## Background

- Public funds for campaign expenses
- Public finance is voluntary
- Encourage a wider range of candidates to run for elected office
- Rockville does not have a public campaign finance program

## Best practice principles

- Learn from other jurisdictions, e.g., Montgomery County, Seattle, NYC, etc.
- Follow state laws and or guidelines

## Consultant approach

- If there is a desire, proceed with a phased approach
- Start with an advisory question and implement the program in 2030

**Does the Mayor and Council support developing a public campaign financing program?**



# Campaign Finance Reporting

## Background

- City limits contributions to \$1,000
- No clear reporting guidelines for PACs, Independent Expenditures, etc.
- Detailed reporting structure needed

## Best practice principles

- Clear and simple reporting requirement
- Provide clear and concise regulations that limit the need for interpretation

## Recommendations

- Simplify reporting requirements
- Find a balance between flexibility and regulations

1. **Should Political Action Committees (PACs) and independent expenditures be required to report additional activities?**
2. **How often should contribution limits be reviewed?**





# Election Procedures

## Background

- Extensive election policies and procedures for election administration
  - Ballot delivery and collection
  - Provisional ballots and canvass

## Best practice principles

- Develop a clear and concise election handbook
- Regularly update the election handbook

## Consultant approach

- Minor modifications to existing policies and procedures
- No code changes within 12 months of an election
- Add new language for the pre-election, election day, and post-election

**Should a detailed Election Handbook be created and renewed annually?**



## **Enforcement Mechanism**

### **Background**

- Enforcement of campaign violations was not an issue before 2023
- BSE issues infraction citations. Prosecution falls to the Office of the City Attorney
- Disputes regarding whether certain violations should be prosecuted

### **Best practice principles**

- Refer violations:
  - directly to the Office of the City Attorney
  - to the city staff, the BSE, then to the Office of the City Attorney
  - directly to BSE

### **Consultant approach**

- Violations to BSE and to administrative hearing

**Should election/campaign finance violation policies and procedures be updated to include administrative hearings?**



# Role of the Board of Supervisors of Elections

## Background

- Five-member volunteer board.
- Serve 4-year staggered terms
- Appointed by the Mayor and Council
- Duties outlined in the Charter (Article III) and Code (Chapter 8)

## Best practice principles

- Board roles and responsibilities vary by state and local jurisdictions
- Boards focus on policy recommendations
- Administration of the election conducted by staff

## Consultant approach

- Change the role of BSE

**Should the BSE's responsibilities be updated to reflect the BSE as a policy-recommending body, versus also being administrators of the elections?**



# Rank Choice Voting

## Background

- Voters rank candidates in order of their preference
- RCV is used in cities across the nation, e.g., Takoma Park, Minneapolis, etc.
- Rockville does not have Rank Choice Voting
- Community voiced support

## Best practice principles

- Learn from other jurisdictions
- Utilize available resources at the state level

## Consultant approach

- Implementation will take time, but feasible
- Getting assistance from the state is critical

**Should the City of Rockville consider moving forward with changing from a winner-takes-all system to a ranked-choice voting system?**



## 2023 Ballot Measures

### Background

- Four advisory ballot questions
  - Voting Age – Yes 28% - No 69%
  - Non-Citizen – Yes 33% - No 63%
  - Term Limits – Yes 74% - No 22%
  - Districts – Yes 40% - No 51%
- Community voiced support for allowing 16-and 17-year-olds to vote
- Mayor and Council supported moving forward with the term limits

### Best practice principles

- Many jurisdictions have lowered the voting age for their local elections
- Utilize state resources and learn from other jurisdictions

### Consultant's approach

- Proceeding with 16-and 17-year-olds to vote is feasible for the 2027 elections
- Outreach and public education are critical at the high schools

**Should the Election Code be changed to allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in city elections?**



## Next Steps

- ❑ **Research and Analysis**
- ❑ **Final Report Presented on September 8**

## Judy Penny

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**From:** Barry Jackson <b.jackson@rockvillemd.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 13, 2025 2:33 PM  
**To:** City Clerk  
**Subject:** Fw: Election Discussion

Here is a comment on the election that I received from Art Stigile who was a campaign treasurer last election and I believe previous ones.



Rise Together

**Barry Jackson**  
 COUNCILMEMBER  
 City of Rockville  
 C: 202-641-4018  
 P: 240-314-8295  
[www.rockvillemd.gov](http://www.rockvillemd.gov)




---

**From:** Art Stigile <artstigile@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 13, 2025 2:26 PM  
**To:** Barry Jackson <b.jackson@rockvillemd.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Election Discussion

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Hi Barry,

Just uncovered a note to myself about election materials. This probably isn't a Code issue. I wish the electronic campaign instructions that the Staff provide to each campaign had a useful table of contents with bookmarks. It's so hard finding info in that document.

Best,  
 Art Stigile

## Judy Penny

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**Subject:** FW: Election feedback from resident

**From:** Barry Jackson <[bjackson@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:bjackson@rockvillemd.gov)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 11, 2025 3:45 PM

**To:** City Clerk <[City\\_Clerk@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:City_Clerk@rockvillemd.gov)>

**Cc:** Jeff Mihelich <[jmihelich@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:jmihelich@rockvillemd.gov)>

**Subject:** Election feedback from resident

I got this from someone in Rockville who has input into the election discussion. Please pass this along to the consultant:

1. •

BSE -- I appreciate the effort and expertise of this group. They've done a fantastic job implementing vote-by-mail, which I enthusiastically support. They are responsive and considerate. They respond slowly during the fall campaign, but I can't fault a volunteer group for that, especially given the number of candidates. I wonder if there is some way to lighten their workload?

2. •

How to report fees paid by contributors when using an online platform to make a contribution. My analysis was that since the campaign did not directly pay the fee, the campaign should not report the fee as a contribution. The BSE agreed. This is especially important when the contribution is at the \$1000 maximum level because the contribution plus the fee would exceed the max. This should be clarified in the Code.

3. •

When was the maximum contribution set at \$1000? Inflation has greatly reduced the real value of \$1000. We ought to increase the maximum at least to account for inflation. We should also consider indexing it to the CPI so that it stays in step automatically with future increases in prices.

4. •



One thing I've observed is that the cost of campaigning prices out potential candidates and makes it very difficult to fund a campaign that can contact voters meaningfully. We should consider some form of public funding.

5. •

The BSE said candidates cannot make purchases for the campaign using personal funds and subsequently be reimbursed by the campaign. This makes no sense to me. One candidate did it at least once because it was the quickest way at the time to make the payment. As long as it is reported as an expense of the campaign, who cares that it was first paid by the candidate. This probably requires a Code change.

6. •

I vaguely recall that Treasurers are not permitted to make in-kind contributions to the campaign. If this is correct, it makes no sense to me. As long as it is reported as an in-kind contribution, what is the harm? This probably requires a Code change.

7. •

Do's and don'ts. This may not need to be addressed in the Code, but several of the campaigns committed similar violations in 2023. The campaign rules and reporting rules are complex. You can't just hand a copy of the Code to campaigns and expect them to understand and follow all of the rules. It would help to prepare a list of common violations and distribute them to the campaigns at the campaign kick-off and later during the fall. As an example, every yard sign must include a statement saying it was paid for by the campaign together with the name of the Treasurer. These things are easy to forget.

8. •

In 2023 the State (or County) Board of Elections provided the City with incorrect voter lists. I think the problem was detected by someone other than a City staff person. I think this happened twice in 2023 and may have happened in 2019. Each time the City blamed it on the State BOE. I'm paraphrasing, but they said that the City has no control over the data, so the City is not responsible. This is unacceptable. The City is conducting the election and should take greater responsibility for verifying voter registration lists. This is especially critical for mail ballots. After the 2023 election, I suggested a way to do this to the BSE. There is no reason that the City can't compare a new voter list to old voter lists to identify missing chunks of voters. It's just a matter of setting up a database of addresses within the City and cross-walking them electronically to the new voter list provided by the State, to see what's missing.

9. •

I would like to see us shift to district representatives instead of at-large representatives. It made little sense to increase the size of the Council while not shifting to district representation. Previously we had 4 council members each trying to represent 70,000 people. Now we have 6 council members facing the same task and same workload. We should task a group with coming up with a well thought out proposal, which would include proposed district definitions, that could be discussed with the broader community before the next election, and then put it to a question on the next ballot.

10. •

If we do not shift to district representation, we should task a group to examine the pros and cons of ranked choice voting. There was a proposal to include this as a question on the 2023 ballot. I sent emails urging the Council not to include the question because the proposal was not fleshed out. It was just a concept, and voters need something much more concrete than a concept before giving their approval. But I've heard a lot of good things about the concept, and I would like to see what it would actually mean in Rockville. I suspect most voters would feel the same.



Rise Together

**Barry Jackson**  
COUNCILMEMBER  
**City of Rockville**  
C: 202-641-4018  
P: 240-314-8295  
[www.rockvillemd.gov](http://www.rockvillemd.gov)



**Judy Penny**

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**Subject:** FW: Document shared with you: "Vote 16 Testimony.docx"  
**Attachments:** ATT00001.txt; ATT00002.htm


**From:** Youth Commission (via Google Docs) <[drive-shares-dm-noreply@google.com](mailto:drive-shares-dm-noreply@google.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 5:17 PM  
**To:** Sara Taylor-Ferrell <[sferrell@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:sferrell@rockvillemd.gov)>  
**Subject:** Document shared with you: "Vote 16 Testimony.docx"

## Youth Commission shared a document



Youth Commission ([rockvillemdyc@gmail.com](mailto:rockvillemdyc@gmail.com)) has invited you to **view** the following document:



 Vote 16 Testimony.docx



Does this item look suspicious? [Block sender](#)

Google LLC, 1600 Amphitheatre Parkway, Mountain View, CA 94043, USA  
 You have received this email because [rockvillemdyc@gmail.com](mailto:rockvillemdyc@gmail.com) shared a document with you from Google Docs.

Google™

We are the City of Rockville Mayor and Council's Youth Commission. Our role is to be leaders within the City to advocate for Rockville's youth. Working alongside each other, staff liaison, and Mayor and Council to set meaningful goals and develop plans to make our city a more welcoming and supportive place for teens has been an incredibly rewarding experience. We speak out today as a testament of the morals, values, standards, and genuine concern for our city's engagement in the youth. The Vote 16 movement is extremely important to us and we are in full support. Young people are trusted to contribute to society through many ways, something that turning eighteen does not change. We are responsible enough to do many things that are privy to our futures so we should have the right to vote for leaders who make decisions affecting our future. Lowering the voting age requirement to sixteen could increase civic engagement and encourage citizens to become informed and participate in the political process from a younger age, fostering a lifelong habit of voting.

First and foremost, at sixteen, teens in many places are trusted with serious responsibilities, ones that directly affect their lives, communities, and futures. So why are they not trusted with a voice in their democracy? At sixteen, teenagers can legally drive in Maryland—something that is not just a privilege, but a major responsibility that requires maturity, focus, and decision-making under pressure. A single wrong move on the road can be fatal. If we trust sixteen year-olds to safely operate a vehicle and follow laws that protect public safety, we should also trust them to make thoughtful choices at the ballot box. Thousands of sixteen and seventeen year-olds work and pay taxes, contributing to Social Security, Medicare, and income taxes just as adults do, yet with no say in how that money is spent. If you are old enough to pay taxes, you are old enough to have a voice in how those taxes are used. Teens at the age of sixteen can legally work in most industries and are expected to follow labor laws, sign

contracts, and make financial decisions. Many teens work to support themselves or help their families, and are held accountable for their actions in the workplace just like adults are. That level of responsibility should come with the civic right to vote on the policies that impact the economy, education, healthcare, and jobs. At sixteen and seventeen teens are still in high school, living every day under the rules and decisions made by school boards, state legislatures, and Congress. From curriculum standards to school safety and mental health funding, teens are directly impacted by education policy. Should we not have a say in the system we are required to be a part of? We as young people are already showing up, leading climate strikes, organizing for gun safety, demanding racial justice, and volunteering for political campaigns. We are engaged. We care. And we are ready. Giving sixteen year-olds the vote is not about forcing politics on youth—it is about empowering those who are already participating to make their voices count.

Additionally, granting 16 year-olds the ability to vote would instill in them lifelong values of civic engagement and duty. When they are given the right to do so as adults, they might feel too busy to partake in political actions that may not have as significant a sway on the world, such as local elections. However, giving them the suffrage in their late teenage years would teach them how important local elections are, creating a habit that will stay with them for the rest of their lives. It would also be an important educational step to voting in congressional and presidential elections, a leap that may seem daunting otherwise. With today's youth often feeling frustrated and underrepresented in government, it is imperative to make voting and civic participation important to them through the right to vote in local elections, to empower them and teach them to be active citizens for the rest of their lives. While it seems like a small step, it would promote their appreciation and contribution to our democratic system, bettering the nation for generations to come.

While sixteen year-olds are often seen as lacking the maturity needed to vote, there are many who are as knowledgeable and mature as the average adult, and who should not be denied the suffrage solely because some sixteen-year olds are not. Ultimately, the fact that one has to go out of their way to vote discourages those who do not truly care about the process from doing so.

This brings us to our final point: equal representation is essential. If you ask a group of 30+ year-old adults if a sixteen year-old should be able to vote, as seen in the 2023 election almost every time means that the answer is “No.” You must include the group it is affecting and asking for change, but so far, this issue has been debated behind closed doors, without asking the City’s youth where their opinions stand. If only one group of people in the same demographic is asked, change will never occur and we will forever face exclusion as well as finding ourselves in a loophole of the youth’s cries for inclusion not being put into action. It is unjust that the youth, those with stakes in this debate, have no voice in its final outcome. As members of the Youth Commission, we represent Rockville youth in its government and advise the Mayor and Council, but ironically, we cannot do something as simple as voting.

We are asking to be trusted with our basic democratic rights. In closing, we stand before you not as a single group, but as a voice for a generation pleading to be heard. Our experiences, our perspectives, and our futures are inseparably linked to the decisions made by the Mayor and Council. Excluding us from the table is not just a disservice to us but a disservice to change itself. Give us a seat, lend us your ear, and one step at a time we can build a future where every voice matters and every generation thrives. Thank you.

**Judy Penny**

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**From:** jbecker <jb.ic@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 3:18 PM  
**To:** City Clerk  
**Subject:** community engagement sessions on election codes and procedures updates  
**Attachments:** 06-9-25 community engagement ltr on elections to city clerk\_000067.pdf

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

as received and instructed on the evening of thursday, 6/5 and saturday morning, 6/7, attached are my comments on the election updates as presented by the rockville board of supervisors of elections, the city staff, gant consultants and most important the citizens of rockville that participated in both sessions


any comments/questions/suggestions are appreciated

good luck

**Regards,**  
**John Becker**  
**Direct: 301-852-9051**

6/9/25

To: city clerk/director of council operations  
city of rockville, 111 maryland ave., rockville, md 20850  
[cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov)

Fr: john becker   
148 monroe street  
rockville, md 20850  
[jb.ic@aol.com](mailto:jb.ic@aol.com)

Re: community engagement sessions on election codes and procedures updates

I want the rockville mayor and council to adopt the following updates to the election code and the procedures that affect the operation of the election process of the city of rockville as well as continue with policies and procedures in place:

1. continue vote by mail
2. increase transparency in campaign funding
3. city must enforce all aspects of campaigns: funding, specific response by campaigns/campaigners to the board of supervisors of elections (bse), city attorney and city staff to questions, citations of violations of the election code.
4. Penalties for violating election code/procedures must be clear and enforced. enforcement is not an option.
5. City of rockville must establish more diversity of representatives that live throughout the city and not in a limited area of the city, and not to single family detached/town home areas. There is definitely a lacking in diversity, equity, and inclusion. Therefore, representative districts that address diversity, equity, and inclusion are necessary. The formulation of such districts must include strong, strenuous participation by the citizens ensuring fair, equitable, and inclusive elections.
6. Updates to the election code and procedures must be in language that is easy to understand and that all portions of the updates clearly state who/which department of the city a citizen can contact for assistance in understanding the updates and the overall code/procedures.
7. Regulations regarding outside campaign organizations (those that are not directly/legally under the control of a candidate) are required to be transparent.
8. Bse: more information on its functions, what is their responsibility, what is not and if not what department, other public citizen body is.



## Judy Penny

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**From:** advocate@mail.actionbutton.org on behalf of Sarah Renner  
<advocate@mail.actionbutton.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 2:46 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Support Ranked Choice Voting for Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Dear Sara Taylor-Ferrell,

I am Sarah Renner and I am a resident of Rockville. I am emailing to express my support for ranked choice voting (RCV) for Rockville elections.

Here are three reasons why RCV is an innovative voting method that would give Rockville voters more power and make their voices heard:

- 1) Stronger Representation - RCV promotes fair representation and elections better reflect the community, giving overlooked communities a voice on policy.
- 2) Effective Democracy - RCV gives voters the ability to better express their preferences, reducing strategic voting and toxic campaigning, allowing voters and candidates to focus on the issues.
- 3) Rockville is Ready - RCV is already used in 51 jurisdictions across the U.S., giving 14 million voters greater choice and more power in elections. Voters in Washington, D.C. said YES to RCV in 2024, and Takoma Park has used RCV since 2007. A wealth of data, best practices, and expertise provides the city with a roadmap to simple and effective implementation.

I look forward to the Community Engagement Sessions and hope Rockville will move forward to use ranked choice voting in future elections.

Thank you,  
Sarah Renner

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This message was sent by Sarah Renner via [ActionButton](#), on behalf of Ranked Choice Voting Maryland. Please reply to Sarah Renner at [sarah\\_e\\_renner@yahoo.com](mailto:sarah_e_renner@yahoo.com).

**Judy Penny**

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**From:** advocate@mail.actionbutton.org on behalf of Keren Cummins  
<advocate@mail.actionbutton.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 1:18 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Support Ranked Choice Voting for Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Dear Sara Taylor-Ferrell,

I am Keren Cummins and I am a resident of Rockville. I have given a lot of thought and research to the benefits of ranked choice voting and it captures the best of competing approaches.

I am emailing to express my support for ranked choice voting (RCV) for Rockville elections.

Three key reasons why RCV is an innovative voting method that would give Rockville voters more power and make their voices heard:

- 1) Stronger Representation - RCV promotes fair representation and elections better reflect the community, giving overlooked communities a voice on policy.
- 2) Effective Democracy - RCV gives voters the ability to better express their preferences, reducing strategic voting and toxic campaigning, allowing voters and candidates to focus on the issues.
- 3) Rockville is Ready - RCV is already used in 51 jurisdictions across the U.S., giving 14 million voters greater choice and more power in elections. Voters in Washington, D.C. said YES to RCV in 2024, and Takoma Park has used RCV since 2007. A wealth of data, best practices, and expertise provides the city with a roadmap to simple and effective implementation.

I look forward to the Community Engagement Sessions and hope Rockville will move forward to use ranked choice voting in future elections.

Thank you,  
Keren Cummins

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This message was sent by Keren Cummins via [ActionButton](#), on behalf of Ranked Choice Voting Maryland. Please reply to Keren Cummins at [keren\\_cummins@yahoo.com](mailto:keren_cummins@yahoo.com).

**Judy Penny**

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**From:** advocate@mail.actionbutton.org on behalf of Rebecca Cole  
<advocate@mail.actionbutton.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 1:08 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Support Ranked Choice Voting for Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Dear Sara Taylor-Ferrell,

I am Rebecca Cole and I am a resident of Rockville. I am emailing to express my support for ranked choice voting (RCV) for Rockville elections.

Here are three reasons why RCV is an innovative voting method that would give Rockville voters more power and make their voices heard:

- 1) Stronger Representation - RCV promotes fair representation and elections better reflect the community, giving overlooked communities a voice on policy.
- 2) Effective Democracy - RCV gives voters the ability to better express their preferences, reducing strategic voting and toxic campaigning, allowing voters and candidates to focus on the issues.
- 3) Rockville is Ready - RCV is already used in 51 jurisdictions across the U.S., giving 14 million voters greater choice and more power in elections. Voters in Washington, D.C. said YES to RCV in 2024, and Takoma Park has used RCV since 2007. A wealth of data, best practices, and expertise provides the city with a roadmap to simple and effective implementation.

I look forward to the Community Engagement Sessions and hope Rockville will move forward to use ranked choice voting in future elections.

Thank you,  
Rebecca Cole

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This message was sent by Rebecca Cole via [ActionButton](#), on behalf of Ranked Choice Voting Maryland. Please reply to Rebecca Cole at [rjanecole@gmail.com](mailto:rjanecole@gmail.com).

## Judy Penny

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**From:** advocate@mail.actionbutton.org on behalf of Kellie Nance  
<advocate@mail.actionbutton.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 12:27 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Support Ranked Choice Voting for Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Dear Sara Taylor-Ferrell,

I am Kellie Nance and I am a resident of Rockville. I am emailing to express my support for ranked choice voting (RCV) for Rockville elections.

Here are three reasons why RCV is an innovative voting method that would give Rockville voters more power and make their voices heard:

- 1) Stronger Representation - RCV promotes fair representation and elections better reflect the community, giving overlooked communities a voice on policy.
- 2) Effective Democracy - RCV gives voters the ability to better express their preferences, reducing strategic voting and toxic campaigning, allowing voters and candidates to focus on the issues.
- 3) Rockville is Ready - RCV is already used in 51 jurisdictions across the U.S., giving 14 million voters greater choice and more power in elections. Voters in Washington, D.C. said YES to RCV in 2024, and Takoma Park has used RCV since 2007. A wealth of data, best practices, and expertise provides the city with a roadmap to simple and effective implementation.

I look forward to the Community Engagement Sessions and hope Rockville will move forward to use ranked choice voting in future elections.

Thank you,  
Kellie Nance

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This message was sent by Kellie Nance via [ActionButton](#), on behalf of Ranked Choice Voting Maryland. Please reply to Kellie Nance at [eclectickellie@gmail.com](mailto:eclectickellie@gmail.com).

**Sara Taylor-Ferrell**

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**From:** advocate@mail.actionbutton.org on behalf of Braum Katz  
<advocate@mail.actionbutton.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 12:15 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Support Ranked Choice Voting for Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Dear Sara Taylor-Ferrell,

I am Braum Katz and I am a resident of Rockville. I am emailing to express my support for ranked choice voting (RCV) for Rockville elections.

Here are three reasons why RCV is an innovative voting method that would give Rockville voters more power and make their voices heard:

- 1) Stronger Representation - RCV promotes fair representation and elections better reflect the community, giving overlooked communities a voice on policy.
- 2) Effective Democracy - RCV gives voters the ability to better express their preferences, reducing strategic voting and toxic campaigning, allowing voters and candidates to focus on the issues.
- 3) Rockville is Ready - RCV is already used in 51 jurisdictions across the U.S., giving 14 million voters greater choice and more power in elections. Voters in Washington, D.C. said YES to RCV in 2024, and Takoma Park has used RCV since 2007. A wealth of data, best practices, and expertise provides the city with a roadmap to simple and effective implementation.

I look forward to the Community Engagement Sessions and hope Rockville will move forward to use ranked choice voting in future elections.

Thank you,  
Braum Katz

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This message was sent by Braum Katz via [ActionButton](#), on behalf of Ranked Choice Voting Maryland. Please reply to Braum Katz at [braumjkatz@gmail.com](mailto:braumjkatz@gmail.com).

**Judy Penny**

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**From:** advocate@mail.actionbutton.org on behalf of Jessica Silverman  
<advocate@mail.actionbutton.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 11:58 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Support Ranked Choice Voting for Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Dear Sara Taylor-Ferrell,

I am Jessica Silverman and I am a resident of Rockville. I am emailing to express my support for ranked choice voting (RCV) for Rockville elections.

Here are three reasons why RCV is an innovative voting method that would give Rockville voters more power and make their voices heard:

- 1) Stronger Representation - RCV promotes fair representation and elections better reflect the community, giving overlooked communities a voice on policy.
- 2) Effective Democracy - RCV gives voters the ability to better express their preferences, reducing strategic voting and toxic campaigning, allowing voters and candidates to focus on the issues.
- 3) Rockville is Ready - RCV is already used in 51 jurisdictions across the U.S., giving 14 million voters greater choice and more power in elections. Voters in Washington, D.C. said YES to RCV in 2024, and Takoma Park has used RCV since 2007. A wealth of data, best practices, and expertise provides the city with a roadmap to simple and effective implementation.

I look forward to the Community Engagement Sessions and hope Rockville will move forward to use ranked choice voting in future elections.

Thank you,  
Jessica Silverman

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This message was sent by Jessica Silverman via [ActionButton](#), on behalf of Ranked Choice Voting Maryland. Please reply to Jessica Silverman at [jokerjesss@gmail.com](mailto:jokerjesss@gmail.com).

**Judy Penny**

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**From:** rtreinhard@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 11:56 AM  
**To:** cityclerk; Judy Penny  
**Subject:** Re: elections input

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Judy...

Let me add:

I am in favor of ranked-choice voting. It is fairer. Rockville could provide a good test case that could later be picked up by Montgomery County. MoCo may very well have had a different county executive in each of the last two elections, instead of one elected with a distinct minority vote.

Rick

On Monday, June 2, 2025 at 11:50:21 AM EDT, Judy Penny <jpenny@rockvillemd.gov> wrote:

Mr. Reinhard,

Thank you for the email regarding your input on possible changes to Chapter 8.

Your comments will be shared with the election consultant as he shares recommendations with the Mayor and Council.

Kind regards, and stay safe!



Rise Together

**Judy Penny**  
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT  
**City Clerk/DCO**  
O. 240-314-8280  
D. 240-314-8281  
[www.rockvillemd.gov](http://www.rockvillemd.gov)



*"In order to be in compliance with the open meetings act, please do not reply to all. If you would like to discuss a matter in an open meeting, please let me know and we can have the matter placed as an agenda item for discussion"*

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**From:** rtreinhard@aol.com <rtreinhard@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 1, 2025 1:35 PM  
**To:** cityclerk <cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov>  
**Subject:** elections input

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Richard Reinhard

38 Maryland Ave Unit 501

Rockville MD 20850

- Do you prefer to vote by mail? Yes.
- Do you think there are enough drop boxes and voting centers? Yes.
- Do you think there is enough transparency around funding campaign committees/slates/political action committees? No.
- Are you satisfied with the city's efforts to enforce its campaign finance laws? No. Get on top of it.
- Do you believe the city is promoting diversity, equality and inclusion appropriately? Yes.



- Should the city implement the 2023 ballot measures? If so, which ones? Yes on term limits.
- \* Do you have other ideas to improve the city's election process? No excuses for making mistakes on who lives in the City of Rockville and who doesn't. No excuses for voters getting ballots late or not at all. Don't just point fingers at Montgomery County. Fix it. It's not rocket science. If the Board of Supervisors of Elections cannot get these simple things right, no one will have confidence in it.

**Judy Penny**

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**From:** advocate@mail.actionbutton.org on behalf of Travis Gettinger  
 <advocate@mail.actionbutton.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 11:56 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Support Ranked Choice Voting for Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Hello,

I am Travis Gettinger and I am a resident of Rockville. I am emailing to express my support for ranked choice voting (RCV) for Rockville elections.

Here are three reasons why RCV is an innovative voting method that would give Rockville voters more power and make their voices heard:

- 1) Stronger Representation - RCV promotes fair representation and elections better reflect the community, giving overlooked communities a voice on policy.
- 2) Effective Democracy - RCV gives voters the ability to better express their preferences, reducing strategic voting and toxic campaigning, allowing voters and candidates to focus on the issues.
- 3) Rockville is Ready - RCV is already used in 51 jurisdictions across the U.S., giving 14 million voters greater choice and more power in elections. Voters in Washington, D.C. said YES to RCV in 2024, and Takoma Park has used RCV since 2007. A wealth of data, best practices, and expertise provides the city with a roadmap to simple and effective implementation.

I look forward to the Community Engagement Sessions and hope Rockville will move forward to use ranked choice voting in future elections.

Thank you,  
 Travis Gettinger

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This message was sent by Travis Gettinger via [ActionButton](#), on behalf of Ranked Choice Voting Maryland. Please reply to Travis Gettinger at [travismgettinger@hotmail.com](mailto:travismgettinger@hotmail.com).

## Judy Penny

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**From:** advocate@mail.actionbutton.org on behalf of Andrea Shettle  
<advocate@mail.actionbutton.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 11:54 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Support Ranked Choice Voting for Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Dear Sara Taylor-Ferrell,

I am Andrea Shettle and I am a resident of Rockville. I am emailing to express my support for ranked choice voting (RCV) for Rockville elections as an important means of strengthening our democracy.

Here are three reasons why RCV is an innovative voting method that would give Rockville voters more power and make their voices heard:

- 1) Stronger Representation - RCV promotes fair representation and elections better reflect the community, giving overlooked communities a voice on policy.
- 2) Effective Democracy - RCV gives voters the ability to better express their preferences, reducing strategic voting and toxic campaigning, allowing voters and candidates to focus on the issues.
- 3) Rockville is Ready - RCV is already used in 51 jurisdictions across the U.S., giving 14 million voters greater choice and more power in elections. Voters in Washington, D.C. said YES to RCV in 2024, and Takoma Park has used RCV since 2007. A wealth of data, best practices, and expertise provides the city with a roadmap to simple and effective implementation.

I look forward to the Community Engagement Sessions and hope Rockville will move forward to use ranked choice voting in future elections.

Thank you,  
Andrea Shettle

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This message was sent by Andrea Shettle via [ActionButton](#), on behalf of Ranked Choice Voting Maryland. Please reply to Andrea Shettle at [andrea.shettle@gmail.com](mailto:andrea.shettle@gmail.com).

**Judy Penny**

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**From:** advocate@mail.actionbutton.org on behalf of Rebekah Durig  
 <advocate@mail.actionbutton.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 11:26 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Support Ranked Choice Voting for Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Dear Sara Taylor-Ferrell,

I am Rebekah Durig and I am a resident of Rockville. I am emailing to express my support for ranked choice voting (RCV) for Rockville elections.

Here are three reasons why I care about RCV:

- 1) Effective Democracy - RCV gives voters the ability to better express their preferences, reducing strategic voting and toxic campaigning, allowing voters and candidates to focus on the issues.
- 2) Voters Education: I care deeply about breaking bipartisan clashes without intent to compromise or find solutions. While Rockville does not have this issue due to non-partisan elections, implementing RCV in Rockville will allow voters to be more familiar with the process in partisan elections for the state and the nation.
- 3) Rockville is Ready - RCV is already used in 51 jurisdictions across the U.S., giving 14 million voters greater choice and more power in elections. Voters in Washington, D.C. said YES to RCV in 2024, and Takoma Park has used RCV since 2007. A wealth of data, best practices, and expertise provides the city with a roadmap to simple and effective implementation.

I hope this message was also clear in the Community Engagement Sessions and hope Rockville will move forward to use ranked choice voting in future elections.

Thank you,  
 Rebekah Durig

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This message was sent by Rebekah Durig via [ActionButton](#), on behalf of Ranked Choice Voting Maryland. Please reply to Rebekah Durig at [rebekahdurig@yahoo.com](mailto:rebekahdurig@yahoo.com).

**Judy Penny**

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**From:** mark.votepierzchala.org <mark@votepierzchala.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 11:12 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Comments on election laws

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

June 9, 2025

Dear City Clerk's Office,

I attended Saturday's session.

During the session's question and answer part, I advocated that the City of Rockville pay for a mailing where every eligible candidate gets one page in the mailing subject to certain minimal rules.

The facilitator morphed this into something else in his comments. I did not appreciate that.

I know the difference between mail and electronic communications. They are not the same thing, and they do not usually replace one another. The facilitator should have just accepted the suggestion without commenting on it.

Here are my responses to the questions posed on the handout.

1. I vote in person, but I think it is very important that Vote by Mail is available.
2. I think there are enough drop boxes and voting centers, especially with the vote by mail option.
3. I think there is enough transparency around campaign committees that are also referred to as slates. In 2023, we saw a political action committee send 2 widely mailed postcards. While the PAC did file a report, and did list its contributors (mostly or totally corporate as I recall), the people behind the mailing were not known, or it was hard to find out about them. PACs are legal, but voters should be able to determine who is behind this independently spent money.
4. I am not satisfied with the City's efforts to enforce the campaign finance laws in that there was one candidate who did not file and the City Attorney's Office decided not to file a municipal action. These reports are considerably easier to file than before, but they still require a great effort, often at the most difficult times of the campaign.

I would agree to provide an easy way out for someone who effectively ends their campaign, but there must still be some reporting.

5. I believe the City is effectively promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. There is huge outreach.
6. If any of the ballot measures should be changes, it should be ones that were approved by the voters in the advisory referenda. There was only one that was approved (term limits) though I don't personally support it.
7. I have other suggestions to improve the City's election process:
  - a. The City should implement campaign financing along the lines that the County has approved them. Since all elected positions are at-large, it can be daunting for first-time candidates to overcome resource issues. This is especially true for those who are not well-connected with the political powers in the City.
  - b. Ranked-choice voting should be on the ballot for 2027 as an advisory referendum.
  - c. As noted above, there should be one City-Wide physical mailing where every certified candidate gets a page subject to some minimal rules. This would help candidates overcome resource issues.

Yours,

Mark Pierzchala

## Judy Penny

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**From:** Claire Funkhouser <clairefunk@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 8, 2025 7:11 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Sara Taylor-Ferrell City Clerk, Director of Council Operations

Re: Elections

We are sorry neither one of us were able to attend the in-person sessions last week. We did want to provide input about the questions posed.

- 1) We prefer to vote by mail in the city elections. We have found it to be easy and convenient
- 2) There seem to have been sufficient drop boxes and voting centers. However, since the last election, several new housing developments, primarily townhouses and large apartments, have been built. They are in areas throughout Rockville such as Twinbrook, Town Center, King Farm, Tower Oaks and Rockville Pike so it would be wise to examine this further.
- 3) There has been increased ability for the public to follow information regarding funding campaign committees/slates/political action committees on line.
- 4) Again, with the public and the Board of Elections able to monitor all of this, additional scrutiny would promote the expectation of enforcement of campaign finance laws
- 5) We are not quite sure why this question regarding diversity, equality and inclusion is being asked. Any registered voter who is a citizen of Rockville and who can gather 100 verified signatures can be on the ballot.
- 6) The only ballot measure which we feel strongly about is the one concerning representative districts. We believe all seats on the Mayor and Council should stay at-large. Decisions should be made for the benefit of the entire city rather than potentially competing districts.

Additionally, we want to stress the critical role of the support of several groups within the city's governance to run a successful and smooth election. Obviously, the City Clerk's Office and the Board of Supervisors of Elections must work well together. Also, the City Manager's Office can provide critical support in terms of publicity through the city's website, Rockville Reports, Channel 11 and the coordination of any debates. The city's IT Department may be helpful with the testing of any equipment the city may use with the County's registration process.

Most important is the relationship between the City Clerk's Office and the City Attorney's Office. An attorney should be assigned who has the time and knowledge to provide support to the Clerk's Office and the Board of Supervisors of Elections from the beginning of the election cycle to well after the election.

Rockville has a history of elections that have been well run and legal. Hopefully, this year's examination will only enhance this most important of civil activities.

Claire and Gary Funkhouser

1037 Carnation Drive



**Sara Taylor-Ferrell**

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**From:** Gaby Moore <gabynm1013@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 8, 2025 1:48 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Rockville City Lowered Voting Age

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

My name is Gabrielle Moore Brooks and I am a regional director of Vote16 Maryland, a statewide coalition working to lower the voting age to 16 in municipalities throughout Maryland. I still strongly support allowing 16 and 17 year olds to vote in Rockville local elections. As a young patron from another part of Maryland who had spent years engaged in civic education and student advocacy, I've witnessed first hand that 16 and 17 year olds are variable of understanding complex issues that affect them.

In communities across Maryland, including my own, youth are testifying before school boards and town halls, working on political campaigns, and advocating for legislation on the state level. These students are paying attention to policies on education, safety, mental health, and the environment because these decisions affect our daily lives. The idea that 16-year-olds are not mature or informed enough to vote simply isn't the reality.

Research has shown that lowered vote age also increases overall civic involvement. When given the chance, 16 and 17 year olds have higher voter turnout rates and created lifelong voters. It makes sense to allow them to have a say in who is making decisions about their future, especially at the local level where policies often have the most immediate impact.

Local democracy is strongest when it reflects the voices of all stakeholders. I urge you to lead by example and give 16 and 17 year olds the right to participate in shaping their community. Their voices are vital and more than ready to be heard at the ballot.

Gabrielle Moore Brooks

**Sara Taylor-Ferrell**

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**From:** Kylen Jackson <kylenjackson318@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 8, 2025 12:14 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Cc:** vanessali1805@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Written testimony on voting age

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Good evening members of the Rockville City Council,

My name is Kylen Jackson. I'm a high school student, and someone who believes deeply in expanding civic opportunity. I am writing to support Rockville's efforts to lower the voting age to 16-17 in our local city elections.

At 16, many young people are already working jobs, paying taxes, helping care for family members, and engaging in community organizations. In my own experience, I've seen students lead public policy efforts, testify before elected officials, and help shape school and local government decisions. We're already involved — we just deserve the right to have our voices counted at the ballot box.

Rockville has the chance to set a powerful example. By recognizing youth not just as future voters, but as current stakeholders, you show trust in the next generation of leaders. This is a decision that would reflect Rockville's commitment to equity, participation, and long-term democratic strength.

Thank you for your leadership and for considering this important step.

Kylen Jackson

Maryland Youth Association Baltimore County Local Policy Co-Director

Baltimore County Public School SMOB Committee Member

Maryland Association of Student Councils Finance Committee Member

Barnes & Scott Youth at Law  
 Human Resources Coordinator

**Sara Taylor-Ferrell**

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**From:** Gabriella Blair <gabrielladblair@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 6, 2025 9:19 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Cc:** Vanessa Li; anyafkleinman@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Written Commentary  
**Attachments:** Gabriella Blair - Vote16MD Rockville Commentary.pdf

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Hello, my written commentary is attached below.

My name is Gabriella Blair, and I am a Freshman. I currently serve as a Co-Regional Director for Vote 16MD. I write to you today in support of lowering the voting age in Rockville, Maryland, to 16. Doing so could make a real and lasting difference in our communities and in how we approach civic life.

Lowering the voting age to 16 can truly strengthen our democracy and reshape the way young people engage with the world around them. Sixteen-year-olds are already contributing to society in meaningful ways. Many hold jobs, drive, and some live independently. Giving them the right to vote ensures they have a say in the policies and decisions that shape their daily lives and futures.

By allowing young people to vote, we're not just recognizing their responsibilities, we're encouraging civic participation early on, helping them build lifelong voting habits and empowering a generation that will live with the long term consequences of today's decisions. Excluding them from the process isn't just unfair, it's a missed opportunity to make our democracy more inclusive, forward-thinking, and representative. Maryland already allows 16-year-olds to pre-register to vote so why not let them actually cast a ballot at the same age?

Lowering the voting age wouldn't just benefit youth, it would strengthen civic engagement across the board. Campaigns and politicians would be encouraged to consider the perspectives of younger voters, and in the process would gain insight into the issues that matter most to them. This kind of inclusion would help ensure that our political system is responsive to all voices in the community, not just the oldest or loudest.

We've already seen success in other parts of Maryland. For example, in Takoma Park, where the voting age was lowered to 16 in 2013, turnout among 16- and 17-year-olds was 44% which is nearly four times higher than the turnout rate of voters 18 and older, which was only 11%. This shows that when young people are included, they do show up and take the responsibility seriously. There's no reason to believe the same couldn't happen in Rockville.

In fact, the interest is already there. As of 2023, over 52,000 16- and 17-year-olds had pre-registered to vote in Maryland, according to The Civics Center. These are thousands of teens actively preparing to fulfill their civic duty. But while they are ready and willing, the law is holding them back along with lawmakers. Just imagine how many thoughtful, passionate and informed voices are going unheard. These voices are going unheard, not because they're not engaged but simply because of an outdated age restriction.

Based on this data and the success seen in other Maryland cities, Rockville has a real opportunity to lead. Lowering the voting age to 16 would show that the city values its youth, trusts them, and is ready to strengthen local democracy by including those who are most affected by the decisions being made.

Young people care deeply about the issues in their communities and when you give them a chance, they will show up. I strongly urge you to allow them that opportunity by lowering the voting age in Rockville to 16.

Sincerely,  
 Gabriella Blair  
 Vote16MD CoRegional Director

**Sara Taylor-Ferrell**

---

**From:** Vincent Russo <vdrusso1@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 6, 2025 7:06 PM  
**To:** Sara Taylor-Ferrell  
**Cc:** Judy Penny  
**Subject:** Fwd: election reform comments  
**Attachments:** Election reform notes 2025.docx

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Hello Sara,

Here are my comments for Rockville elections.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

Kind regards,

Vincent

Vincent Russo

Notes on election reform

June 6, 2025

## **General statement**

Keep it simple. The rewrite of Chapter 8 presents the opportunity to simplify the city's election practices. This will benefit voters and those who must administer the election. Be mindful that the city: (1) has no control over its voter register; (2) uses county equipment and space for secure storage of ballots, canvassing and tabulation; and (3) does not have a full-time elections department. Our ambitions must align with these realities.

## **Enforcement**

- Penalties are insufficient to compel timely compliance. Public interest for disclosure and transparency is not served when candidates evade the rules.
- Avoid putting BSE in position of having to enforce violations that will not be pursued by the city. Discretion is ok to a point, but we do not want the BSE to be perceived as unevenly enforcing between candidates or enforcing some rules and not others.

## **CFR**

- Is there commercial software (an app?) with data validations that would simplify compliance for campaigns and review for the BSE? Common problems are carrying forward balances, accounting for loans.
- Review timeliness of CFR filing and penalties for non-compliance. Voters should have visibility into funding sources earlier in the process because votes are cast well before election day with VBM. Candidates can avoid reporting under current rules without incurring penalties until after votes are cast. Or ever, really.

## **Campaign financing**

- Anticipate that increasing sums will come from external organizations wanting to participate in city elections. Adjust Chapter 8 accordingly. Should these organizations be subject to the same requirements as candidate committees?
- Outcomes of municipal elections are hugely consequential, especially regarding land use, and thus will attract money. Rather than strain to keep money out, we should embrace the interest in promoting participation in city elections. That seems healthy.

- Maintain alignment of Chapter 8 with SCOTUS decisions which trend toward fewer restrictions. E.g., *Buckley v Valeo*; *McCutchen*; *Citizens United*. Avoid introducing measures that would put Rockville in a position to have to defend (with costly litigation) an election code that runs afoul of these decisions. It seems obvious but there is passion for (unconstitutional) restrictions on self-funding following the 2023 election.

## **Operations**

- Why do Rockville results take so long to tabulate? On election night Kentucky and Mississippi know their next governors hours before we know the outcome of our municipal election with fewer than 13,000 ballots cast.
- Do the data on drop box usage justify their continued use, much less expansion? Four underutilized locations together accounted for fewer than 8 percent of total ballots cast (Montrose, Lincoln Park, Thomas Farm, and Twinbrook). The other locations at city hall (38.7 percent of ballots) and the senior center (3.5 percent) saw more usage. The security and collection costs should be considered.
- Consider compensation/stipend of BSE members.

**Legal counsel.** BSE should have independent or in-house legal counsel during election season, especially for canvassing and election nights.

## **Code changes**

- Do not mandate placement of drop boxes and other operational details in the code. BSE needs flexibility. Code should give overall direction, not mandate operational specifics. Technical and security considerations are factors, as well as cost.
- Update language that refers to dated communication methods; archaic references. “Newspaper”.
- Clarify roles between CM, CA, and DCO. Sign enforcement. Running forums. Infraction enforcement. What does it mean that violators “shall be prosecuted” by the CA? What discretion does the CA have to opt not to prosecute?
- Generally, the dollar amounts referenced in the code need to be updated for inflation. For example, some limits are as low as \$25 in various parts of the code.
- Clarify definition of “campaign committee.” Is it just a slate? Or sometimes something else?

## Ballot questions and other proposed reforms

### Public financing

- Rockville is small compared to county. What is cost? How would the program be administered and by whom? CM? BSE? City Clerk? What is threshold for qualifying?
- Enlarging Council in 2023 enabled election of wider range of candidates, thus achieving what would be a goal of public financing.

### Ranked Choice Voting

- Election outcomes for our current process and RCV are likely to be mathematically equivalent in Rockville. Voters currently select up to six choices. When selections of all voters are aggregated, the result is a collective ranking not unlike the outcome from RCV. So why bother with the complication and expense of RCV? Our mayoral elections are historically binary affairs, so the winners already have majority support.
- Expensive to implement if not supported by the state and county with appropriate equipment and software.
- RCV is a solution in search of a problem that we do not have in Rockville municipal elections.

**Alphabetic ordering.** How would random ordering of candidate names affect the number of ballot styles needed? We already have ten ballot styles. As a voter I know the candidates I want to support and prefer seeing them ordered alphabetically for ease of identification. Again, keep it simple. Avoid confusing voters.

### Districts

- Council expansion from five to seven seats opened an opportunity for more areas of the city to be represented. Indeed, our sample size of 1 already shows positive results with candidates from King Farm and Twinbrook winning seats in 2023. Allow more time to evaluate whether the expansion continues to result in improved geographic representation before adopting districts.
- Would require additional costs for consultants to draw and eventually reapportion the districts. Need code to regulate periodic reapportionment.
- If the city did adopt districts, we should maintain citywide voting so all members are responsive to the entire population. Similar to Board of Education elections in the county.



- Rockville is a compact, relatively homogenous city with similar needs and wants throughout, so district voting seems an unnecessary complication. We do not have significant socio-economic, demographic, or geographic disparities like larger polities where district voting is perhaps justified.

**Term limits.** Term limits are unnecessary in Rockville. Since 1900 only a handful of officials have served longer than 12 years in combined service as either councilmember or mayor. The longest tenures were 14 years (Bob Dorsey 1993-2007; Bridget Newton 2009-2023; Douglas Blandford 1932-1946); 16 years (G. LaMar Kelley 1934-1952); and 18 years (Joseph Clagett 1914-1932). It is not a job people hold for decades like members of Congress, nor is it an executive position prone to abuse by long-term incumbents. If experienced council members are willing to serve and the voters are happy to have them, so be it.

**Presidential-year voting.** Retain off-year election cycles for municipal elections. This gives the city more control over the ballot and voting methods. Our vote-by-mail innovation, the first in the state of Maryland, would not have been possible if we had coincided with the presidential election. Off-cycle elections preserve our ability to innovate and experiment.

Follow resident sentiment on **lowering voting age** and **non-citizen voting** both of which voters resoundingly rejected in 2023. Do not pursue these. There must be an age limit and 18 is appropriate. That 16-year-olds can drive is irrelevant. The city offers youth other means for civic engagement, including boards and commissions. Non-citizen voting would require the city to maintain a separate register of alien residents eligible to vote. What if a federal administration hostile to the interests of aliens demanded that list? Let's table this one.

## Judy Penny

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**From:** Asad Farooq <asadf20261@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 6, 2025 5:29 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Written Testimony for Lowering Voting Age in Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

My written election input is pasted below:

Dear Mayor Ashton and Council-members,

My name is Asad Farooq. I'm a junior in high school and I serve as a Regional Director for Vote 16MD, a statewide youth coalition committed to expanding voting rights to 16- and 17-year-olds in local elections across Maryland.

I'm here today because Rockville has a powerful opportunity. An opportunity to strengthen its democracy, to include more voices in decisions that matter, and to lead by recognizing that young people are already engaged members of our community.

At 16, we're not watching from the sidelines. We're commuting on city buses, working jobs in Rockville businesses, navigating mental health challenges in our schools, and balancing demanding course loads with family responsibilities. These are not small things. These are adult-level decisions being made by people who are told they're still too young to vote. But how does that make sense? Why should we wait two more years to have a say in the very systems we're already living within?

Local government shapes so many of our everyday experiences. It affects how safe we feel in our neighborhoods, whether our schools are well-funded, how accessible our public transportation is, and whether our parks and libraries are being prioritized. These decisions are being made with or without our input. And when you're 16 or 17, waiting two more years can feel like an eternity, especially when those years are some of the most formative in a person's civic identity. If we want engaged, informed, lifelong voters, we shouldn't delay their entry into democracy. We should welcome it.

And this isn't just a theory. We've seen how it plays out right here in Montgomery County. In 2013, Takoma Park became the first city in the country to lower its voting age to 16. Like Rockville, it's a diverse and civically engaged city. And the results were remarkable. According to the University of Maryland's Civic Innovation Center, 44 percent of eligible 16- and 17-year-olds voted in that first election, compared to just 10 percent of the general population.

That enthusiasm didn't fade. In 2015, youth turnout was 45 percent. In 2017, it was nearly 48 percent. And in 2020, it rose to 69 percent, far exceeding the 54 percent turnout for other voters. These aren't one-time spikes. They show a pattern. When young people are invited into democracy, they show up and lead.

Some may still have doubts. Are 16-year-olds informed enough? Are they mature enough? The research says yes. The National Institutes of Health and the Vote16 Research Network have found that 16-year-olds have the cognitive ability to make thoughtful voting decisions. In fact, they are just as capable, if not more so, than older first-time voters. And when surveyed, many adults who initially opposed lowering the voting age changed their minds after hearing directly from young people.

So I ask again. What are we waiting for? Lowering the voting age doesn't just give young people a voice. It helps build lifelong voting habits. It brings more perspectives into our local decision-making. And it shows that Rockville believes in the next generation of leaders.

Let's follow the lead of our neighbors in Montgomery County and across the country. Let's give the young people of Rockville the chance to participate, to engage, and to help shape the city they already call home.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Asad Farooq

## Sara Taylor-Ferrell

---

**From:** Anya Kleinman <anyafkleinman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 6, 2025 5:20 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Written Election Input

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

My written election input is pasted below. Thank you so much!

Dear Mayor Ashton and Councilmembers,

My name is Anya Kleinman. I am a rising senior at Richard Montgomery High School and the Statewide Co-Director of Vote16MD, a statewide coalition working to lower the voting age to 16 in Maryland's municipal elections. I am here to strongly endorse a measure enabling 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in the City of Rockville's local elections.

Turning 16 is a rite of passage. When you turn 16, you can operate a vehicle, get married, and drop out of high school, among other things. Turning 16 requires you to grapple with deeply consequential decisions and responsibilities. 16- and 17-year-olds are huge stakeholders in their communities, impacted by city council decisions ranging from mental health to local appropriations.

Now you may be thinking: Why 16? Well, according to a study conducted by the NIH, at 16, individuals are cognitively capable of making thoughtful and comprehensive voting decisions. On another note, data suggests that Rockville local elections, even with the measure of mail-in voting, experience low voter turnout during presidential election off-years. In Rockville's 2023 local election, the turnout rate hovered around 25%. I think we can all agree: when a minority of registered voters cast a ballot, city election results are not truly representative.

However, evidence shows that 16- and 17-year-olds are very reliable voters, with a voting rate up to 200% higher than the general population. Additionally, lowering the local voting age, as seen in Maryland municipalities like Takoma Park, leads to an increase in the general voting rate. A measure to lower the voting age provides Rockville with a unique opportunity to create more representative and democratic elections.

It's not just a matter of turnout; Voting is habit-forming. Allowing individuals to begin voting earlier in life has the potential to improve lifelong civic participation, creating a generation of engaged and active voters. A measure to lower the voting age doesn't just allow Rockville to enfranchise 16- and 17-year-olds; It allows Rockville to prepare young people to contribute meaningfully to democracy for the rest of their lives.

With this in mind, I urge you to support a measure to lower the voting age and take this essential step towards encouraging and extending youth civic participation in Rockville. Thank you for your consideration!

Sincerely,  
Anya Kleinman  
Vote16MD Co-Director

**Sara Taylor-Ferrell**

---

**From:** Gavin Falcon <gavinmichaelfalcon@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 6, 2025 5:19 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Public Commentary on Future of Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Hello,

I hope all is well, I just wanted to send my commentary, as I can't come in person. Thank you so much for the opportunity!

Here it is below:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AvnLAopuJQ9hG96IKbILR4y3Gff0W0wPQOdABRqlxrU/edit?usp=drivesdk>

I hope you have a great weekend.

Sincerely,  
Gavin Falcón

Good evening distinguished council members, my name is Gavin Falcon and I am a student leader in my community, writing today to provide commentary on Sections 8-6 of Rockvilles election code to allow for 16 years to vote and have their future as well.

Currently, this section of code is generally vague and left up to interpretation, falling back on the state legislature. But beyond that we now have the power to create meaningful change to empower all of us future leaders, not just now but forever. Many times decisions are being made at the state and national level without the student perspective in mind, making it feel as if our voices are meaningless. We need this alteration to prevent this feeling of helplessness, that ruins our society as a participatory democracy.

I can't speak for all students but I know speak for myself at least, and it is disheartening to see officials we don't elect control our lives. Even though I am now a student advocate, fighting for a better future for as many people as possible this wasn't always the case. Just because I couldn't vote I felt my voice meant nothing. We learn in school that we elect officials to make the choices for us, represent us, and protect us but we don't have any say in who they are ruining our sense of activism, how can that be?

Additionally, by the age of 16 the vast majority of individuals are neurological and socially intelligent enough to make decisions about their life, and are currently learning about government in our society, making many more informed than grown adults. So I have to ask again why we don't take advantage of this. The younger one starts in civic engagement the longer one will stay involved. With that being said, if we want voter turnouts representing all of Rockville, and everybody, we must make this change to empower us youth and set the foundation for our future.

In our great state Maryland we are able to register to vote at 16 but nothing more, so let's flip the page one area at the time starting with one of the best Rockville. Make a change that will last generations. Especially in this time of day we need all the voices we can get, and if we want that we must find ways to empower more individuals, and this is the key to doing so.

Considering all of this is section 6-8 please, specifically allow 16 years olds to vote, have a say in their life, and lay the groundwork for a better future for all of us Americans, Marylanders, and more. Thank you for your time.

**Judy Penny**

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**From:** Mary Cramer Wagner <mary@pinnaclestrategiesconsulting.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 6, 2025 3:06 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Cc:** Nina Taylor; Allison Sardinas  
**Subject:** Rockville City Council Meeting - Elections Review  
**Attachments:** HPSCAN\_20250606185350506\_2025-06-06\_185537610.pdf

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Good afternoon:

On behalf of the Center for Election Science, please see the attached written testimony with informational handouts.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Best Regards,

Mary Cramer Wagner  
Government Relations  
Pinnacle Strategies, LLC  
443-994-5073



# THE CENTER FOR Election Science



6/6/2025

Rockville Mayor and City Council Members  
111 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Mayor Ashton  
Council Member Fulton  
Council Member Jackson  
Council Member Myles  
Council Member Shaw  
Council Member Valeri  
Council Member Van Grack

## **Subject: Consideration of Approval Voting as a Method of Voting**

I'm writing to respectfully request that the City of Rockville consider adopting **approval voting** as a more representative and fairer approach to electing local leaders.

Approval voting is a simple, nonpartisan reform that allows voters to select as many candidates as they support, not just one. This change empowers residents to vote honestly without fear of wasting their vote or splitting the vote among similar candidates.

Across the country, cities that have adopted approval voting such as Fargo, ND, and St. Louis, MO have seen:

- Higher voter satisfaction, as people feel their true preferences are better reflected.
- Reduced negative campaigning, since candidates are incentivized to appeal to a broader audience.
- Elimination of the "spoiler effect" and less need for strategic voting.
- Winners with broader community support, leading to stronger legitimacy and trust in elected leaders.

Rockville is known for being forward-thinking and community-centered. This reform would continue that tradition by ensuring our elections produce leaders who represent the full range of voter support not just those with narrow pluralities.

I encourage the Council to begin exploring approval voting through feasibility studies or public forums. The Center for Election Science would be glad to provide resources, connect you with experts, or participate in discussions on how approval voting is an elegant simple solution that can benefit Rockville.

Attached is a brief overview of approval voting and how it could be implemented locally.

Thank you for your time and commitment to improving our democratic process. I look forward to the opportunity to support this effort.

Warm regards,

*Nina Taylor*

Chief Executive Officer

The Center for Election Science

# Approval Voting Fact Sheet



## Approval Voting is Used in Government Elections Today

Fargo, ND became the first U.S. city to adopt approval voting in 2018, followed by St. Louis, MO in 2020. Both cities have conducted multiple elections using the new method without issues. Additionally, approval voting is currently used by the United Nations Security Council, the Pro Football Hall of Fame, and the American Mathematical Society.



## Approval Voting Has Been Used for Over 750 Years

Approval voting is one of the oldest voting methods in the world. The Republic of Venice used it for major elections from 1268 until 1797. Also used in papal enclaves, over 40 popes were elected through this method (then called 'scrutiny') from the 13th to 17th centuries.



## Why Approval Voting is Hitting the Radar Now

Larger candidate fields at every level are leading to more vote splitting. This phenomenon harms candidates who share similarities (e.g., two centrists, two women), causing both to lose as they 'take' votes from each other. This issue is prevalent in primaries, where multiple centrists lose to hyperpartisans. There's widespread discontent with hyperpartisan-dominated governments, prompting a search for solutions.



## Approval Voting is Different Than Ranked Choice Voting

Approval voting is not ranked choice voting. While both are alternative voting methods, they belong to different families of voting. We advocate for approval voting because it is simpler and cheaper than RCV while still being incredibly impactful. We believe people can support multiple methods at the same time. People can support approval voting, ranked choice voting, or both.



## Approval Voting Works With All Current Systems

Approval voting is so simple that it can work with any current voting system without adding time, complexity, or cost. Whether it's mail-in ballots, paper ballots, single or multiple winners, primaries or general elections, even proportional systems - there is no system too simple nor too complex for approval voting to improve.



## The Winner is Only the Most Supported Candidate

Everyone's chief concern is...who is going to win? In approval voting, candidates win by attracting broad support from all the voters, rather than focusing solely on a narrow, dedicated base. They may lose if they fail to appeal to a wide range of voters or go against mainstream opinion. Simply put, those who perform well in approval voting bring people in.



## The Center for Election Science is a National, Nonpartisan Reform Organization

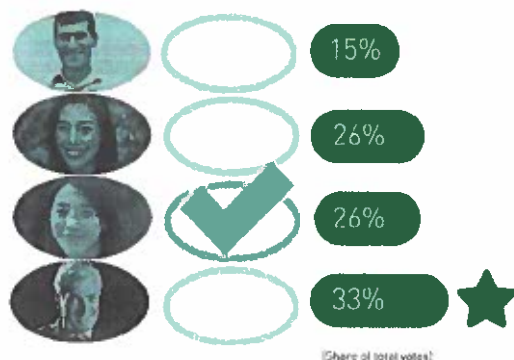
CES is a 501(c)(3) nonpartisan nonprofit organization that advocates for approval voting in state legislatures, educates the public, and advances the study of key and under-researched topics like vote splitting.

# What is Approval Voting?



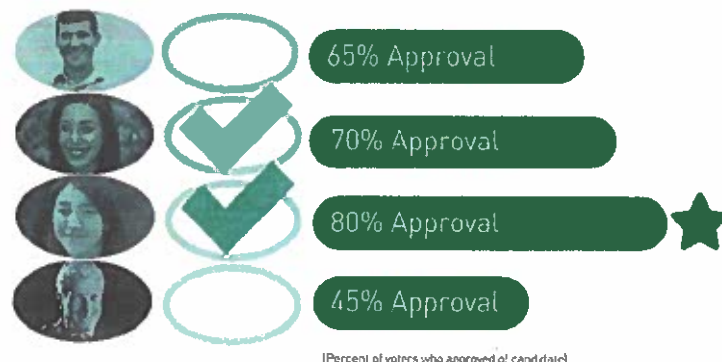
Right now we can only  
**choose one** candidate.

Candidates Choice Results



In approval voting, you can  
**support all the candidates you like.**

Candidates Choice Results



## Your Vote is Your Voice. Approval Voting Makes It Powerful.

### Approval Voting is Simple

In approval voting, voters can give support to all the candidates they like. All of the ballots are tallied, and the candidate who received an approval from the most voters wins. That's it. No multiple rounds or runoffs needed.

### Approval Voting Makes Every Voter Important

When voters have more options, they can't be ignored like they are now. By giving voters the power to give or deny support to any candidate, every voter can demand more from their politicians.

### Approval Voting Allows You to Vote Your Conscience

In approval voting, voters have the opportunity to express support for all the candidates they like, and vote against all the ones they do not. Unlike choose one voting, supporting a candidate only helps them. Voters can express their true beliefs, without fear of a helping a spoiler.

### Approval Voting Winners Are Representative

Unlike our current system, a candidate in an approval voting election can only win by being the most representative and broadly supported candidate of the electorate.

### Approval Voting Stops the Vote Splitting That Elects Hyperpartisans

'Vote splitting' is a phenomenon of choose one voting, where two similar candidates inadvertently divide their shared base and both lose to a third, less representative candidate. Hyperpartisans exploit this to get elected with a small, fervent base. Approval voting eliminates vote splitting, and this tactic of division.

### Approval Voting Can Be Implemented Tomorrow at No Cost

Our current machines can run approval voting elections today. That means we can have better, more representative elections tomorrow at little to no cost.

Try Approval Voting





# Case Study: St. Louis Before & After Approval Voting








## St. Louis, MO and The Delmar Divide

Through the heart of St. Louis, MO runs a road called Delmar Boulevard that politically and economically splits the city in two. Locals call it the Delmar Divide. The north side is predominantly black, the south side predominantly white. Decades of politics had favored the white south side, leaving the black north side to struggle. In a city where the population for both white and black voters were equal, all city politics revolved around this question, "which side would win, and which side would be shut out?"

St. Louis had an issue that made things worse. Races for offices like mayor and alderman were drawing upwards of seven candidates, leaving candidates to split votes between them and denying a majority winner. From 2015-2019, there were eight city elections in St. Louis where the winner earned less than 37% of the vote. Of those eight elections, five had winners who earned less than 20% of the vote. For decades there was suspicion that this was done purposefully by white politicians who would find extra black candidates to run to split the black vote to help white politicians win.

Purposeful or not, the vote splitting issue in St. Louis was out of control, and more often the communities of color were penalized for having multiple candidates from their community run in the same election. This was especially true in the 2017 race for mayor, where five major candidates ran for the seat.

### March 2017 STL Mayor Results

Candidate	Percent of Vote
 Lyda Krewson <small>Suburban</small> 32%	
 Tishaura Jones <small>City Treasurer, Former St. Louis Mayor</small> 30%	
 Lewis Reed <small>President, Board for St. Louis</small> 18%	
 Antonio French <small>Alderman</small> 16%	
 Jeffrey Boyd <small>Candidate</small> 3%	

**South St. Louis had one major candidate, Krewson, while north St. Louis had four. Despite 68% of voters choosing black candidates, Krewson won.**

**St. Louis voters rightfully asked - "How is this right?"**

A coalition emerged to reform St. Louis elections. They started a ballot initiative campaign, called Prop D (for Democracy), and an organization to advocate for it, St. Louis Approves. They wanted to end vote splitting by bringing **approval voting** to all city elections. In 2019 The Center for Election Science joined the effort. St. Louis Approves was able to build a large coalition from across the city that went to community events, town halls and door-to-door to grow support for this effort. In November 2020 St. Louisans overwhelmingly voted in favor of the measure, **passing it with 68% support.**



## PROP D FOR DEMOCRACY

NOVEMBER 3, 2020

**ST. LOUIS IS AT A CROSSROADS AND NEEDS POSITIVE CHANGE.**

**THESE ORGANIZATIONS & LEADERS ENDORSE VOTING "YES" ON PROPOSITION D FOR DEMOCRACY.**

**ON NOVEMBER 3, VOTE WITH A DIVERSE COALITION OF LEADERS WHO BELIEVE THAT VOTERS SHOULD HOLD ALL OF THE POWER.**

**VOTE YES ON PROP D.**



St. Louis Young Democrats



League of Women Voters of Metro STL



The St. Louis Post Dispatch



St. Louis American Newspaper



Cori Bush, Democrat for Congress



Treasurer Tishaura Jones (D-St. Louis)



Rep. Rashleen Aldridge (D St. Louis)



Rep. Steve Butz (D St. Louis)



Recorder Michael Butler (D-St. Louis)



Alderman Megan Green (D-15)



Service Employees International Union



Action St. Louis Power Project

# Case Study: St. Louis Before & After Approval Voting







## Smashing the Divide

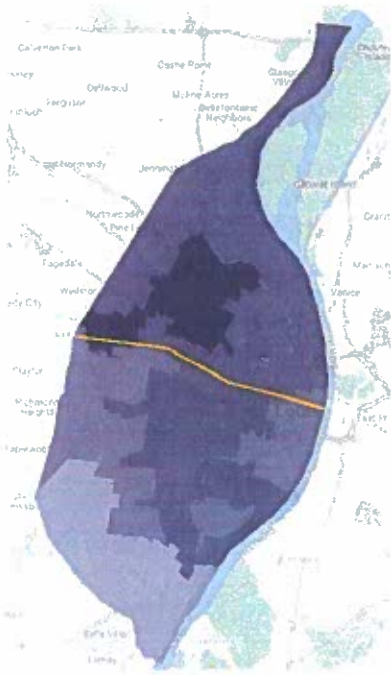
March of 2021 would be the first election in St. Louis history to use approval voting. Four major candidates ran, excluding Mayor Krewson who chose not to run for re-election. They included Tishaura Jones and Lewis Reed from 2017, as well as Alderwoman Cara Spencer and businessman Andrew Jones. Approval voting radically changed the election. Candidates pushed for broader support on both sides of the Delmar Divide

Voters could support multiple candidates who were similar, whether it be along ideological, racial or geographical lines. There was a clear consensus winner Tishaura Jones, hindered by vote splitting in the past, was the far-and-away winner of the first approval voting election with **57% approval**.

The real power of approval voting came into focus when plotting Jones' support on a map. The darker the blue, the higher approval support for her. Outlined in yellow is Delmar Boulevard.

## March 2021 STL Mayor Results with Approval Voting

Candidate	Percent Approval
 Tishaura Jones 57% <small>City Treasurer, Former State Rep.</small>	
 Cara Spencer 46% <small>Alderwoman</small>	
 Lewis Reed 39% <small>President, Board of Aldermen</small>	
 Andrew Jones 14% <small>Businessman</small>	



**While other candidates still drew most of their support from one side of the divide, Jones' support transcended the old borders.**

**Because of approval voting Jones had smashed through the Delmar Divide by appealing to the whole city, and she would go on to make history as the first black female mayor of St. Louis.**

## Aftermath

A poll conducted by Change Research in March of 2021 captured the broad feelings of support for approval voting.

- 81% of voters appreciated approval voting's simplicity.
- 67% of voters appreciated being able to express their preferences easily, without worrying about electability.
- 60% of voters want to use approval voting to elect other officials.

Voters supported 1.6 candidates on average. The City of St. Louis officials stated that no additional funding was used to make the change - The solution was simple, just allow for voters to fill in more bubbles on their ballots. In 2022, the St. Louis Board of Aldermen threatened to repeal Prop D, as some felt it threatened their power. The coalition regrouped, even larger this time, to enshrine approval voting into their charter forever. Bucking the desires of the Aldermen, St. Louis voters chose to keep Prop D's reforms in a measure called Prop R (for "Reform") - voting 69% in favor. St. Louis continues to use approval voting in city elections to this day.

## Approval Voting

### *Intuitive for Voters*

An approval voting ballot looks exactly like ballots that American voters are used to. The only difference is that, instead of having to choose just one candidate, voters can choose as many as they like.

### *Simple to Administer*

Approval voting can be implemented using existing machines and technologies. No additional investments are required.

### *Transparent, Clear & Quick Results*

Approval voting calculations are no mystery:

The candidate with the most votes wins. The difference from our current system is that people vote for who they *actually* support, so the results are not confused by issues such as vote splitting and discussions about 'electability.'

### *Clear about the full extent*

of support for each candidate

After an approval election, every candidate sees an honest tally of how many people support them. For the winner, that clarity means understanding real *support*, which can be leveraged to begin governing immediately and effectively on behalf of the whole community.

### **Use the QR Code to Try Approval Voting**

**And learn more at ElectionScience.org**



## Ranked-choice voting

### *Complicated for Voters*

To prepare for an RCV election, voters must read detailed instructions for the new ballot layout.

Voters must be careful to avoid mistakes, such as filling out more than one ranking per candidate.

### *Expensive & complex to administer*

In most cases, RCV requires cities and states to purchase new machines and technology. Election administrators must learn new ways to process ballots, conduct run-offs, and audit results.

### *Ambiguous about how the winner was determined*

Voters—and even most election administrators— cannot predict or follow how results are calculated. The 'run-off' process is entirely simulated, lengthy due to multiple rounds and reallocations of votes. Voters must trust that no mistakes were made—without being able to see or understand the steps involved.

### *Unclear about the full extent*

of support for each candidate Voters' voices are ignored. Many rankings aren't considered at all. Winners have no way to see who really supports them. With an uncertain mandate, they build coalitions before they can govern.

**Rank Choice Explained courtesy of  
NBC Bay Area (San Francisco, CA)**



**Sara Taylor-Ferrell**

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**From:** Nabila A Balami <nabilabalami2@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 6, 2025 10:24 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Community Input on the Future of Rockville Elections  
**Attachments:** Testimony for V16 (3).pdf

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Attached below is my Testimony for the upcoming public session and the future of Rockville Elections!

Good evening Rockville County Council Members,

My name is Nabila Balami. I'm a high school sophomore and a Director of Vote16 Maryland, a nonpartisan youth-led initiative working to lower the voting age to 16 in municipal elections across the state.

I appreciate making it possible to comment on the future of Rockville elections from the public. In consideration of making changes to Chapter 8 of the Rockville City Code, and those in particular that could increase local democracy by making it more inclusive, I urge you to include wording that would provide a vote for 16- and 17-year-olds in Rockville city elections.

Why? Because we're already members of this community. We go to school here. We work here. We drive your buses, walk your streets, and bear the aftermath of the decisions made by city leaders. But we don't have a voice in who speaks for us. That disparity is important. And lowering the voting age is a fact-based way of closing it.

We know it has worked in the past. Takoma Park and Hyattsville, Maryland, have extended voting to 16- and 17-year-olds in local elections, and those cities have seen young voters cast ballots in those elections at high rates. When kids are offered a choice, they take it seriously. I've seen this myself through my work on Vote16 Maryland and through interviews I've held on Vote16 Frederick Voices, a podcast I've started to provide a platform for young people's voices. Guests of mine have included the President of the Frederick County Council and the President of the Board of Education both of who have supported lowering voting age. If leaders at this level are able to recognize the value in young people engaging, that's a message.

Rockville can now have the opportunity to be next, to lead by example of what civic inclusion means and set an example as a region with a forward-thinking change to your election law. Updating Chapter 8 to enfranchise 16- and 17-year-olds would not only support a generation, it would serve as a powerful statement that Rockville is committed to and values all citizens, regardless of age.

Thanks for considering this move toward a more representative and inclusive democracy.

Sincerely,

Nabila Balami  
Regional Director, Vote16 Maryland



Sara Taylor-Ferrell

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**From:** Zoë Burnett <zoeburnett008@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 5, 2025 7:32 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Written Testimony  
**Attachments:** Written%20Testimony.pdf.pdf

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Dear Members of the Rockville City Council,

My name is Zoe Burnett and I am writing to express my strong support for lowering the voting age to 16 for local elections in Rockville, particularly those that directly affect youth, such as the Board of Education elections. Students spend the majority of their day in schools shaped by policies enacted by elected officials—most notably, members of the Board of Education. Yet, they have no say in who represents them. Lowering the voting age to 16 would ensure that students have a voice in decisions about curriculum, school safety, mental health resources, transportation, and funding. These are not abstract policy areas—they are realities students live every day. At 16, many students are already working, driving, and taking on adult responsibilities. Civics education is typically taught in high school—precisely when students are becoming most aware of their role in democracy. Allowing them to vote while they are still in school helps form strong lifelong voting habits, creating more engaged and informed citizens. Cities such as Takoma Park and Hyattsville, Maryland, have already allowed 16-year-olds to vote in local elections. The result? Higher voter turnout among young voters and a more representative electorate. Rockville has the opportunity to follow this successful model and become a leader in youth civic engagement in Montgomery County. Students are directly impacted by decisions made by local elected officials, yet they are consistently excluded from the process. Lowering the voting age would not only increase civic participation but also signal to our youth that their experiences and perspectives are valued. Empowering 16- and 17-year-olds with the right to vote in local elections will strengthen our democracy, improve civic education, and create a more inclusive community. I urge the Rockville City Council to move forward with this initiative and give our students a seat at the table. The future of Rockville belongs to them—they should have a say in shaping it..

Thanks,  
Zoe Burnett

**Judy Penny**

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**From:** Sienna <sienna.alazarr@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 5, 2025 7:30 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Cc:** vanessali1805@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Written Testimony in Support of Lowering the Voting Age

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Dear Mayor and Council, Board of Supervisors of Elections, and City Clerk,

My name is Sienna Alazar. I am a high school sophomore and a Regional Director for Vote16MD. I am writing to express my strong support for lowering the voting age in Rockville municipal elections. Young people are deeply impacted by the decisions made at the local level, whether it's transportation, education, climate policy, or public safety. Giving 16 and 17-year-olds the right to vote not only reflects their place in the community but also helps develop lifelong civic engagement. Studies show that people who vote early in life are more likely to remain voters as adults.

At 16, many young people are already working, paying taxes, and contributing to their communities in meaningful ways. They are engaged, informed, and passionate about creating positive change.

Extending their voting rights is a step toward a more inclusive, representative, and forward-thinking democracy.

Lowering the voting age would also align with Rockville's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. It ensures that youth voices, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds, are not left out of decisions that shape their futures.

I strongly urge you to implement the 2023 ballot measures that expand voting access, including those that would lower the voting age. Thank you for considering this testimony and for your commitment to improving our city's democratic process.

Sincerely,

Sienna Alazar

[sienna.alazarr@gmail.com](mailto:sienna.alazarr@gmail.com)

## Judy Penny

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**From:** advocate@mail.actionbutton.org on behalf of Brandon Barnard  
 <advocate@mail.actionbutton.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 5, 2025 8:24 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Support Ranked Choice Voting for Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Dear Sara Taylor-Ferrell,

I am Brandon Barnard and I am a resident of Rockville. I am emailing to express my support for ranked choice voting (RCV) for Rockville elections.

Here are three reasons why RCV is an innovative voting method that would give Rockville voters more power and make their voices heard:

- 1) Stronger Representation - RCV promotes fair representation and elections better reflect the community, giving overlooked communities a voice on policy.
- 2) Effective Democracy - RCV gives voters the ability to better express their preferences, reducing strategic voting and toxic campaigning, allowing voters and candidates to focus on the issues.
- 3) Rockville is Ready - RCV is already used in 51 jurisdictions across the U.S., giving 14 million voters greater choice and more power in elections. Voters in Washington, D.C. said YES to RCV in 2024, and Takoma Park has used RCV since 2007. A wealth of data, best practices, and expertise provides the city with a roadmap to simple and effective implementation.

I look forward to the Community Engagement Sessions and hope Rockville will move forward to use ranked choice voting in future elections.

Thank you,  
 Brandon Barnard

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This message was sent by Brandon Barnard via [ActionButton](#), on behalf of Ranked Choice Voting Maryland. Please reply to Brandon Barnard at [claboyz@yahoo.com](mailto:claboyz@yahoo.com).

## Judy Penny

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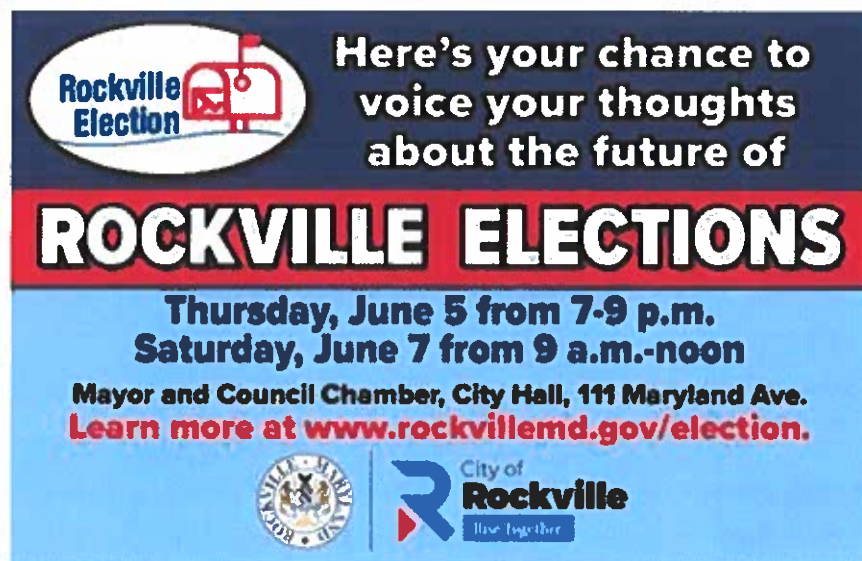
**From:** ALAN KAPLAN <doctorask@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 5, 2025 7:27 AM  
**To:** Judy Penny  
**Subject:** Re: FINAL REMINDER - Thursday - June 4 - Voice Your Thoughts on the Future of Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Just be sure we - that we keep the mail-in ballots and early voting. Not sure about other issues.

Alan S. Kaplan M.D.  
 Rockville

On 06/04/2025 9:43 AM EDT Judy Penny <jpenny@rockvillemd.gov> wrote:



Community engagements sessions in June offer the chance to voice your thoughts about the future of Rockville elections.

The Mayor and Council, Board of Supervisors of Elections, city staff, and a city consultant will conduct a top-to-bottom review of Rockville's future election process beginning with in-person sessions to gather input about potential changes to the city election code.

**The sessions will be held 7-9 p.m. Thursday, June 5 and 9 a.m.-noon Saturday, June 7 in the Mayor and Council chamber at City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave.**

The city is seeking input regarding [Chapter 8 of the city code, entitled “Elections.”](#) Community members are asked to consider the following questions about city elections:

- Do you prefer to vote by mail?
- Do you think there are enough drop boxes and voting centers?
- Do you think there is enough transparency around funding campaign committees/slates/political action committees?
- Are you satisfied with the city’s efforts to enforce its campaign finance laws?
- Do you believe the city is promoting diversity, equality and inclusion appropriately?
- Should the city implement [the 2023 ballot measures](#)? If so, which ones?
- Do you have other ideas to improve the city’s election process?

Community members may also submit input in writing to the city clerk/director of council operations by 5 p.m. Monday, June 9 at [cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov).

For more information, visit [www.rockvillemd.gov/election](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/election).

**Sara Taylor-Ferrell**  
City Clerk/Director of Council operations  
**City Clerk/DCO**



**Rise Together**

P. 240-314-8280  
D. 240-314-8283  
[www.rockvillemd.gov](http://www.rockvillemd.gov)



*“In order to be in compliance with the open meetings act, please do not reply to all. If you would like to discuss a matter in an open meeting, please let me know and we can have the matter placed as an agenda item for discussion”*

## Judy Penny

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**From:** advocate@mail.actionbutton.org on behalf of Isabel Dawson  
<advocate@mail.actionbutton.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 4, 2025 3:32 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Support Ranked Choice Voting for Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Dear Sara Taylor-Ferrell,

I am Isabel Dawson and I am a resident of Rockville. I am emailing to express my support for ranked choice voting (RCV) for Rockville elections.

Here are three reasons why RCV is an innovative voting method that would give Rockville voters more power and make their voices heard:

- 1) Stronger Representation - RCV promotes fair representation and elections better reflect the community, giving overlooked communities a voice on policy.
- 2) Effective Democracy - RCV gives voters the ability to better express their preferences, reducing strategic voting and toxic campaigning, allowing voters and candidates to focus on the issues.
- 3) Rockville is Ready - RCV is already used in 51 jurisdictions across the U.S., giving 14 million voters greater choice and more power in elections. Voters in Washington, D.C. said YES to RCV in 2024, and Takoma Park has used RCV since 2007. A wealth of data, best practices, and expertise provides the city with a roadmap to simple and effective implementation.

I look forward to the Community Engagement Sessions and hope Rockville will move forward to use ranked choice voting in future elections.

Thank you,  
Isabel Dawson

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This message was sent by Isabel Dawson via [ActionButton](#), on behalf of Ranked Choice Voting Maryland. Please reply to Isabel Dawson at [isabelcdawson@gmail.com](mailto:isabelcdawson@gmail.com).

**Judy Penny**

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**From:** rtreinhard@aol.com  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 1, 2025 1:35 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** elections input

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Richard Reinhard  
 38 Maryland Ave Unit 501  
 Rockville MD 20850

- Do you prefer to vote by mail? Yes.
  - Do you think there are enough drop boxes and voting centers? Yes.
  - Do you think there is enough transparency around funding campaign committees/slates/political action committees? No.
  - Are you satisfied with the city's efforts to enforce its campaign finance laws? No. Get on top of it.
  - Do you believe the city is promoting diversity, equality and inclusion appropriately? Yes.
  - Should the city implement the 2023 ballot measures? If so, which ones? Yes on term limits.
- \* Do you have other ideas to improve the city's election process? No excuses for making mistakes on who lives in the City of Rockville and who doesn't. No excuses for voters getting ballots late or not at all. Don't just point fingers at Montgomery County. Fix it. It's not rocket science. If the Board of Supervisors of Elections cannot get these simple things right, no one will have confidence in it.



**Judy Penny**

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**From:** advocate@mail.actionbutton.org on behalf of Gene Slothour-hudnall  
<advocate@mail.actionbutton.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 4, 2025 1:14 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Support Ranked Choice Voting for Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Dear Sara Taylor-Ferrell,

I am Gene Slothour-Hudnall and I am a resident of Rockville. I am emailing to express my support for ranked choice voting (RCV) for Rockville elections.

Here are three reasons why RCV is an innovative voting method that would give Rockville voters more power and make their voices heard:

- 1) Stronger Representation - RCV promotes fair representation and elections better reflect the community, giving overlooked communities a voice on policy.
- 2) Effective Democracy - RCV gives voters the ability to better express their preferences, reducing strategic voting and toxic campaigning, allowing voters and candidates to focus on the issues.
- 3) Rockville is Ready - RCV is already used in 51 jurisdictions across the U.S., giving 14 million voters greater choice and more power in elections. Voters in Washington, D.C. said YES to RCV in 2024, and Takoma Park has used RCV since 2007. A wealth of data, best practices, and expertise provides the city with a roadmap to simple and effective implementation.

I look forward to the Community Engagement Sessions and hope Rockville will move forward to use ranked choice voting in future elections.

Thank you,  
Gene Slothour-Hudnall

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This message was sent by Gene Slothour-hudnall via [ActionButton](#), on behalf of Ranked Choice Voting Maryland. Please reply to Gene Slothour-hudnall at [gene.hudnall@gmail.com](mailto:gene.hudnall@gmail.com).

**Judy Penny**

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**From:** advocate@mail.actionbutton.org on behalf of Steve Breyman  
 <advocate@mail.actionbutton.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 4, 2025 12:37 PM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Support Ranked Choice Voting for Rockville Elections

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Dear Sara Taylor-Ferrell,

I am Steve Breyman and I am a resident of Rockville. I am emailing to express my support for ranked choice voting (RCV) for Rockville elections.

Here are three reasons why RCV is an innovative voting method that would give Rockville voters more power and make their voices heard:

- 1) Stronger Representation - RCV promotes fair representation and elections better reflect the community, giving overlooked communities a voice on policy.
- 2) Effective Democracy - RCV gives voters the ability to better express their preferences, reducing strategic voting and toxic campaigning, allowing voters and candidates to focus on the issues.
- 3) Rockville is Ready - RCV is already used in 51 jurisdictions across the U.S., giving 14 million voters greater choice and more power in elections. Voters in Washington, D.C. said YES to RCV in 2024, and Takoma Park has used RCV since 2007. A wealth of data, best practices, and expertise provides the city with a roadmap to simple and effective implementation.

I look forward to the Community Engagement Sessions and hope Rockville will move forward to use ranked choice voting in future elections.

Thank you,  
 Steve Breyman

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This message was sent by Steve Breyman via [ActionButton](#), on behalf of Ranked Choice Voting Maryland. Please reply to Steve Breyman at [stevebreyman@icloud.com](mailto:stevebreyman@icloud.com).

**Judy Penny**

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**From:** Roselie Bright <roseliemail@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 1, 2025 9:04 AM  
**To:** cityclerk  
**Subject:** Rockville Elections listening session

**WARNING - External email. Exercise caution.**

Hi,

It would be good to offer a virtual listening session, in addition to in-person and email.

I prefer to vote by mail and am satisfied with the existing drop box system.

Q: Should the city implement the 2023 ballot measures? If so, which ones?

Of course, I prefer for the city to implement the measures I voted for. If the city is hesitating, there should probably be working groups and hearings specific to each measure.

For term limits, I caution that people often want them to try to refresh leadership. The problem with it is that there is a lot of learning done on the job, and the resulting expertise gets wiped out when the term limit is reached, even if the populace are happy with their performance. I'm for age limits, but not term limits.

Sincerely,  
Roselie Bright  
Rockville resident



MAYOR AND COUNCIL Meeting Date: July 21, 2025

Agenda Item Type: WORKSESSION

Department: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE (CMO)

Responsible Staff: JEFF MIHELICH

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## **Subject**

Economic Development

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## **Department**

City Manager's Office (CMO)

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## **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Mayor and Council discuss the city's current economic development model and direct staff accordingly following the discussion.

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## **Change in Law or Policy**

If directed to modify the city's economic development delivery model, this may require amendments to the existing funding agreement and operation.

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## **Discussion**

At the March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Mayor and Council meeting, a majority of the body requested a work session to discuss economic development.

Work session topics requested for discussion include:

1. An overview of the different types of frameworks/models used by municipalities/jurisdictions to tackle economic development
2. Identification of the different roles and responsibilities in economic development, what entity currently covers each, and whether we have any gaps
3. Discussion and clarification of the lines of communication, direction, and accountability of all involved
4. Discussion of outcomes-based measurements of success
5. Discussion of various mechanisms (to include funding agreement) to implement enhancements/changes identified in prior items

The majority of the body emphasized that this consideration should be more of a conversation among the members of the Mayor and Council, and not follow the typical work session format, where staff conducts in-depth research and seeks specific feedback on policy options.

## **Economic Development Models**

The delivery of economic development services in local government can be achieved using different models. The two most common are:

1. The service is provided by a separate third-party entity, Economic Development Organizations (EDOs), such as Rockville Economic Development Inc. (REDI)
2. Government-run or “in-house”, such as an Economic Development Department or a division within a department or office.

Most third-party Economic Development Organizations operate as a 501(c)(3) non-profit with strategic collaboration from the cities they serve. This mode typically includes an autonomous board, relies on municipal funding, and lacks direct access to internal city systems. In most cases, they have their own administrative services, including information technology, human resources, legal, and record keeping.

Examples of third-party Economic Development Organization models in Maryland include [Rockville Economic Development Inc.](#), [Cumberland Economic Development Corporation](#), and the [Easton Economic Development Corporation](#).

In a government-run (“in-house”) economic development delivery model, the economic development functions in some jurisdictions are solely with the economic development department, while in others, the functions can be a division within the City Manager’s Office. In other jurisdictions, these functions can be combined within other departments, such as a Community and Economic Development Department, which combines land use and economic development functions within one department.

Examples of “in-house” economic development delivery models in Maryland include the [City of Gaithersburg](#), [the City of Frederick](#), and the [City of Bowie](#).

### **Current Practice**

Currently, the City of Rockville uses the third-party economic development delivery model and has an existing [Funding Agreement](#) with REDI for their provision of certain services.

REDI was aware of the Mayor and Council's impending work session on economic development and prepared a summary of key areas of economic development activity that they provide, including the current role and areas of coordination with the city. (See Attachment 1).

In addition, they prepared a document (Attachment 2) where they compared the pros and cons of how REDI would compare with an internal city economic development department.

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### **Mayor and Council History**

On June 16, 1997, the Mayor and Council established the Greater Rockville Partnership, Inc. (GRPI) and approved its Articles of Incorporation, which organized GRPI as a nonstock

charitable “supporting organization”. GRPI was created, among other things, to support and assist the Mayor and Council by conducting and performing the functions previously conducted by the Economic Development Division of the Department of Community Development.

On November 19, 2003, Greater Rockville Partnership, Inc., with the consent and authorization of the Mayor and Council, amended its Articles of Incorporation and changed its name to “Rockville Economic Development, Inc.” (REDI). Since then, the Mayor and Council and REDI have entered into subsequent funding agreements.

On July 1, 2024, the Mayor and Council and REDI entered into and executed the REDI Funding Agreement – Fiscal Years 2025-2027.

On July 1, 2025, the Mayor and Council and REDI entered into and executed the First Amendment to the REDI Funding Agreement – Fiscal Years 2025-2027

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### **Fiscal Impact**

A detailed fiscal impact analysis would be prepared, pursuant to the direction provided by the body following the economic development work session.

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### **Next Steps**

Following the work session discussion, staff will follow up with any direction received from the body.

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### **Attachments**

Attachment 1: REDI\_Areas of Economic Development Activity, Attachment 2: REDI Comparisons, Attachment 3\_Economic Development Work Session PPT

# KEY AREAS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

## REDI PROVIDES:

- Business Development (Attraction, Retention, Expansion)
- Market Research
- Marketing and Communications
- Resources and Connections
- Technical Assistance
- Entrepreneurship Development
- Incentive Programs
- Placemaking and Community Identity
- Tourism/Destination Marketing
- District Identification and Support
- Partnering with Key Stakeholders

## REDI PARTNERS:

- Workforce Development
- Lending Programs
- Development and Redevelopment Projects
- Public Private Partnerships
- Infrastructure, Transportation and Utility Projects
- Art and Cultural Development
- Business Associations/Districts
- Housing Development
- Education Opportunities



A black and white photograph of a modern city building with a grid-like facade, featuring a prominent staircase and structural elements.

# COLLABORATIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ROLES FOR BEST-IN-CLASS COMMUNITIES

## CITY

- Community Development/Placemaking
- Infrastructure
- Growth Mindset/Legislation
- Fiscal Management
- Public Safety
- Planning, Zoning, Permitting
- Civic Engagement
- Regional Collaborations

## REDI

- Attraction, Retention, Expansion
- Research & Analysis
- Communications & Marketing
- Business Outreach & Engagement
- Industry Initiatives
- Foster Business Ecosystem
- Leverage Partnerships

## REGIONAL PARTNERS

- Growth Policies/Legislation
- Business Friendly Tax and Programs
- Education
- Workforce Development
- Inclusive Outreach & Collaboration
- Utilities/Transportation
- Regional Initiatives



# TOOLS AND FOCUS FOR ACHIEVING GOALS

## CITY

- Liaison/Permitting Concierge
- Zoning Rewrite
- Permitting/Inspection Streamlining (Clarity/Timeline)
- Tax Incentives
- Economic Development Element
- Fund Incentives/Grants
- Develop Key Projects/Assets
- Affordable and Adequate Infrastructure
- Accessible Transportation
- Help Provide/Facilitate Energy/Utility Needs
- Support a Safe Community

## REDI

- Focus on key industry areas
- Create opportunities for business to learn/interact
- Promote resources/information
- Develop brands for industry sectors/district/business community/local tourism
- Provide local tourism information
- Manage website/social media/public relations
- Business engagement
- Assist with filling vacancies
- Administer incentives
- Produce marketing materials/campaigns
- Track metrics - jobs/space/capital

## REGIONAL PARTNERS

- Educational Institutions
- Workforce Development Boards
- EDOs/COG/Board of Trade
- Think Tanks (Connected DMV), Accelerators & Incubators
- Chamber
- Trade Associations
- Developers/Real Estate Brokers/Site Selectors
- Members of the Business Community
- Funders
- State, County, Local Government officials and staff

# CURRENT REDI/CPDS COORDINATION

- Coordinate market and demographic data for projects like the Town Center Master Plan
- Map areas like Rock East and Twinbrook
- Provide input on key development projects like Metro stations, King Farm Farmstead, Redgate Park
- Provide feedback from business community for code changes and plans (including the Comprehensive Plan - Economic Development element and the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite)
- Connect businesses to appropriate staff for approvals, permitting, inspections
- Highlight projects and businesses that have significant economic impact on the city
- Market the city as business friendly
- Meet several times a month

# COMPARISON OF STRUCTURES

Note: Green are pros and Brown are cons

Economic Development Organization (EDO) as a separate entity:	Internal Economic Development Department:
<p><b>Business Development Support/External Partnerships:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Businesses are able to discuss their concerns with staff prior to any submittals or meetings, providing a trusted partner to the business community. Businesses appreciate this independent informed viewpoint.</li> <li>REDI provides technical assistance through MWBC programming that creates a pipeline for attracting existing and start-up businesses and helps with business retention.</li> <li>MWBC has established partnerships with other jurisdictions that feed referrals for businesses interested in locating in Rockville.</li> <li>Because REDI is an autonomous entity, it can participate in and facilitate regional problem solving without representing an official city position.</li> <li>REDI's current structure has been a successful model since 1997, and Rockville has a robust and attractive business community and economy.</li> <li>Many jurisdictions look to REDI as best practices, and have sought to replicate programs such as retail and childcare incubators, and support for small-scale manufacturing</li> <li>If roles are not clearly delineated between the EDO and city staff, there may be overlap or confusion in service delivery, especially in technical assistance or outreach.</li> <li>May face barriers in accessing internal city systems (e.g., permitting, planning), slowing down coordinated responses for business needs.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Business Development Support/External Partnerships:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Businesses would have a single point of contact for navigating permitting and incentives, reducing confusion between REDI and city departments and enabling faster and more coordinated support for businesses.</li> <li>ED staff would have direct use of city properties, GIS systems, permitting databases, and demographic data enhances the ability to support site selection, outreach, and retention efforts.</li> <li>While the MWBC program is not permitted to be hosted by a governmental entity, the city could establish an entrepreneurship center to provide technical assistance to the small business community.</li> <li>MWBC program would have to be eliminated ending direct support for Rockville businesses.</li> <li>Staff would be bound by government rules and requirements, limiting the ability to quickly create or adjust pilot programs, small grants, or partnerships in response to new business needs.</li> <li>Staff may become absorbed in city processes and lose the business-first mindset.</li> <li>Might lose the perception of neutrality as businesses may be less candid about challenges or concerns when engaging directly with government staff, fearing regulatory or political repercussions.</li> </ul>

<b>Marketing Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ability to promote businesses and private industry through tools like Explore Rockville, which has a business directory and calendar for city and non-city events.</li> <li>○ Ability to tailor messaging to different audiences like tourists, employees, employers, and investors.</li> <li>○ More flexibility in branding and messaging to craft campaigns and public messages that align with market trends and business language, rather than needing to conform to government communication protocols.</li> <li>○ Ability to create placemaking and identity through marketing and other placemaking efforts like Rock East, Biotech Corridor, etc.</li> <li>○ REDI's marketing may not be automatically aligned with broader city initiatives missing opportunities for cross-promotional impact.</li> <li>○ REDI must independently fund or outsource marketing functions and remain independent on external tools, which can slow execution and increase costs.</li> </ul>	<b>Marketing Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Communication efforts are more easily aligned with the city's overall communication strategy and priorities, creating a cohesive message for residents, businesses, and investors.</li> <li>○ Marketing content may move more smoothly through internal city review channels when produced by in-house staff.</li> <li>○ Economic development marketing can be more easily tied into broader city campaigns (e.g., sustainability, equity, housing), enhancing visibility and cross-departmental collaboration.</li> <li>○ Restricted in ability to promote private businesses or city assets not for public benefit/service.</li> <li>○ Would not be able to host the tools for businesses such as Explore Rockville's events calendar or the business directory.</li> <li>○ Economic Development initiatives and programs may not have as much visibility to the public or business community.</li> </ul>
<b>Funding &amp; Programming</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Private entities are often more comfortable donating to or partnering with a nonprofit than a government entity, increasing potential sponsorships or philanthropic funding.</li> <li>○ Incentive programs are run by a committee, which provides separation in decision-making from the political process.</li> <li>○ Ability to host MBWC as an SBA program, which gives a competitive edge, as most EDOs do not also</li> </ul>	<b>Funding &amp; Programming</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Could still provide incentive programs, and if funded, staff can provide technical support services and entrepreneurship support possibly without federal or other local government funding – or there could be a hybrid model where a separate non-profit is retained to deliver technical services through MWBC with outside funding.</li> <li>○ Grant compliance, audits, reporting, and financial</li> </ul>



<p>provide technical business support services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ MWBC elevates the ecosystem as a place that encourages entrepreneurship and innovation, which is an underpinning of the key industry areas of bio/life science, small-scale manufacturing, and other technology companies.</li> <li>○ Managing multiple grants with varied reporting requirements diverts staff time from direct business support and strategic planning.</li> </ul>	<p>management would be supported by existing city departments (Finance, Legal, Procurement), reducing overhead for program administration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Economic development functions are typically built into the city's base budget, providing greater year-to-year stability and predictability and providing stable core funding.</li> <li>○ If delivery of all REDI services is brought in house, the city would need to absorb costs currently covered by other jurisdictions for entrepreneurship/technical assistance if retaining entrepreneurial technical assistance is desired.</li> <li>○ The city is not eligible for some external funding sources like grants for non-profits, foundations, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Infrastructure &amp; Operations support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A separate entity EDO is nimbler in procurement, contract management, and decision-making, as they are not "in line" for services from procurement or other departments.</li> <li>○ Lack of internal infrastructure and operations support and must outsource some IT, HR, Finance, and Legal support.</li> <li>○ Required to follow the Open Meetings Act, the Maryland FOIA, and the Maryland Archive requirements, without City Clerk or Legal Department support.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Infrastructure &amp; Operations support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In-house support for IT, HR, Finance, Legal, Records, and Open Meetings.</li> <li>○ The City Manager would direct work rather than an autonomous board.</li> <li>○ Easier access to city staff for planning &amp; collaboration.</li> <li>○ Cost savings on rent are unlikely, as the Economic Development team would not be in City Hall, and most departments require separate offices to ensure confidentiality for businesses.</li> <li>○ Economic development work often demands agility and operating as a</li> </ul>

	city department could create procurement delays and bureaucratic constraints.
<b>Hiring Employees/Board Function</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Participation by high-level business owners and executives who are more engaged by being a part of an autonomous Board.</li> <li>○ Ability of business leaders to provide business perspective and vision for the future to guide the Mayor and Council.</li> <li>○ Ability to access key business leaders to get input on pressing current issues and proposed ordinance/regulatory changes.</li> <li>○ Able to attract staff with government and non-government experience, which businesses appreciate. Employees are mission driven.</li> <li>○ REDI staff are recognized as thought leaders in economic development across the State.</li> <li>○ Jobs may not seem as stable because each year requires a funding discussion</li> <li>○ Limited ability to influence other Rockville city departments; REDI staff can be treated as outsiders instead of partners.</li> <li>○ Funding for MWBC positions is competitive with respect to some other small non-profits, but not with government and private sector positions, which leads to turnover.</li> <li>○ Limited funding from Rockville, impacts staffing levels for business development activities, is currently at capacity without additional staff.</li> </ul>	<b>Hiring Employees/Board Function</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Economic Development staff would be “on the team,” &amp; able to interject the business point of view in decision internally.</li> <li>○ Economic development will become part of the city’s overall management structure, allowing for more holistic integration into land use, housing, transportation, and infrastructure planning.</li> <li>○ Eliminates the complexity of managing an autonomous board, streamlining decision-making and administrative oversight.</li> <li>○ Without an autonomous board composed of business leaders or developers, there is less risk of perceived or actual conflicts in decision-making related to programming or initiatives.</li> <li>○ Employees would have municipal benefits and might have a perception of more job security.</li> <li>○ Business leaders and industry experts have less formal influence over program direction, innovation, and responsiveness to market trends.</li> <li>○ Without an active board structure, the city may struggle to foster deep partnerships with the business community, which can impact referrals, credibility, and collaborative funding opportunities.</li> <li>○ A Business Advisory Board is unlikely to get the same participation as the current REDI board.</li> <li>○ Employment may not be attractive to entrepreneurial professionals who value performance-based</li> </ul>

	incentives, flexibility, or innovation-driven environments.
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# Economic Development

## Mayor and Council Work Session

July 21, 2025







## City Council Request

- ❖ March 24<sup>th</sup> work session requested
- ❖ Work session topics:
  - Overview models
  - ED roles and responsibilities
  - Lines of communication, direction, and accountability
  - Outcomes-based measurements of success
- ❖ Conversation format



# Economic Development Models

Two common models:

1. Separate third-party entity
2. Economic Development Department



## Third Party Model

- ❖ 501(c)(3) non-profit
- ❖ Autonomous board
- ❖ Relies on municipal funding
- ❖ No direct access to internal city systems
- ❖ Own administrative services (IT, HR, Legal etc.)
- ❖ Examples - REDI, Cumberland Economic Development Corporation, Easton Economic Development Corporation



## In-House Model

- ❖ Economic Development Department
- ❖ Division of City Manager's Office
- ❖ Combined Department – i.e. Community and Economic Development Department
- ❖ Examples of “in-house” - Cities of Gaithersburg, Frederick, and Bowie



## Current Functions/Roles - REDI

- ❖ Business Development (Attraction, Retention, Expansion)
- ❖ Market Research
- ❖ Marketing and Communications
- ❖ Resources and Connections
- ❖ Technical Assistance
- ❖ Entrepreneurship Development
- ❖ Incentive Programs
- ❖ Tourism/Destination Marketing
- ❖ District Identification and Support



# Current Functions/Roles – City Departments

- ❖ Community Development/Placemaking
- ❖ Infrastructure
- ❖ Growth Mindset/Legislation
- ❖ Fiscal Management
- ❖ Public Safety
- ❖ Planning, Zoning, Permitting
- ❖ Civic Engagement



# Current Functions/Roles – Regional Partners

- ❖ Growth Policies/Legislation
- ❖ Business-Friendly Tax and Programs
- ❖ Education
- ❖ Workforce Development
- ❖ Inclusive Outreach & Collaboration
- ❖ Utilities/Transportation
- ❖ Collaboration amongst all partners



# Existing Funding Agreement

- ❖ Agreement between REDI and City of Rockville





# Mayor and Council Conversation

Questions, comments and direction regarding:

1. City economic development models
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. Lines of communication, direction, and accountability
4. Outcomes-based measurements of success
5. Any needed next steps



MAYOR AND COUNCIL Meeting Date: July 21, 2025

Agenda Item Type: MOCK AGENDAS

Department: CITY CLERK/DIRECTOR OF COUNCIL OPERATIONS OFFICE

Responsible Staff: SARA TAYLOR-FERRELL

## **Subject**

Mock Agenda

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## **Department**

City Clerk/Director of Council Operations Office

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## **Recommendation**

Staff recommends the Mayor and Council review and provide comments.

## **Attachments**

August 04, 2025 Mock Agenda (Rev.2).pdf



## MAYOR AND COUNCIL

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Meeting No. 20-25

Monday, August 4, 2025 - 5:30 PM

### AGENDA VIRTUAL ONLY

**Agenda item times are estimates only. Items may be considered at times other than those indicated.**

#### Ways to Participate

If you require a reasonable accommodation, for community forum or a public hearing and need reasonable accommodations, please contact the City Clerk's Office by the Wednesday before the Monday meeting at 240-314-8280 or [cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov) or by filling this form: <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/FormCenter/City-Manager-2/Request-a-Reasonable-Accommodation-50>

#### Translation Assistance

If you wish to participate in person at a Mayor and Council meeting during community forum or a public hearing and may need translation assistance in a language other than English, please contact the City Clerk's Office by the Wednesday before the Monday meeting at 240-314-8280, or [cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:cityclerk@rockvillemd.gov), or by using this form: <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/FormCenter/City-Clerk-11/Sign-Up-for-Translation-Assistance-at-Co-368>

#### In-Person Attendance

Community members attending in-person who wish to speak during Community Forum, or a Public Hearing, should sign up using the form at the entrance to the Mayor and Council Chamber. In-person speakers will be called upon in the order they are signed to speak and before virtual speakers.

**Note: In-Person Speakers will be called upon to speak before those who have signed up to speak virtually for Community Forum and Public Hearings.**

#### Viewing Mayor and Council Meetings

The Mayor and Council are conducting hybrid meetings. The virtual meetings can be viewed on Rockville 11, Comcast, Verizon cable channel 11, livestreamed at [www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/rockville11), and available a day after each meeting at [www.rockvillemd.gov/videoondemand](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/videoondemand).

#### Participating in Community Forum & Public Hearings:

If you wish to submit comments in writing for Community Forum or Public Hearings:

- Please email the comments to [mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov) no later than 10:00 am on the date of the meeting.

If you wish to participate in-person or virtually in Community Forum or Public Hearings during the live Mayor and Council meeting:

1. Send your Name, Phone number, For Community Forum and Expected Method of Joining the

Meeting (computer or phone) to [mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov) no later than 10:00 am on the day of the meeting. Each speaker will receive 3 minutes.

2. Send your Name, Phone number, the Public Hearing Topic and Expected Method of Joining the Meeting (computer or phone) to [mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:mayorandcouncil@rockvillemd.gov) no later than 10:00 am on the day of the meeting.

3. On the day of the meeting, you will receive a confirmation email with further details, and two Webex invitations: 1) Optional Webex Orientation Question and Answer Session and 2) Mayor & Council Meeting Invitation.

4. Plan to join the meeting no later than approximately 20 minutes before the actual meeting start time.

5. Read for <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/38725/Public-Meetings-on-Webex> meeting tips and instructions on joining a Webex meeting (either by computer or phone).

6. If joining by computer, Conduct a WebEx test: <https://www.webex.com/test-meeting.html> prior to signing up to join the meeting to ensure your equipment will work as expected.

### Participating in Mayor and Council Drop-In (Mayor Ashton and Councilmember Fulton)

The next scheduled Drop-In Session will be held by phone or in-person on Monday, September 15 from 5:15-6:5 pm with Mayor Ashton and Councilmember Fulton. Please sign up by 10 am on the meeting day using the form at: <https://www.rockvillemd.gov/formcenter/city-clerk-11/sign-up-for-dropin-meetings-227>

#### 1. Convene - 5:30 PM

#### 2. Pledge of Allegiance

#### 3. Proclamation and Recognition - 5:35 PM

A. Proclamation Declaring August 5, 2025, as National Night Out in Rockville, Maryland (Mayor Ashton)

#### 4. Agenda Review

#### 5. City Manager's Report - 5:40 PM

#### 6. Boards and Commissions Appointments and Reappointments - 5:45 PM

#### 7. Community Forum - 5:50 PM

#### 8. Special Presentations - NONE

#### 9. Consent Agenda - NONE

#### 10. Public Hearing - NONE

#### 11. Action Items - 6:10 PM

A. FY 2026 Budget Amendment #1

#### 12. Worksession - 6:25 PM

A. Fourth Work Session on the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite (ZOR): Uses, Parking, and

Planning Commission Work Session Updates, with a Focus on Process

- 13. Mock Agenda - 7:25 PM**
- 14. Old / New Business - 7:30 PM**
- 15. Adjournment - 7:45 PM**