

# Town Administrator's May 2019 Report



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Dear Mayor and Council,

We are continuing to finalize the proposed FY20 budget for consideration and adoption by the Mayor and Town Council during the June 10, 2019 Council meeting. The FY20 budget process included three (3) Council budget worksessions, three (3) community input meetings, to include a Pop Up budget forum, and the FY20 Constant Yield Public Hearing. Our goal during the FY20 budget process was to improve community engagement in the budget process by offering more opportunities for Town residents and businesses to provide input and feedback into how the budget is being determined.

The FY20 proposed budget included a few increases to include: adding funding to the Community Events line item under the Mayor/Council budget and the Police Department budget. This was done to better reflect the Town's commitment to improving community engagement. Staff has also recommended adding funding for a contract grant writer to seek supplemental funding opportunities for infrastructure improvements, and under Public Works, funding to purchase a new leaf machine truck to improve the ability to collect leaves during the fall leaf collection season. During the 2018 leaf collection season, 56.2 tons of leaves were collected. The leaf collection service not only assists residents with removal of leaves, but helps to reduce leaves from clogging stormwater drains and mitigating potential flooding.



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.

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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## REDEVELOPMENT ADVISORY GROUP

A Redevelopment Advisory Group consisting of several key partners was established and launched on May 6, 2019. The Partners involved include:

- Steve Paul – PGC Redevelopment Authority
- Ebony Stock – PGC Economic Development Corporation
- Wendy Irminger – MNCPP Revitalization Department
- David Harrington – PGC Chamber of Commerce
- Barry Stanton & Walter Ware – PGC School System
- Maria Day-Marshall – Colvin Institute Real Estate – University of Maryland
- Brendan Quinn – Ernest Maier



The purpose of the Redevelopment Advisory Group is to serve as advisors and assist the Town with the development of an Annapolis Road/450 Redevelopment Plan utilizing the information collected during the Master Plan study conducted by the Colvin Institute.

As part of the Towns’ goal to attract and encourage investment along the 450/Annapolis Road corridor, the Town partnered with the University of Maryland's Master Real Estate Development Program to complete Phase I and Phase II of a Rebranding/Master Plan focusing on commercial areas located along this strategic corridor. Phase I focused on the section of 450/Annapolis Road from Edmonston Road to the 202/450 split. Phase II focused on the section of 450/Annapolis Road up to 57<sup>th</sup>. The process included hosting a community input meetings to encourage residents, businesses and community stakeholders to provide input into developing a plan to encourage economic/redevelopment in a strategic corridor in the Town of Bladensburg.

The Redevelopment Advisory Group will be using this information and the recommendations from the Phase I and Phase II studies to formulate a plan to help the Town attract investment and encourage redevelopment opportunities to improve the economic sustainability of the Town for future generations.

## GREEN TEAM UPDATE

The Green Team is moving forward with finalizing the 2019 Sustainable Maryland Action Plan to submit to the University of Maryland’s Environmental Center’s Sustainable Maryland Certification program. The recertification program focuses on eight core areas to include:

- Community Action
- Community Based Food Systems
- Energy



- Green House Gas
- Health & Wellness
- Local Economies
- Natural Resources
- Planning and Land Use

To recertify as a Sustainable Community, the Town is required to complete two (2) mandatory actions, two (2) Priority items and accumulate 150 points. The Town Administrator is in the process of updating the recertification application to ready for a June 30, 2019 submission.

## ICMA GETTYSBURG LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Debi Sandlin, Town Administrator, attended the ICMA Gettysburg Leadership Institute. The Leadership Institute focuses on leadership lessons from the battle and explores the primary values involved in guiding organizational decisions to include:

- Communication
- Team building
- Empowerment
- Adaptability
- Strategic and Visionary thinking
- Decision making under pressure
- Accountability
- Execution

The context of the Gettysburg story added an experimental dimension by allowing participants to see immediate and dramatic consequences of organizational dynamics.

## PORT TOWNS QUARTERLY MEETING

The Quarterly Port Towns meeting was hosted by the Town of Edmonston on May 29, 2019. The agenda included:

1. A presentation by Andrew Fellows Community Outreach & Engagement Manager with the University of Maryland's School of Architecture. Mr. Fellows spoke about increasing community engagement between the University and the Towns located in close proximity to the University, and working together to identify projects the University and Towns could partner together on.
2. Mayor Takisha James gave an update on the Towns Annual Fireworks Celebration scheduled for Saturday, July 6, 2019 from 6 to 9:30 p.m. at the Bladensburg Waterfront Park and encouraged the Port Towns to host complimentary events as part of the celebration.
3. An update on the status of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) Sustainable Communities recertification application

process. Ms. Sandlin, Town Administrator, Bladensburg and Mr. Rod Barnes, Town Administrator, Edmonston and Co-Project Managers, provided an update on two recently held working group meetings facilitated by DHCD. The two meetings focused on the six required core areas of the Maryland Sustainable Communities recertification process to include:

- Environment
- Economy
- Transportation
- Housing
- Quality of Life
- Land Use/Local Planning

The Working Group identified the strengths and weaknesses as well as three to four priorities for each of the core areas. The staff from DHCD planned to use the feedback from the two brainstorming meetings and in partnership with the Working Group, develop draft goals, objectives and strategies. The consensus of the Working Group is to develop realistic and achievable goals and strategies to ensure success in implementing the five-year 2019 Strategic Action Plan. Ms. Sandlin applied for and received an extension to the May 31, 2019 due date to reapply for the Sustainable Communities recertification designation.

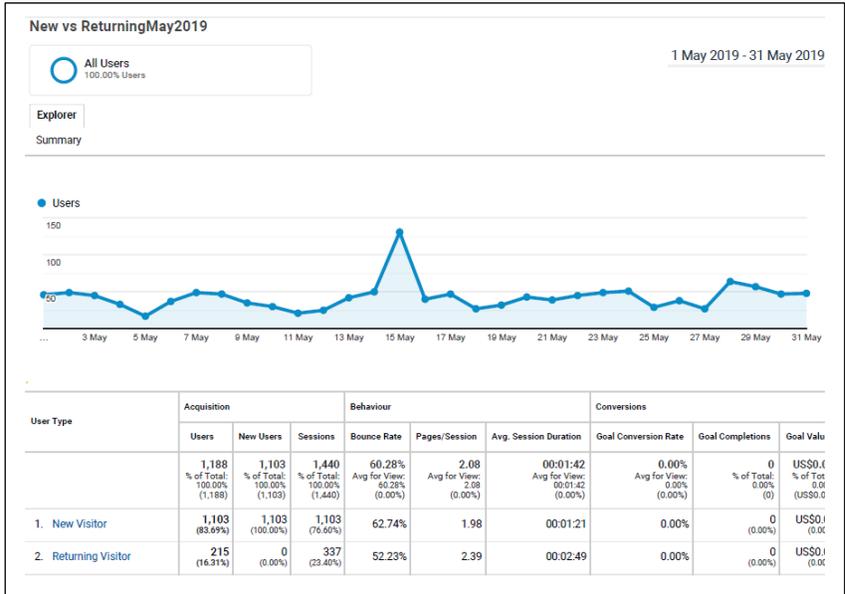
The Working Group is comprised of:

1. One elected representative from each of the four Port Towns
2. The Anacostia Watershed
3. Anacostia Trails and Heritage Area
4. Bladensburg Waterfront Park
5. Bladensburg Community Center
6. Bladensburg Library
7. Roger Heights Elementary School
8. Faith Based organization
9. Cottage City Town Administrator

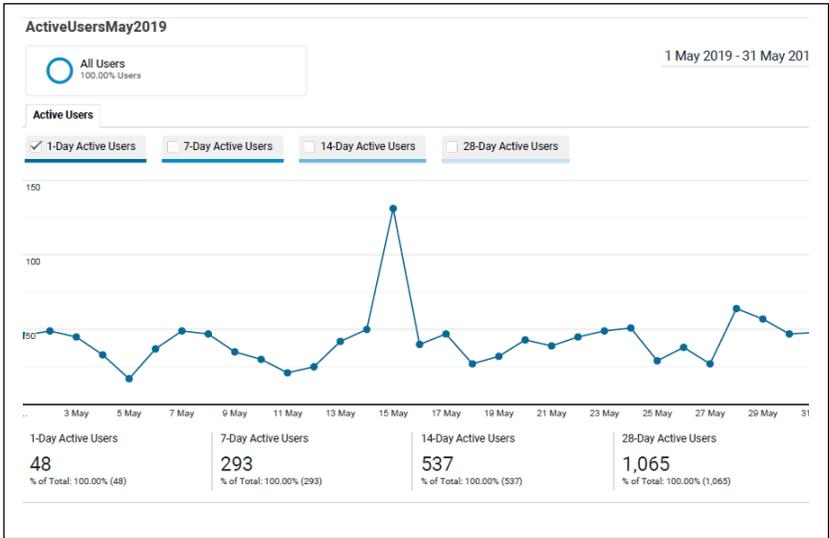
## WEBSITE STATISTICS

The data for May 2019 shows there were 1,188 visitors to the website, of which, 1,103 were new visitors to the site and 215 were returning visitors. Additionally the data shows the most frequently used devices when visiting the site were, Desktops (58.75 %), Mobile Phones (36.78 %) and tablets (4.46 %).

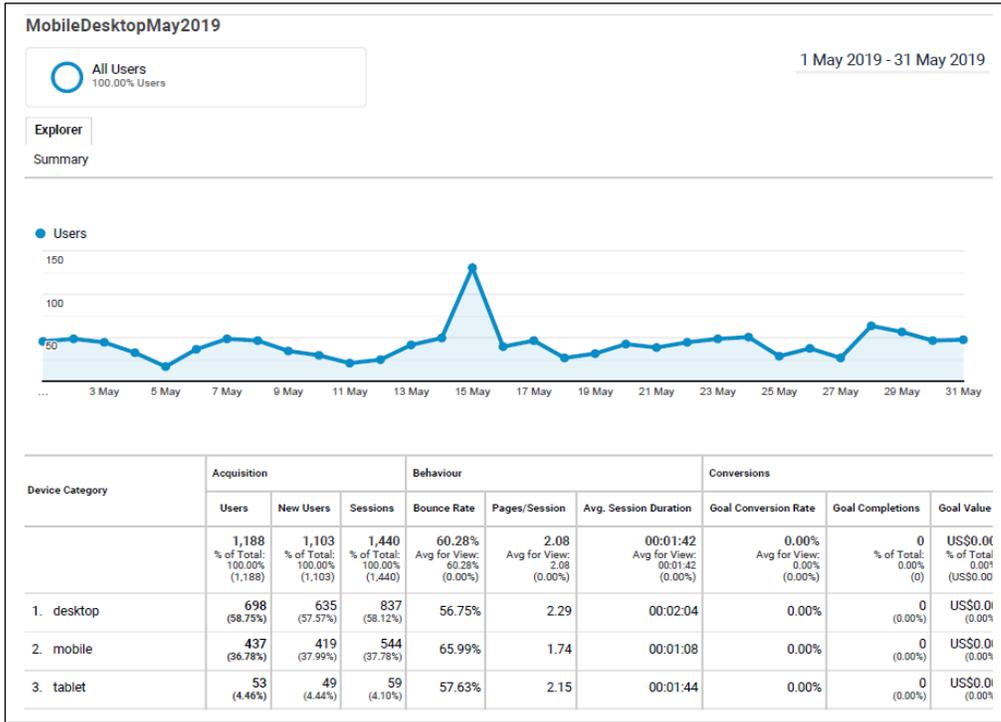
## New vs Returning Visitors to the Website



## Active Users May 2019



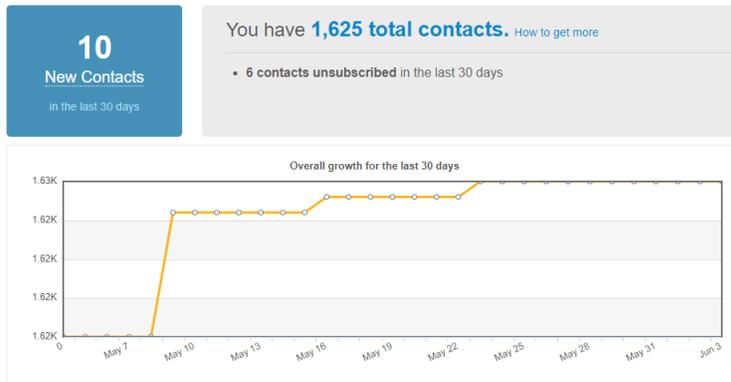
# Mobil-Desk Top-Tablet Overview



## CONSTANT CONTACT

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.

During the month of May there were 10 new e-mail addresses were generated. As of May 6, 2019, the Town had 1,625 subscribers signed up to receive the weekly E-Blast. From May 1, 2019 through May 31, 2019 a total of 5,045 e-mails were sent, and four weekly community updates.



The most engaged community notification was the May 29, 2019 email weekly update.

**Email Statistics:**

- 5,045 E-mails sent
- 24.95% Open rate
- 63% Desktop opens
- 37% Mobile opens
- 4.5% Click rate

**SOCIAL MEDIA ANALYTICS**

**Facebook** Between May 1, 2019 and May 31, 2019, a total of 19 posts were created. The most popular post was the May 3, 2019 Save the Date Fireworks Celebration.

There was a total of 672 page likes at the end of May gaining 21 new likes within the entire month.

The post with the most virtual engagement was the May 3, 2019 posting of the “Save the Date” Bladensburg Fireworks Celebration with 325 engagements and 2,427 people reached.



**INSTAGRAM**

The @BladensburgMD Instagram account concluded the month of April with a grand total of 429 followers with a gain of 37 new followers. The most engaged upload on the Town’s Instagram account (@BladensburgMD) was the May 31, 2019 post of our Public Works Department installing a new Big Belly Trash receptacle. This post accumulated 20 likes.

Follow the Town of Bladensburg on Facebook and Twitter.



## MAY 2019 MEETINGS/COMMUNITY INVOLVMENT

### APRIL 2019 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & MEETINGS

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

1. Participated in the Maryland Sustainable webinar to learn more about the recertification program through the University of Maryland's Department of Environment.
2. Attended the Emerson House Tenant Council meeting.
3. Facilitated two Redevelopment Advisory Group meetings.
4. Attended the Parkview Tenant Council meeting.
5. Attended the Maryland City/Town Managers luncheon meeting.
6. Facilitated the Green Team meeting.
7. Attended the COP's Division/Principles meeting.
8. Attended the Memorial Day Celebration
9. Attended the Quarterly Port Town Meeting.

### UPCOMING EVENTS & INITIATIVES

#### 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!