

City of Rockville
Leadership Planning Team Meeting Notes
March 23, 2026

Meeting Participants:

Mayor Ashton
Councilmember Jackson
Councilmember Van Grack
Councilmember Shaw
Jeff Mihelich, City Manager
Sara Taylor-Ferrell, City Clerk/Director of Council Operations
Barack Matite, Deputy City Manager
Dave Gottesman, Assistant City Manager
Linda Moran, Associate City Manager

Agenda Review

March 23, 2026 Meeting Agenda

Comment: Councilmember Van Grack noted that the ZOR public hearing is at the next meeting [April 13], and asked if the body should wait on giving direction to staff until after that public hearing occurs

Response: City Manager noted that this is an iterative process and the current sequencing works

Comment: Mayor Ashton asked if there will be a new draft posted before the public hearing

Response: City Manager said yes, approximately 7-10 days after receiving direction this evening, it will be posted and sent to Mayor & Council before the public hearing and the two related work sessions; City Manager also referenced the ZOR process calendar that he sent to the body

Comment: Councilmember Jackson noted agreement with the Mayor

Comment: Mayor Ashton asked when it will be posted

Response: City Manager said he will confer with staff and let the body know, and noted that the work sessions are broken out by the different articles in the ZOR, so people will not have to review the entire document at once, just the relevant sections for any given meeting

Comment: Mayor Ashton asked if the sign-in sheets for Community Forum versus a Public Hearing on a topic can be clearly delineated so people know which agenda item they are signing in for to speak

Response: City Clerk said it is clear but there are people who want to speak on a topic related to a public hearing but choose to speak at Community Forum because it is earlier in the meeting agenda; in these instance CC/DCO includes their testimony in the public record for the public hearing on their issue

April 13, 2026 Meeting Agenda

Comment: City Manager requested that the Associate City Manager add some additional descriptive information to Budget Public Hearing #4

Comment: Mayor Ashton mentioned there are some student recognitions still to be added to the agenda

Response: City Clerk said CC/DCO is working on getting them added

Review and Comment on the Six Month Agenda Planning Calendar

Comment: Mayor Ashton asked about the algorithmic piece and if it can be accelerated

Response: City Manager said this piece is built into the agenda item on Chapter 18

Comment: Councilmember Shaw thanked staff for providing data on the landlord-tenant code, and asked if the body could continue to receive updates through May

Response: City Manager said yes and to let him know if there is a specific ask

- Councilmember Shaw said the number or percent of cost-burdened renters, using the HUD definition of the amount of money tenants are paying for rent relative to their income

Comment: Mayor Ashton asked if this data can include comparisons to our neighboring jurisdictions, specifically Montgomery County and the City of Gaithersburg

Legislative Review Team Meeting
March 23, 2026

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

Review of Legislative Issues:

Bill - HB 437 / SB 59: Major Highway Capacity Expansion Projects - Impact Assessments and Workgroup (Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2026)

Position - Support

Next Steps: A support letter will be sent to the House and Senate Committees.

House Bill 597 Montgomery County - Community Choice Aggregation Pilot Program - Alterations MC 17-26

Position – Support

Next Steps - A support letter will be sent to the House and Senate Committees.

Bill – House Bill 345/Senate Bill 341: Public Utilities – Solar Energy Generating Systems and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (Affordable Solar Act)

Position – Support

Next Steps – A support letter will be sent to the House and Senate Committees.

HB 938 – Anne Arundel, Prince George’s, Montgomery County – Crosswalk Monitoring Systems

Update - HB 1086, the Montgomery County crosswalk monitoring systems bill, is not going to pass. Montgomery County and Prince George's County were added to HB 938, which originated as the Anne Arundel County bill.

Position – Support. **Next Steps** – If the bill makes the 3/23 crossover deadline (preliminary approval provided on 3/21), a letter of support to the Senate Committee.

Status Updates:

The City Manager provided updates on the budget process, Legislative Bond Initiatives, and asked the Mayor and Council if there were any bills in particular that they were interested in. The update d3/23 LRT summary (City Manager will forward to the body) provides additional details.

- In the last few weeks of the General Assembly Session, which ends on 4/13, staff and the City's State lobbyist will flag bills of interest for the Mayor and Council that are being amended and may require action taken by the City.
- The bill focused on securing access to treatment for menopause will be added to the City's bill tracking chart.
- It was noted that since the State algorithm bill is not going to move this year, the City should be ready with Rockville's legislation.
- Staff reached out to MML staff to inquire if they expect HB 1142 Task Force to Modernize County and Municipal Revenue Structures to make the 3/23 crossover deadline. As of 3/21, the legislation had received preliminary approval in the House. MML staff noted that they expect HB 1142 to pass the House on 3/23. Upon House approval, the City's written testimony in support of HB 1142 will be forwarded to the Senate Committee.

Requested Crossover Updates:

Updates were requested on the following bills. Please see below for the status:

House Bill 168: Housing and Community Development -Affordable Housing – Educator Workforce and Municipal Corporations (Rockville support) has passed the House with amendments. As amended, the bill establishes a state policy supporting the development of educator workforce housing and creates a definition for “educator workforce housing” as housing that is rented or sold as affordable, low- or moderate-income housing, and reserved for teachers or other employees of a local school system. The amendments remove the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) provision entirely and no longer modifies tax credit eligibility. It expands the Housing Innovation Fund to allow loans for educator workforce housing and broadens eligibility of recipients to local boards of education and municipal corporations. The amendments also expand the Housing Innovation Pilot Program to allow “housing innovation projects” to include developments where a portion of the units are set aside for educators. Additionally, it incorporates educator housing into the Neighborhood and Community Assistance Program, allowing qualifying projects with required approval from a local board of education. Finally, the bill amends the Education article to establish that providing educator workforce housing is a valid ‘school purpose’.

Gaithersburg requested **House Bill 691 - State Government – Procedures – Permitting Efficiency for Housing**. The bill has crossed over.

Senate Bill 518: Maryland Financial Empowerment Center Network Pilot Program – Establishment – This bill has crossed over.

County Legislative Matters:

- The Mayor and Council approved sending a letter of concern and posing questions to the County Executive and County Council relating to the proposed changes to the County waste management system and transfer station in the Executive's recommended FY27 Operating Budget. DPW is scheduling a meeting with the County DEP to discuss the proposed changes and assess the impact.