

**Neighborhood Resources/Community Engagement Information Request**

The current Neighborhood Resources Division is composed of the Neighborhood Resources Program and the Human Rights and Community Mediation Program. The division has served the community for more than 15 years. The division provides a unique personal touch for neighborhood leaders and individual residents, to support responsive City services and a high quality of life.

The FY17 proposed budget renames the function to Community Engagement and places it organizationally with Public Information. The adjustment is intended to more closely partner the city's neighborhood expertise with the city's communication expertise as we work to move beyond sharing information to more resident engagement with the city government.

**Mission**

The mission of Neighborhood Resources or Community Engagement is to support Mayor and Council initiatives to inform and engage Rockville's neighborhood leaders and residents by:

- Facilitating communication between city government and residents,
- Cultivating civic leadership and volunteerism,
- Celebrating neighbors,
- Engaging the diverse population,
- Collaborating with partners in the government, faith, business and non-profit communities,
- Promoting human rights and conflict resolution in the community, and
- Providing information and assistance to city staff.

**Program Activities**

Partner with neighborhoods:

- Attend regular community meetings to keep abreast of community interests and provide responses to neighborhood inquiries (approximately 10 neighborhood association meetings per month and other topic specific or special meetings, as needed.)
- Support neighborhood initiatives through the matching grant program which funds community projects that enhance quality of life and promote a sense of community (\$6,000 budgeted annually.)
- Organize and follow up on Walking Town Meetings to give residents personal time with the Mayor and Council and interaction with city staff about neighborhood concerns.

Cultivate civic leadership:

- Partner with the Rockville Chamber of Commerce and Rockville Economic Development Inc (REDI) to support businesses through the annual Rockville Business Academy.
- Prepare future city leaders through annual Rockville Leadership Program (formerly Rockville University.) Following this program, many residents engage by serving on boards and commission or running for office.

- Engage high school and Montgomery College students in the Diversity Leadership Workshop to increase diversity awareness and respect in order to reduce prejudice and isolation in schools.

Celebrate the diverse community:

- Support the Human Rights Commission (HRC) to host the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration. A keynote speaker is selected each year to inspire the community to understand and value diversity.
- Support the Asian Pacific American Task Force (APA) to host the annual Lunar New Year Celebration to increase awareness and appreciation of the growing Asian community and culture and their contributions to the city.
- Support other city events that celebrate diversity, such as Twinbrook Day and International Day.
- Attend expos, forums and other events organized by community groups working with the diverse community (e.g., Montgomery County Faith Community Advisory Council.)
- Reach out to multicultural groups and organizations that work directly with the diverse community to promote trust and inclusion among the diverse communities in Rockville (e.g., Community Ministries of Rockville's Language Outreach Program.)

Educate and engage residents:

- Deliver more than 300 welcome packages annually to new residents in Rockville to make them feel welcome, informed and encouraged to engage in their new community.
- Organize forums and workshops about topics of interest for the community (e.g., I Could Be Your Neighbor, Rockville's changing demographics.)
- Use Meet Your Neighbor article in Rockville Reports and segment on Rockville 11 to highlight neighbors and their contributions to the community.

Community problem solving:

- Provide conflict resolutions services and referrals to help resolve day to day struggles between neighbors, landlords and tenants, consumers and businesses owners and community groups.
- Facilitate assistance for residents when they report that their rights have been violated.
- Advise neighborhood leaders and coordinate between neighborhoods and city staff to resolve service requests.
- Advise city staff on conducting effective outreach and resolving delicate situations in the community (support DPW work with Citizen's Task Force on the Watts Branch Stream Restoration project, coordinate multi-department response to Great Wall grocery noise complaints.)
- Coordinate the city's response to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) questions and modifications.

This table details how the programs would be continued, adjusted or discontinued in response to a reduction from the 3.0 FTEs in the FY17 proposed budget to 2.0 FTEs.

<b>3.0 FTEs in the FY17 Proposed Budget</b>	<b>2.0 FTEs suggested on April 18</b>
Good Neighbor Award Program	Continue
Neighborhood Matching Grants	Continue
Walking Town Meetings	Continue
Martin Luther King Jr Celebration	Continue
Lunar New Year Celebration	Continue
Americans with Disabilities Act coordination	Continue
Conflict Resolution and Mediation	Continue
Diversity Leadership Program	Continue
Meet Your Neighbor in Rockville Reports and on Rockville 11	Continue
Rockville Leadership Academy (formerly Rockville University)	Continue and put on hold an expansion of the program to target the Hispanic or Asian communities.
Rockville Business Academy	Continue and put on hold an expansion of the program to target Hispanic or Asian businesses.
Attend approximately 10 civic and homeowner association meetings per month, and other topic specific community meetings as needed	Attend the monthly civic and homeowner association meetings on a quarterly basis or upon request. Rely on departments to staff topic-specific neighborhood meetings.
Welcome Packet delivery (approximately 300 total per year)	Hand delivery of a subset of Welcome Packets would be discontinued. Mail delivery only.
Human Rights Commission and Asian Pacific American Task Force community workshops and initiatives	Limit the number of workshop and new initiatives.
Consultation with departments on neighborhood communication/communication plans for specific projects and programs to ensure understandable and relevant messaging (e.g., Rockville Pike Plan, Rockville 2040, bridge replacement project, special events)	Continue to provide consultation on projects and initiatives with significant city wide reach and impact and limit or discontinue on smaller projects that impact subsets of the community.

<b>3.0 FTEs in the FY17 Proposed Budget</b>	<b>2.0 FTEs suggested on April 18</b>
Support neighborhood problem solving (e.g., CSX debris clean up behind the homes at Lewis Ave., Pepco tree trimming in Woodley Gardens, jay walking on Park Rd)	Forward neighborhood requests for assistance directly to the most appropriate department to take the lead in coordinating with neighbors.
Rockville University for Youth	This program has been on hold since the latest NRD vacancy and would be discontinued.
Spanish language Facebook	This program has been on hold since the latest NRD vacancy and would be discontinued.
<b>New Initiatives Proposed for FY17:</b>	
Implement the Mayor and Council Priority Initiative – Increase the city’s proactive outreach to diverse populations	Work is underway to develop a strategy and plan. Implementation of that strategy will be adjusted depending on staff resources.
Implement the Mayor and Council Priority Initiative – Review existing codes and policies based on the scoring of the Municipal Index done by the Human Rights Campaign and identify modifications to enhance LGBT non-discrimination	Proceed
Implement NextDoor to improve communication with and in our neighborhoods	This continues to be a high priority and will be implemented upon Mayor and Council approval. Implementation citywide will be adjusted depending on staff resources.
Neighborhood Ambassador program similar to existing block captain programs to increase resident engagement and improve information distribution	On hold