



**City of Rockville
Testimony of Mayor Bridget Donnell Newton
Joint House and Senate Priorities Hearing
November 18, 2015**

Good evening, I'm Bridget Donnell Newton, Mayor of Rockville. First, I'd like to thank the Montgomery County Delegation for the opportunity to speak and for all of your support in Annapolis. I'm here this evening on behalf of the City to ask for your support for Rockville's 2016 State Legislative Program.

A brief overview of our priority program is as follows:

- The highest priority of the Mayor and Council is to advocate for increased school construction funding to alleviate overcrowding in Rockville schools and others throughout the County. Rockville will vigorously advocate in the 2016 Session in support of joint efforts by the County and State Delegation to secure funds needed to address the spiraling enrollment growth in our County's public school system.
- Rockville, Gaithersburg, and MML adopted the restoration of municipal Highway User Revenues (HUR) as a priority for 2016. While we are extremely grateful to the General Assembly and the Governor for the one-time restorations in FY14, FY15, and FY16 Rockville and all Maryland municipalities urgently need a permanent HUR solution to address this critical infrastructure funding gap created by State reductions during the economic downturn.

- Rockville and MML adopted a 2016 priority for the restoration of Program Open Space funding, which has been diverted to the State's general fund to backfill revenue shortfalls in economic downturns. The restoration of these funds is critical to the City's ability to build outstanding parks and recreational facilities, such as the Thomas Farm Community Center and Mattie Stepanek Park, which support the health and wellness of our residents.
- The Rockville police are evaluating the use of body cameras. The Maryland Police Training Commission will develop and publish a state wide policy on the use of body cameras in January 2016. Prior to implementing the technology, it will be important for Rockville to review the State policy and monitor any bills that could be introduced in the 2016 Session to ensure that local governments have the flexibility to implement programs that best meet their needs.
- Rockville, Gaithersburg, and Takoma Park are negotiating with Montgomery County for each city to enter into an MOU with the County, by December 31, 2015, that would defray the cost incurred by municipalities that provide stormwater pollution control services to County property. We are very grateful to Delegate Barve for including the MOU language in SB 863 in the 2015 Session. We hope that the MOU process will be successful. If it is not, the municipalities will seek legislation in the 2016 Session that would require counties to pay municipal stormwater fees.

In closing, I thank the Delegation for this opportunity. My Council colleagues and I look forward to collaborating with you in Annapolis on Rockville's 2016 State legislative priorities. I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.