

# Town Administrator's March 2019 Report



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## Executive Summary

Dear Mayor and Council,

We are continuing to draft the proposed FY20 budget for consideration and discussion by the Mayor and Council. The first draft will be presented during the April 8, 2019 Council Worksession. Our goal, as always, is to present a sustainable budget ensuring Town residents and businesses receive the exemplary services they have come to expect.

The information used for balancing the FY20 budget is based on the most current information available. The items outlined in the budget message are designed to keep the Town financially sound; keep our community safe; promote redevelopment; maintain our existing facilities and infrastructure; and improve the quality of life for all Town residents and businesses.

We are pleased to announce our Spring 2019 Newsletter has been mailed out to all residents and businesses. Congratulations to Ms. Diamond McDowell, our Marketing/Social Media Specialist, for designing an amazing newsletter our residents and businesses will enjoy reading.

As always, the Town staff and I will continue to make every effort to increase efficiencies in Town services as we serve the citizens of Bladensburg. On behalf of the Town staff, I hope you find this report to be an informative tool to assist you, the policy makers, in better serving the Town of Bladensburg, and provide transparency and useful information to the citizens and businesses of the community. I look forward to hearing any feedback you may have. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, and/or suggestions regarding this report.



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## **MARYLAND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES DESIGNATION**

The Town of Bladensburg in collaboration with the Port Towns of Colmar Manor, Cottage City, and Edmonston has begun the initial process of reapplying for the Maryland Sustainable Community Application through the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Debi Sandlin, Town Administrator for Bladensburg, and Rod Barnes Town Administrator for the Town of Edmonston will be serving as co-project managers responsible for leading the Maryland Sustainable Communities Working Group in 1) identifying the goals and objectives as part of the five year sustainable plan, and 2) the development of an Action Plan detailing how the goals and objectives will be accomplished. Ms. Sandlin and Mr. Barnes, along with Mayor Kisha James, met with DHCD's team to determine the next steps in reapplying for the Sustainable Communities designation.

The Working group will be comprised of representation from the four Port Towns, community non-profits, local businesses, faith based organizations, local school representation, and Maryland Park and Planning.

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's Sustainable Communities Program is a place-based designation offering a comprehensive package of resources supporting holistic strategies for community development, revitalization and sustainability. Led by the Department, Sustainable Communities has provided local governments with a framework for promoting environmentally, economically and socially responsible growth and development in existing older communities.

## **MEETING WITH PEPCO REPRESENTATIVES**

On March 22, 2019, Mayor Kisha James, Debi Sandlin, Town Administrator, Shaun Rinehart, Code Supervisor, and Purnell Hall, Public Works Foreman, met with Tony Ruffin, Vince Wynn and Christin Sunn from Pepco to discuss the Town of Bladensburg participating in a Pilot program to replace existing street lights with LED lights to improve illumination in targeted areas of the community. The Pilot program would include identifying an area with 10 to 15 lights needing improved illumination, possibly an area to assist with deterring crime.

In addition to the Pilot program, Pepco offers a Small Business incentive program to encourage small businesses to upgrade their HVAC systems to be more energy efficient. Eligible businesses could receive up to a \$400 incentive. The Town will send out a notification along with the 2019 business license invoice to notify businesses about Pepco's Small Business Incentive program.

## **FY20 TOWN GRANTS**

The Town of Bladensburg is pleased to announce the FY20 community grants application process is now open to eligible community non-profit organizations. The Town's Grant program is designed to assist non-profit agencies offering projects, programs, and/or

services to support and promote the well-being and quality of life for Town residents and businesses.

The purposes of the Town grants are to provide support to our local partners committed to sustainable programs consistent with the Town’s Strategic Goal of “Cultivating new and grow existing partnerships with public, private, non-profit and government organizations to support a thriving community”.

The Town Grant application is available to download at [www.bladensburgmd.gov](http://www.bladensburgmd.gov) or can be picked-up at the Bladensburg Town Hall.

### **GREEN TEAM UPDATE**

The Green Team met on March 14, 2019 to identify initiatives to incorporate into the Sustainable Maryland Three Year Action Plan. The initiatives are designed to promote the Town’s long-term commitment to sustainable development with a focus on environmental, economic and social equity for all residents and businesses. The initiatives include:

1. Green Tips – promoting green tips to encourage residents to incorporate sustainable practices as part of their daily life. Green Tips will be included in weekly E-Blasts and the Town’s Quarterly Newsletter.
2. Rain Barrels – Rain Barrels will be placed in the Pocket Park located at Tausig and 52<sup>nd</sup> Street, the David C. Harrington Community Park, and the Police Department Annex building.
3. Planting of Edible Plants/Trees – As part of the healthy living sustainability goal, the Town will plant fruit trees in the Pocket Park.
4. The Chesapeake Bay Trust and Prince George’s County Rain Check Rebate Program – The Town will promote the Chesapeake Bay Trust and PGC Rain Check Rebate Program. The Rain Check Rebate program provides eligible applicants the opportunity to receive a reimbursement for installing approved stormwater management practices.
5. Port Towns’ Day – The Green Team will share a table with the Town at the 2019 Port Towns’ Day to distribute information on Green Initiatives and practices the community can incorporate as part of their own sustainable efforts.

### **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PERMIT & STORMWATER POLLUTION PREVENTION PLAN**

The Town is partnering with Prince George’s County Department of Environment and the Low Impact Design Center to complete the Maryland Department of Environment’s Stormwater Management Permit application and to develop the required Stormwater Pollution Action Plan. The purpose of the plan is to identify how the Town will mitigate potential stormwater runoff from the Town’s Public Works facility located in the Industrial Park.



Effective December 2017, the Maryland Department of Environment required all municipal Public Works facilities associated with industrial activity to apply for a Stormwater Management Permit and to submit a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.

## **MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY UPDATE**

The Maryland General Assembly is about to wrap up the 2019 Session. Below is a list of having passed and are now law and bills waiting for the Governor to sign or veto.

### **1 - Bills Passed and Are Now Law**

- **\$15 Minimum Wage**  
HB 166/SB 280 General Assembly over-rode Governor's veto and is now law. The minimum wage will go to \$15 per hour by 2025. The next increase will be January 1, 2020 when the minimum wage goes to \$11 an hour from the current \$10.10.
- **Flexible School Calendar**  
Overturns the Governor's Executive Order (that mandates all schools to start after Labor Day) to allow a local school board to set the school calendar.  
SB 128 General Assembly over-rode Governor's veto and is now law, which will allow local school districts to decide the beginning and end of the school year. (The Governor had previously passed an executive order mandating that all schools start after Labor Day.

### **2 - Bills Waiting for the Governor to Sign or Veto**

- **Banning Discrimination in Underwriting and Rating Because of Status As A Surviving Spouse**  
HB 191 – Passed the House and the Senate
- **Maryland Dream Act**  
Expands the people eligible for in-state tuition  
SB 537 – Passed the Senate and House – Waiting for Governor to sign/veto
- **Option for Gender Neutral Drivers' License**  
Bill allow residents to apply for licenses with gender identifiers of "M," "F," or "X."  
SB 196 - The House of Delegates and the Senate passed this bill. It now goes to the Governor for signature or veto.



## TOWN ADMINISTRATOR RECEIVES CERTIFIED MANAGER DESIGNATION

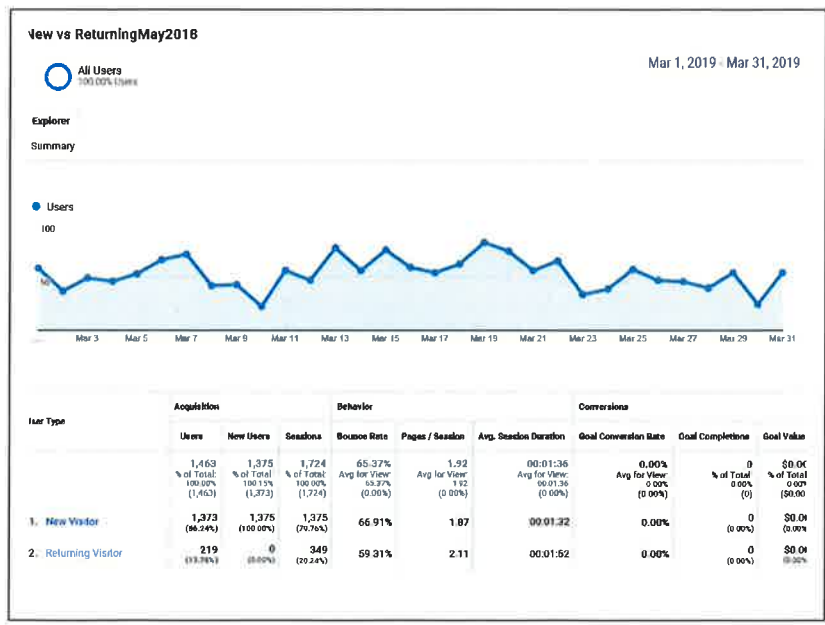
On March 7, 2019, Debi Sandlin, Town Administrator, graduated from the University of Baltimore's Schafer Center for Public Policy's Certified Manager Program. Ms. Sandlin participated in 280 hours of classwork over 16 months. The curriculum focused on enhancing management skills for executive level leaders involved in public management roles. Coursework for the program centered on seven core areas of public management to include: Personal and Organizational Integrity; Managing Self; Leading People; Developing Self; Public Service Focus; Change Leadership; and System Integration. In addition to Ms. Sandlin's designation as a Certified Manager, she is also a Credentialed Manager through ICMA.



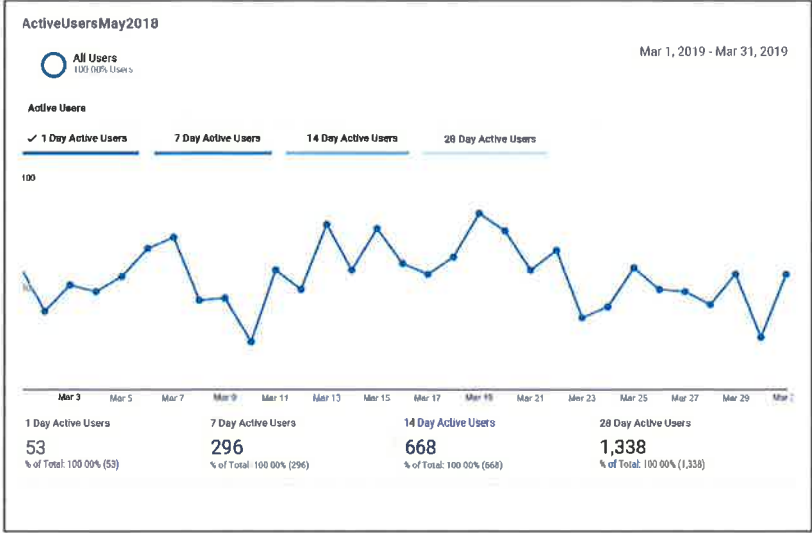
## WEBSITE STATISTICS

The data for March 2019 shows there were 1,463 visitors to the website, of which, 1,373 were new visitors to the site and 219 were returning visitors. Additionally the data shows the most frequently used devices when visiting the site were, Desktops (55.23 %), Mobile Phones (39.03 %) and tablets (5.74 %).

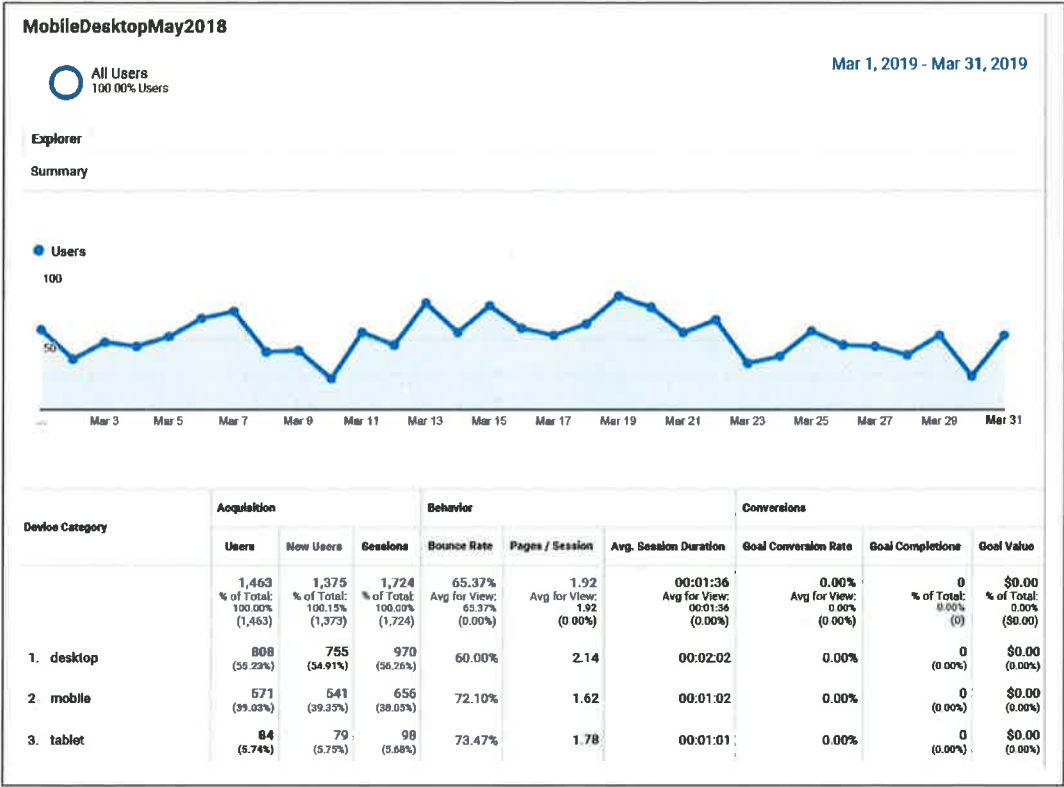
### New vs Returning Visitors to the Website



## Active Users February 2019



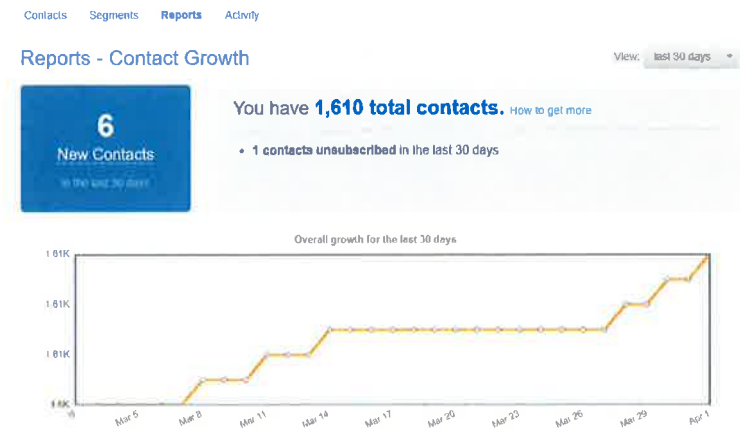
## Mobil-Desk Top-Tablet Overview





## CONSTANT CONTACT

During the month of February there were two (2) new e-mail addresses were generated. As of March 30, 2019, the Town had 1,610 subscribers signed up to receive the weekly E-Blast.



## LIST TRENDS

Constant Contact is a public online marketing company and e-mail service provider. The Town of Bladensburg uses this means of communication to improve the outreach and flow of important information from our Town Offices to our residents.

From March 1, 2019 through March 30, 2019 a total of 237 e-mails were sent, and four weekly community updates.

The most engaged community notification was the February 19, 2019 “Important Community Notification” explaining that Town Offices would be closed due to impending inclement weather, as well as a final notice to RSVP for the Town’s Black History program.

### Email Statistics:

- 1256 E-mails sent
- 22.90% Open rate
- 61.20% Desktop opens
- 38.80% Mobile opens
- 7.70% Click rate

The most engaged E-Blast was the March 8, 2019 weekly community update.



# SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYTICS

## Facebook

Between March 1, 2019 and March 30, 2019, a total of 47 posts were created and 17 posts were shared on the **@BladensburgMD** Facebook page. The most popular post was the March 21, 2019 promotion of the County’s Visionary Women’s Luncheon.

There was a total of 635 page likes at the end of March gaining 19 new likes within the entire month.



## INSTAGRAM

The **@BladensburgMD** Instagram account acquired a total of 367 followers by March 30, 2019, gaining a total of 20 new followers. The most popular post was March 22<sup>nd</sup> posting of County Executive Angela Alsobrooks celebrating the Visionary Women of Prince Georges County. This post accumulated a total of 30 likes.

# Twitter

Town of Bladensburg @BladensburgMD Twitter account ended the month of March with a total of 136-page followers. 29 tweets were created and 19 Town related tweets were retweeted. The most popular tweet was the March 1, 2019 tweet announcing Town Hall would open on a two hour delay due to weather conditions.

Mar 2019 · 11 days

**Top Tweet** earned 557 impressions  
 Due to the impending weather conditions Friday, March 1, 2019, Town Hall will operate on a 2 hour delayed opening. The Bladensburg Police Department remains open 24/7.  
 PGCPs Schools and offices, and Elizabeth Seton will also operate on a 2 hour delay.

**Top mention** earned 102 impressions  
**Tyrone Collington Jr**  
 Excited to attend the dedication ceremony @BladensburgMD for the new Mahler Center for the Performing Arts with @BladensburgPD Chief Stone! @BladensburgMD pic.twitter.com/3Qo4um6C

**Top Follower** followed by 12 other people  
**Darcy Spencer**  
 Former NBC 4 Reporter covering the City since 2001  
 News anchor, UNAC panel, former student at the former State MD

**Top media Tweet** earned 488 impressions  
 On Wednesday, February 27, 2019, Mayor Taldaha James, Chief Tracy Stone, Captain Tyrone Collington and Town Administrator Debi Sandlin had the honor to hear the Peace Cross case argued before the United States Supreme Court.  
 pic.twitter.com/Wu2G0dsE2C

12 Tweets  
 174 Replies  
 11 Retweets  
 4,692 Likes  
 33 Mentions

Follow the Town of Bladensburg on Facebook and Twitter.



## MARCH 2019 MEETINGS/EVENTS/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

### MARCH 2019 MEETINGS/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Town Administrator was involved in the following meetings/events/and community outreach activities:

1. Attended the Parkview Tenant Council meeting.
2. Attended the Emerson House Tenant Council meeting.
3. Met with Mike Clar and Pat McAuley to discuss Phase I of the 58<sup>th</sup> Street road repair project. Mr. Clar was approved by the Mayor and Town Council to serve as the Civil Engineer on the project as a sole source due to the timing of the project.
4. Met with Mike Hunninghake, Program Manager for the University of Maryland's Sustainability program, to discuss the status of the Town's Pet Waste participation in the program.
5. Attended the State Highway Administration's status update meeting on their plans to address and make improvements on Quincy Road. At this time there is no funding to make any improvements. The funding is only to design the plans.
6. Facilitated the March 14<sup>th</sup> Green Team meeting.
7. Met with representatives from the Department of Housing and Community Development to discuss the process to update and reapply for the Maryland Sustainable Community Designation for the Port Towns.
8. Attended the District 47 Legislative Reception in Annapolis.
9. Attended the "Women's Vision" Luncheon as part of Women's History Month.
10. Attended the monthly Principals meeting at the International Schools as part of the Police Departments Community Policing initiative. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss issues the schools are having and to identify how the Police Department can assist in mediating the issues.

### UPCOMING EVENTS & INITIATIVES

#### **Eggstraganza**

Come and enjoy a day of activities along with a special visit by the Easter Bunny. Festivities include an Easter Egg Hunt, sack races, and many other activities. You will not want to miss this awesome family activity. The event is scheduled for Saturday, April 20, 2019 from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., and will be held in the David C. Harrington Community Park Located at Town Hall 4229 Edmonston Road Bladensburg, MD

#### **Fireworks Event**

The 2019 fireworks committee held its second meeting on February 26, 2019. The committee is working on assigned tasks to include acquiring food trucks, kids' activities, save the date flyers, event coverage, guest appearances and more. Our goal is to create an unforgettable experience!