



Frederick County Council News

Mason Carter, District 5

MCarter@FrederickCountyMD.gov • 301-600-1034

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August in review:

After a brief pause for our annual summer recess, the County Council reconvened for regular public meetings on August 19th and 26th. These sessions marked a productive return to the chamber, allowing us to refocus on key priorities and continue the important work of serving our community.

Twice a year, in the summer and winter, the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo)—a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization representing all 24 counties—hosts a conference for county elected officials and staff. These gatherings provide a valuable opportunity to hear from expert panelists on the pressing issues facing county governments today. The sessions not only offer insight into policy and operational challenges but also allow leaders to learn how other counties are addressing similar issues, all with the shared goal of better serving our constituents. I had a great time attending this summer's conference, where I sat in on sessions focused on housing, permitting, and artificial intelligence—I learned a lot and left with new ideas to bring back to our community.

The Council recently considered numerous amendments to legislation establishing a Critical Digital Infrastructure Overlay Zone. After thoughtful discussion and productive debate, a majority of the Council voted in favor of a few amendments—most notably one that strengthens the bill's language to ensure the County Council *shall* consider proximity to schools, colleges and universities, daycare centers, healthcare facilities, and residential areas when evaluating proposals. Because the bill was amended, a second public hearing was held to give the community another opportunity to weigh in. I'm grateful to all the residents who took the time to attend and make their voices heard. Final action on the bill will be taken on September 2nd.

Following a workshop at a previous meeting, my amendment to the Rustic Roads Commission was officially submitted during the bill's "first reader." A "first reader" in Frederick County legislation marks the formal introduction of a bill, during which it is assigned a bill number, and the 90-day review window officially begins. If no action is taken within those 90 days, the bill automatically becomes void. This amendment is designed to streamline the board's processes and ensure it can more effectively carry out its important mission of preserving and managing Frederick County's network of historic rural roads. I look forward to working with the members of our council to pass this critical action.

As always, the public is invited to attend our meetings every Tuesday night at 5:30pm at Winchester Hall, located at 12 East Church Street in downtown Frederick. Your involvement and input help shape our County!

If you have any questions or I can be of service, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office by email at mcarter@frederickcountymd.gov.