



City of Westminster

NEWS AND NOTES

Volume Eleven Issue 4c



2019 Community Survey Results

Earlier this year, the City contracted with The National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) to conduct a survey of 1,600 Westminster residents. NRC has served local governments and other public sector entities for more than 20 years. About 2% of the 1,600 surveys mailed were returned because the housing unit was vacant or the postal service was unable to deliver the survey as addressed. Of the remaining households, 25% completed the survey. The City thanks everyone who took the time to complete the 2019 Community Survey. Your feedback will help us to serve the community better.

The City's survey results were benchmarked against 600 other communities across the country whose residents evaluated the same topics. With few exceptions, its survey results were similar to the national benchmark. Below are some highlights of the 2019 Community Survey results:

- 66% of City residents rated the quality of life in Westminster as excellent or good;
- 75% rated the City as an excellent or good place to live;
- 90% of City residents reported feeling very or somewhat safe in their neighborhood;
- 80% feel very safe or somewhat safe in downtown Westminster;
- 75% of Westminster residents rated the overall quality of City services as excellent or good;
- 71% gave high marks to the overall quality of customer service provided by City employees;
- 82% rated snow removal services as excellent or good, exceeding the national benchmark;
- Approximately 7 in 10 residents gave high marks to their neighborhood, the overall appearance of Westminster, and Westminster as a place to raise children; and,
- About 7 in 10 of survey respondents were likely to recommend living in Westminster and planned to remain in the City.

The 2019 Community Survey also asked for resident opinions about possible enhancements at the former Wakefield Valley Golf Course. These enhancements included reconfiguration/improvement of the trail system, renovation of the existing buildings as community space, and the addition of picnic shelters/pavilions. Residents indicated high levels of support for making improvements to the City-owned portion of the Wakefield property. When asked if they would be willing to incur a tax increase to pay for the enhancements, the level of support declined significantly.

Residents were also asked to provide feedback on the type of businesses in downtown Westminster. About 6 in 10 residents indicated that they would like to see more family-oriented businesses. About half would like to see more cultural- and art-related options (art galleries, theaters, etc.). Approximately 6 in 10 residents felt like the amount of personal services and professional services should remain about the same.

All survey reports are available on the City's website (www.westminstermd.gov) as part of the agenda packet for the September 23, 2019 meeting of the Mayor and Common Council.

Water and Sewer Capacity Management

The Mayor and Common Council invites residents and other interested stakeholders to attend a briefing at which City staff will provide an update on Westminster's water and sewer capacity status and related City initiatives that are underway. The presentation will take place at 7:30pm on Wednesday, December 11 at John Street Quarters, located at 28 John Street in Westminster. The December 11 presentation will be the latest in a series of meetings the Mayor and Common Council have hosted over the last few years to share information with the community on Westminster's ongoing efforts to ensure our water and sewer systems meet the community's needs today and for the future.

Follow us on Facebook for the following information:

Westminster, Maryland: Holiday schedule changes, inclement weather and emergency information

City of Westminster Recreation & Parks Department: Events, parade information, fitness classes, park openings

Downtown Westminster, Maryland: News about Downtown Westminster, from business openings and specials to events and business news

Westminster Fiber Network: Keep up to date with the WFN



Contract Awarded for 45 West Main Renovation Project

The City purchased the property located at 45 West Main Street in 2018. Following renovation of the building, the City will relocate its administrative offices from its current leased location at 56 West Main Street.

On November 11, 2019, the Mayor and Common Council awarded a construction contract to Warner Construction, a Division of R.W. Warner, Inc. City staff is anticipated to move to the new location in early 2021.

City Acquires Key Downtown Parcel

On December 3, 2019, the City closed on the property located at 17-25 West Main Street, at a cost of \$750,000. The property was previously the site of the Stocksedale Service Center.

Acquiring the property gives the City control of the use of this key parcel in downtown Westminster. One of the goals of the City's adopted Strategic Plan is to "promote opportunities for the City to be an active partner in public-private joint ventures that address the underutilization of key parcels in the downtown area."

City Receives Financial Reporting Award

The City recently received the Government Finance Officer's Association's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting (PAFR Award). A PAFR extracts information from the City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report to produce a report specifically designed for those without a background in public finance. The City's FY 2018 report was evaluated by judges for reader appeal, understandability, distribution methods, creativity, and other elements. The FY 2018 PAFR is available in the Finance Department section of the City's website.

Planning the Future: Planning and Zoning Commission

The Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission reviews new projects and makes recommendations to the Mayor and Common Council. The Commission meets regularly on the second Thursday of each month at 7pm in City Hall, located at 1838 Emerald Hill Lane. The meetings are always open to the public, so come see what's in the future for your community! Agendas for all City boards and commissions are posted on the City website.

In the third quarter of 2019, the Commission reviewed construction plans for sections three through six of Stonegate. The Commission approved a site plan for an expansion to the Westminster Branch Library; the project includes the addition of an ADA-accessible entrance to the building, an elevator tower, and the conversion of the existing unfinished basement area into various community uses (a commercial kitchen, meeting rooms, a new maker space, and restrooms). And, finally, the Commission approved a site plan for the Shoppes at Meadow Creek to convert the existing bank drive-thru into new, enclosed gym space.

Winter Weather Reminders

A reminder to all Westminster property owners to clear ice and snow from sidewalks within 24 hours. Failure to do so could not only result in liability to the property owner, but also a fine from Code Enforcement.

Please be a good neighbor this winter and help out your fellow citizens who may have difficulty clearing ice and snow from sidewalks due to age, disability, or other reasons. Also, if you see a fire hydrant or stormdrain that is covered in snow, please help emergency responders and Public Works employees by clearing these areas for quick and easy access in the event of an emergency, and to help avoid flooding from melting snow.

The City of Westminster is committed to providing safe vehicular and pedestrian traffic under all conditions. The following information is provided to answer questions about our snow removal operations.

- Salt brine is applied before winter weather is expected, but not if rain will fall first.
- Once snow begins to fall, two salt/plow trucks are on the streets within one hour of notification, and ten salt/plow trucks are on the streets within two hours of notification.
- The Street Department begins plowing when the accumulation on the street reaches 1 to 1.25 inches. It takes ten salt/plow trucks and ten additional trucks approximately five to six hours to remove every three inches of snow.
- Once 8-10 inches of snow has fallen, some alleys may not be cleared until the event is over. After 15 inches of snow, the City will concentrate on keeping two-lane traffic open on all main roads and one-lane traffic open in all developments.
- Snow plows angle to the driver's right. When going by your home, they may push the snow in front of the driveway. The homeowner is responsible for access to their driveway. The only way to avoid extra shoveling is to wait until the crews have done their final cleanup on the street.

Upcoming Events for December 2019

Visits with Santa Claus

Santa Claus will take up residence in his House on the lawn of the Carroll County Public Library—Westminster Branch, each Saturday in December leading up to Christmas. Children of all ages are invited to visit and talk with him about their holiday wishes from Noon-4pm.

Horse-Drawn Carriage Rides

Join us in downtown Westminster for FREE horse-drawn carriage rides every Saturday in December leading up to Christmas! Carriage rides will be located on Locust Lane, across the street from Santa's House at the Library, and will run from Noon-4pm.

Carroll County Arts Center, 91 W Main Street, CarrollCountyArtsCouncil.org or 410-848-7272

- * 11/15-12/21: Gallery of Gifts
- * 11/29-12/8: Festival of Wreaths
- * Sunday, 12/1: Sunday Night Big Band Holiday Concert, 3pm
- * Friday, 12/13: "A Christmas Carol" Live Theatre, 8pm
- * Saturday, 12/14: "A Christmas Carol" Live Theatre, 3pm & 8pm
- * Friday, 12/20: A Charlie Brown Jazz Christmas, 8pm
- * Saturday, 12/21: A Charlie Brown Jazz Christmas, 3pm & 8pm

Historical Society of Carroll County, HSCCMD.org or 410-848-6494

- * Tuesday, 12/17: Box Lunch Talk—We All Scream for Ice Cream, Grace Lutheran Church, Noon
- * Saturday, 12/21: Past Times for Children—Holidays in the 1800s, Cockey's Koontz-Yingling Learning Center, 10am

Upcoming Events for January 2020

Carroll County Arts Center, 91 W Main Street, CarrollCountyArtsCouncil.org or 410-848-7272

- * 12/18/19-2/29/20: Gallery Exhibit "Cultivate and Fabricate"
- * 12/18/19-2/29/20: Gallery Exhibit "Sykesville Painting Club"
- * 1/14-2/29/20: Gallery Exhibit "Consilience"
- * Friday, 1/10: Documentary Series "Free Solo," 1pm & 7:30pm
- * Wednesday, 1/15: Jazz Series -A Tribute to Miles Davis, 7pm
- * Friday, 1/17: Documentary Series "Three Identical Strangers," 1pm & 7:30pm
- * Monday, 1/20: LEA sings "Songs of the Civil Rights Movement," 2pm
- * Friday, 1/24: Documentary Series "Maiden," 1pm & 7:30pm
- * Friday, 1/31: Documentary Series "Honeyland," 1pm & 7:30pm

Historical Society of Carroll County, HSCCMD.org or 410-848-6494

- * Saturday, 1/18: 182nd Carroll County Birthday Celebration, Grace Lutheran Church, 2-4pm
- * Tuesday, 1/21 Box Lunch Talk—Hahn's Meat, Grace Lutheran Church, Noon

Upcoming Events for February 2020

Carroll County Arts Center, 91 W Main Street, CarrollCountyArtsCouncil.org or 410-848-7272

- * 12/18/19-2/29/20: Gallery Exhibit "Cultivate and Fabricate"
- * 12/18/19-2/29/20: Gallery Exhibit "Sykesville Painting Club"
- * 1/14-2/29/20: Gallery Exhibit "Consilience"
- * Saturday, 2/8: Common Ground on the Hill presents Genticorum, 7:30pm
- * Saturday, 2/29: Teelin Irish Dance Co., 3pm & 7pm

Historical Society of Carroll County, HSCCMD.org or 410-848-6494

- * Tuesday, 2/18: Box Lunch Talk—The Community Media Center's Carroll County History Project, Grace Lutheran Church, Noon
- * Saturday, 2/22: Washington Never Slept There: A Tour of Washington State Wines* with Bernie Vogel, Emerald Hill, *call to reserve tickets

DIRECT-DIAL NUMBER FOR CURBSIDE ITEM PICKUP REQUESTS: 410-848-9077

The City of Westminster has a *direct-dial phone number* for all **curbside item pickup** requests. You can also leave a message and request a call back to confirm when your item(s) will be collected. All requests for curbside pickups must be received at least one working day prior to the scheduled collection date.

The schedule for pick-ups will be on the following days of the week, following the biweekly schedule of dates listed below:

- **Monday**—Tree limbs and brush, no longer than 4 feet, no larger than 4 inches in diameter
- **Tuesday**—Metal, large appliances, tires, and large batteries (excluding dishwashers, TVs, microwaves)
- **Wednesday (weekly)**—Yard waste in brown paper bags or bushel-sized containers weighing less than 50lb; **NO** plastic bags, dirt or sod, mulch, concrete, rock/stone, or brick
- **Thursday**—Bulk trash pick up east of Rt 31
- **Friday**—Bulk trash pick up west of Rt 31

NOTE: If the scheduled pickup day falls on a City holiday, items will be scheduled for the next available collection date. Items must be placed at the curb **no later than 7am** on the scheduled pickup date.

2019 Scheduled Collection Weeks

December: 12/2 – 12/6; 12/16 – 12/20; and 12/30 – 1/3. *NO pickups on 1/1/20*

2020 Scheduled Collection Weeks

January: 1/13 – 1/17; and 1/27 – 1/31

February: 2/10 – 2/14 and 2/24 – 2/28

March: 3/9 – 3/13 and 3/23 – 3/27

April: 4/6 – 4/9, *NO pickups on 4/10*; and 4/20 – 4/24

May: 5/4 – 5/8 and 5/18 – 5/22

June: 6/1 – 6/5; 6/15 – 6/19; and 6/29 – 7/3

July: 6/29 – 7/3; 7/13 – 7/17; and 7/27 – 7/31

August: 8/10 – 8/14 and 8/24 – 8/28

September: 9/8 – 9/11, *NO pickups 9/7*; 9/21 – 9/25

October: 10/5 – 10/9; 10/19 – 10/23

November: 11/2 – 11/6; 11/16 – 11/20; and 11/30 – 12/4

December: 11/30 – 12/4; 12/14 – 12/18; and 12/28 – 12/31, *NO pickups on 1/1/21*

Christmas Tree Collection

The City will collect Christmas trees curbside every other Monday following the Curbside Collection Schedule above (Tree limbs/brush). Please remember that if City offices are closed for a holiday, that day's pick up schedule is cancelled. The complete Schedule is available on the City website at WestminsterMD.gov or by calling the Information Desk at 410-848-9000. **All requests for curbside collections must be scheduled.**

Trees can also be dropped off between December 26, 2019 and March 31, 2020 at the Westminster Skate Park. The Westminster Skate Park is located at the corner of Tuc Road and Locust Street, behind City Hall. Trees may be piled next to the Dumpster at the Park.



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