Welcome to the Bowie Brief, our weekly newsletter about what’s going on in city government.

In This Week’s Update

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Bowie News

Bowie Police Host Virtual Town Hall Meeting for District 1 on December 16

The Bowie Police Department is hosting a virtual Town Hall meeting on Thursday, December 16 at 7 p.m. with the residents of District 1 to discuss crime trends in that area, and share information about patrols, how to prevent crime and protect your property, and how to contact the department. There will also be a Q & A session where residents can get their specific questions addressed. Register for this meeting on Zoom at https://bowie.fyi/impactdistrict1.

We encourage you to share the link and information with those who reside in District 1. Not sure what district you live in? Check out the City of Bowie district neighborhood list here.

Virtual Breakfast with Santa Broadcast

Kids, enjoy a Saturday morning Breakfast with Santa right on TV this Saturday, December 18, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m! There will be stories, a read aloud story, craft making, and we'll show how to make a festive breakfast. We’ve distributed our supply of premade craft bag supplies, but don’t worry! See below for instructions & supply lists to make these crafts at home!

- Gingerbread Person
- Jingle Sticks
- Melted Snowman Collage

The broadcast will air on this website at www.cityofbowie.org/viewevents, on Bowie Government TV (FIOS Channel 10 / Xfinity 71 & 996), or on the City’s YouTube channel.

Holiday House Decorating Contest Winners Will be Announced Soon
Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's holiday house decorating contest! As always, we were absolutely blown away by the artistry on display this year.

For those who would like to drive through the city and look at all of this year's entries, a list of all of our 2021 entries are available here.

We will be announcing this year's winners at an awards ceremony held on Monday, December 20, at 7 p.m. at City Hall (15901 Fred Robinson Way). We will also publish the winners' list on Tuesday, December 21 at www.cityofbowie.org/holidayhappenings.

Don’t Make it Easy for Criminals
The Bowie Police Department is seeing an increase in thefts from autos and in the number of vehicles being stolen. Please make sure that you are not making your car an easy target for criminals.

- Stay with your car while it warms up.
- Remove valuables from the car.
- Make sure you have your keys or key fob when you get out of your car.
- Lock it and then pull the handle to double check that it is really locked.
  (Remember -- if you leave a key fob in the car, it won't lock AND if your key fob is inside but still close to your vehicle, it may prevent the lock from engaging.)

Please share this information with friends and neighbors. View Chief Nesky's latest video message.

Videos from the City of Bowie

Upcoming Events
- Breakfast with Santa – There are no longer craft bags available.
- Santa Calling
- Bowie Police Virtual Town Hall for District 1
- Belair Mansion Holiday Tours

PSAs and Other Information
- Holiday Safety Tips from the Police Department
- City of Bowie Offices are Closed on Christmas Eve

Event Highlights
- City of Bowie Tree Lighting Ceremony (2 min)
- Bowie Police Town Hall for District 4 (1 hr 17 min)
- Bowie Police Town Hall for District 2 (1 hr 16 min)
- Bowie Police Town Hall for District 3 (1 hr 4 min)

View all our videos on Bowie's YouTube channel @cityofbowieMD

Fairy Tale Fun
Keep that holiday spirit going with a story and enjoy a hands-on craft for children ages 3 - 8 at the Belair Mansion on Wednesday, December 29 from 10 – 11 a.m. Parents must accompany their kids to the Mansion to take part in this free event. Be sure to register soon, because space is limited. For more information, contact Susan Proctor at 301-809-3089 or email sproctor@cityofbowie.org.

**Belair Mansion Elf Hunt for Kids**

Christmas elves have been spotted at Belair Mansion. Santa needs them back at the North Pole to help make Christmas presents for all the boys and girls. Kids, we need you to be our official elf spotters. Visit us at Belair Mansion, pick up your free official Elf Spotting Kit, and help us find those naughty elves. **This is the last weekend for the Elf Hunt**, so be sure to stop by before the elves head back to the North Pole! For more information, contact Susan Proctor at 301-809-3089 or email sproctor@cityofbowie.org.

Video: [Belair Mansion Holiday Tours](#)

**New Art Exhibit at City Hall**

Now through the end of February, visitors to City Hall can enjoy a new Winter Art show. The gallery features 30 works of art from 8 regional artists. City Hall is open Monday to Thursday 8:30 a.m. – 8 p.m. and Friday 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

**Student Art Contest Honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

The City of Bowie Diversity Committee is sponsoring the annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Art Contest for Bowie students. The theme for the 2022 contest is "More Than a Dream!". This theme is intended
to encourage students to reflect upon Dr. King’s life, philosophy, and impact on the Civil Rights movement and present-day America. View the contest flyer for details. The deadline to submit entries is December 27, 2021 at 5 p.m. Please visit the website at www.cityofbowie.org/mlk or contact Lori Cunningham at mlcunningham@cityofbowie.org or 301-832-7451.

Food Distribution Events around the County
Through the County’s Stand Up & Deliver program, groceries will be distributed to those in need, at the following locations:

**Friday, December 17, 12:30 p.m.**
- Faith Temple No. 2 Free Will Baptist Church – 211 Maryland Park Drive, Capitol Heights
- Turner AME Church – 7201 16th Place, Chillum/Hyattsville

**Saturday, December 18, 10 a.m.**
- United Baptist Church – 7701 Riverdale Road, New Carrollton
Job Openings
The City of Bowie is currently seeking candidates for the following positions:

December 31, 2021
• Communications Analyst I – City Manager’s Office

Open until filled
• Administrative Assistant – (Records) Police Dept.
• Entry Level Police Officer – Police Dept.
• Communications Specialist II – Police Dept.
• Transportation Specialist I & II – Planning Dept.
• Water Plant Trainee/ Operator – Public Works
• Project Manager – Public Works
• Solid Waste Collector/ CDL Class B – Public Works
• Streets Superintendent – Public Works [View video to learn more about this position]

Visit http://www.cityofbowie.org/jobs for details or to apply.

Calendar of Upcoming Events
Thursday, December 16
• Bowie Police Department District 1 Virtual Town Hall | 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Friday, December 17
• Santa Calling Entry Form Due | Entries due by 5 p.m.
• Magic Elf Hunt | 12 – 4 p.m.

Saturday, December 18
• Breakfast with Santa (Virtual) Broadcast | 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
• Magic Elf Hunt | 12 – 4 p.m.

Wednesday, December 22
• Virtual Bowie Senior Chorale Holiday Concert | 7 p.m.

Friday, December 24
• Christmas Holiday | All Day

Monday, December 27
• Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Art Contest Deadline | 5 p.m.

Wednesday, December 29
• A Very Merry Fairy Tale Fun at Belair Mansion | 10 a.m.
• Fairy Tale Fun | 10 a.m.

Friday, December 31
• New Year’s Day | 5 p.m.

Visit www.cityofbowie.org/calendar for details about other upcoming events sponsored by the City.
COVID CORNER

Recent developments on COVID are summarized below:

Vaccinations
The FDA has endorsed giving Pfizer booster shots to 16- and 17-year-olds. Maryland authorized pharmacies and other providers to begin administering shots to this age group on December 10.

Prince George's County has moved its public vaccination clinic to the student center at Prince George's Community College in Largo. Doses are no longer being distributed at the Sports and Learning Center in Landover. Appointments are preferred, but walk-ins will be accepted beginning next week.

Vaccinations are also available at pharmacies throughout the area, usually by appointment. To find a clinic, visit covidvax.maryland.gov or call the state's multilingual call center, available seven days a week, at 1-855-MD-GOVAX (1-855-634-6829).

Prince George's County Schools are also offering vaccination clinics at various schools over the next few weeks. The next clinic at a Bowie school is at Northview Elementary School (3700 Northview Drive) on December 27, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. (Second doses January 18, 3 – 7 p.m.) View the full PGCPS schedule.

Vaccinations are also available in Hyattsville this weekend for anyone age five and up. No appointment needed. No insurance required. Children under 18 must be accompanied by a guardian. Details at www.hyattsville.org/covidvaccine.

Saturday, December 18, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. & Sunday, December 19, 12 – 4 p.m.
First Methodist Church of Hyattsville
6201 Belcrest Road

Testing
Visit the Maryland coronavirus website to find a testing location near you.
At-home testing kits are being distributed at local libraries. Availability varies, as it is based on shipments received and demand. At-home tests may also be purchased online and at some local pharmacies.

**Variants**
The Delta variant is still by far, the dominant COVID variant in the US, representing approximately 96% of current cases. However, the Omicron variant spreads more quickly than Delta and already accounts for as much as 13% of the COVID cases in some parts of the country.

There is still much to be learned about Omicron. The [Omicron page on the CDC website](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/omicron.html) includes this information, which was last updated on December 15:

- **How easily does Omicron spread?** The Omicron variant likely will spread more easily than the original SARS-CoV-2 virus and how easily Omicron spreads compared to Delta remains unknown. CDC expects that anyone with Omicron infection can spread the virus to others, even if they are vaccinated or don’t have symptoms.

- **Will Omicron cause more severe illness?** More data are needed to know if Omicron infections, and especially reinfections and breakthrough infections in people who are fully vaccinated, cause more severe illness or death than infection with other variants.

- **Will vaccines work against Omicron?** Current vaccines are expected to protect against severe illness, hospitalizations, and deaths due to infection with the Omicron variant. However, breakthrough infections in people who are fully vaccinated are likely to occur. With other variants, like Delta, vaccines have remained effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalizations, and death. The recent emergence of Omicron further emphasizes the importance of vaccination and boosters.

- **Will treatments work against Omicron?** Scientists are working to determine how well existing treatments for COVID-19 work. Based on the changed genetic make-up of Omicron, some treatments are likely to remain effective while others may be less effective.

**Cases**
This week, Johns Hopkins University reported that COVID has now caused more than 800,000 deaths since the pandemic began. In Maryland, more than 11,000 individuals have died from COVID since early 2020.

Maryland has not reported positivity rates or case level data since its public facing system was hacked in early December. This means that we are not able to obtain and share information about COVID cases in Bowie. However, we do know that there are outbreaks at Bowie State University (BSU) and Benjamin Tasker Middle School (BTMS) in Bowie. The number of positive cases at BSU have prompted officials to switch from in-person to virtual final exams. Prince George’s Schools CEO Golson
announced yesterday that BTMS and two other schools in the county were canceling in-person instruction and reverting to virtual learning until the new year because of outbreaks. Despite the absence of zip code level data, both of these instances are evidence that the virus is active in Bowie and that residents should be taking measures to protect themselves.

**Hospitalizations**

State hospitalization data was not impacted by the cybersecurity incident. The number of individuals hospitalized in Maryland has been increasing over the last month and hospitals are nearing capacity limits in some cases. Hospital officials are reporting a rise in influenza cases, as well as increasing numbers of COVID-related hospitalizations. COVID hospitalization were at 525 on November 16 and are now at 1,167.

These increases have prompted the governor to institute new measures to address the problem. These measures were outlined in a [press release issued on December 15](#). They include use of alternate care sites for COVID patients, reducing elective surgeries that require overnight stays when COVID hospitalizations reach 1,200, and reinstituting hospital pandemic plans when the number of patients hospitalized with COVID reaches 1,500, which is projected to happen after the holidays or perhaps sooner.

**Prevention**

All eligible Marylanders are strongly recommended to get a COVID-19 vaccine, booster shot, and flu shot as soon as possible. Flu shots can be administered at the same time as a COVID-19 vaccine shot.

Getting vaccinated against the flu and COVID and getting your COVID booster dose when you are eligible remain the best ways of protecting yourself and preventing the spread of COVID.

Prince George's health officials advise that residents take these other measures to prevent infection:
- Comply with the Prince George’s County mandate, which requires that masks be worn indoors in retail establishments, offices, and other work environments, and in public buildings.
- Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds on both sides and between the fingers.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Avoiding people who are ill.
- Disinfect high-contact surfaces, such as doorknobs and tables.
- Maintain an appropriate distance from others.
- Remain home if you are feeling ill.

**Prince George’s County and Bowie Vaccinations**

The CDC vaccination data by county is based on the percentage of the eligible population.
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<tr>
<td>Total #</td>
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<td>% of Age 65 + Population</td>
<td>89%</td>
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The County’s COVID-19 vaccination clinic is relocating to Prince George’s Community College at the Largo Student Center with vaccinations resuming on
Thursday, December 16.

Prince George’s Community College - Largo Student Center
301 Largo Road
Largo, MD 20774

Hours of Operation:
Monday and Wednesday
9 AM - 7 PM
Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday
9 AM - 4:30 PM

Individuals with vaccination appointments at the Wayne K. Curry Sports and Learning Complex Sunday, Dec. 12 through Wednesday, Dec. 15 will be rescheduled to the new location.

Walk-ins are accepted but appointments are encouraged.

PLEASE NOTE...
Walk-ins will not be accepted on Thursday, December 16 and Friday, December 17.