
Introduction

This publication, *Somerset Resource Guide and Directory*, is designed as a convenient all-in-one resource for Somerset residents. The Resource Guide section will be updated as needed, and the Directory section will be updated every year. The Directory section was prepared by the Town staff, and the remainder of the publication was prepared by the Town's Communications Committee.

Section I, referred to as the Resource Guide, provides Town highlights, Town history, and general information on Town governance, available services, and special features of the Somerset community. Town residents are encouraged to access the Town's website at townofsomerset.com for more detailed information. **Section II** contains the resident directory.

Each family in Town receives one free copy. Additional copies may be purchased from the Town Hall for \$5.00 each. This publication will be sold to Town residents **only** and is not to be used for charitable or commercial purposes.

SECTION I: RESOURCE GUIDE

TOWN HIGHLIGHTS

We are a Tree City U.S.A. Somerset has been a Tree City for many years. We love our beautiful tree-lined streets and our well-established urban forest. Our trees protect our air quality, abate noise, mitigate stormwater runoff, and provide habitat for our wildlife. We share our home with roving platoons of deer, two or possibly three families of foxes, and perhaps even an elusive coyote, while rabbits munch contentedly on our lawns — and all too often on our roses and lilies. Above us we see and hear turkey vultures, two sorts of hawk, the Eastern wild turkeys unique to Maryland, barred owls exchanging hunting cries in the night, flocks of crows, and even that blue heron waiting motionless for lunch in Little Falls Branch. There is a kaleidoscope of garden visitors: blue jays, cardinals, the occasional oriole, catbirds, and a ceaseless myriad of sparrows and wrens. The Somerset we are privileged to see every day is home to so many more families than our own.

HISTORY

WHO WE ARE

Our Town motto is *“Where people and trees have deep roots and grow strong.”*

- We are a community of 1200-plus residents in 413 homes.
- Our Town has 4.2 miles of streets across 168 acres (0.28 sq. miles).
- We are the home of Somerset Elementary School and the Dolphins Swim Team.
- Our budget for the current fiscal year (2024) is \$1,804,469.

OUR BEGINNINGS

1890: Five Department of Agriculture scientists worked in the red brick mansion still standing in what used to be farmland in Norwood Park. They bought 50 acres of exhausted tobacco fields for \$19,000 (\$535,000 today). They were distinguished in their fields: Harvey Wiley, founder of the Food & Drug Administration, was one; another, David Salmon, is remembered in the name of Salmonella bacteria. The five founded the Somerset Heights Colony Company. They laid out a street grid — Dorset Avenue, Cumberland Avenue, Warwick Place, Surrey Street and Essex Avenue — and proposed “a suburb after the very pleasant ones of Boston...”

1891: Dr. Wiley built the first house, 4722 Dorset Avenue, near the corner at Surrey Street. His companions followed. Two of their five houses survive, both extensively renovated: 4722 and 4728 Dorset Avenue.

1900: The census recorded 170 residents, among them eight Black and two White live-in servants.

1905: When Somerset had grown to 35 homes, its residents applied to Montgomery County for municipal status.

1906: A charter was granted. The Town of Somerset was born. Its new Council approved a first budget: \$511 (\$17,000 today), mostly for maintenance and lighting of the dirt streets. The 54 houses built on the initial street grid are now recognized as a Historic District, with the surviving 31 built before 1913 given special status.

MILESTONES

1906: Somerset today is a multinational and multiracial community. Its earliest families, though, were not exempt from the prejudices of their day. Residents joined Friendship Heights in angry protests against a plan advertised by four Black investors to develop a suburb comparable to Somerset for “colored people,” stretching up the east side of Wisconsin Avenue as far as Grafton Street. The suburb was to carry the name of that tract of land, Belmont. Elbert Richmond, Somerset’s very new Town Marshal, twice arrested the principal investor; each time, a local justice of the peace released him. (The Belmont Project collapsed in 1909; Belmont’s name was subsequently expunged from Montgomery County property records.)

1913: The Town approved a sum “not to exceed \$10” (\$300 today) to build a bridge over Little Falls Branch. Children had to ford the stream on their way to school in rented rooms in Mr. Shoemaker’s house in Friendship Heights. Later, they went to Mrs. Givens’ school near Chevy Chase Circle. Parents took turns shepherding them.

1913: The Town’s first speed limit was established: 12 mph.

1917: The Department of Agriculture established a Bee Culture Station at 4823 Dorset Avenue. A surviving photograph shows at least three dozen sizable hives in the garden. Pioneering apiary research was done there, while Dorset Avenue residents endured occasional stings. The work moved to Beltsville in 1937.

1921: Women attained the right to vote in Town elections.

1924: The Town issued \$40,000 (\$593,000 today) in bonds to begin paving the streets. Somerset Women’s Club organized a Town Carnival to celebrate. (When paving was completed the next year, the speed limit rose to 15 mph.)

1926: The U.S. Postal Service agreed to deliver mail to individual addresses in Somerset.

1928: Edna Miller Gish became the first woman elected to the Council.

1928: Somerset’s first school opened on the old site of Joshua Callahan’s farm. The school had eight rooms and separate entrances for boys and girls. There were 138 pupils (most from outside Somerset), six teachers and a 25-year-old principal, Kathryne M. Bricker, who stayed for 37 years. When she retired, the Town gave her a trip around the world.

1940: The Town’s population had doubled to 399. After much debate, keeping cattle, horses, and pigs within the town was banned. Free-roaming chickens were banned two years later.

1943: The Philadelphia family, Bergdoll, which owned most of the land to the south of Somerset's initial street grid, applied to erect apartment blocks. So began a more than 40-year struggle to save Somerset from high-rises and from commercial development along our side of Wisconsin Avenue.

1946-1947: Rebuffed, the Bergdoll family sold 115 acres south of Essex Avenue in four auctions. Successful bidders had to sign pledges to sell houses only to "those of the Caucasian race" (although "partial occupancy...by domestic servants" was to be allowed). What Somerset children called "the great woods" were slowly felled, and the street plan of Lower Somerset took shape: Falstone Avenue, Grantham Avenue, Trent Street, Uppingham Street, and Greystone Street.

Through the 1950s: After the 1946-1947 sales of land that became Lower Somerset, a final 30 acres running down to Friendship Heights remained open fields. Somerset waged an epic legal battle to preserve these, by blocking all efforts to have the land zoned for commercial development. The Hecht Company was forced to abandon plans for a department store there; The Yater Medical Clinic abandoned its plans as well.

1950: The U.S. Census (whose details were released in 2022) recorded 429 residents in 129 houses. Only 15 residents were born in Maryland; others came from elsewhere in the U.S. and from 21 foreign countries (four diplomatic families among them). Several Somerset wives were pursuing their own careers: among them were two physicians, an economist, a journalist, and a celebrated sculptor. Only three people of color were recorded: one cook and three maids, all Black.

1954: Philip Elman, of Cumberland Avenue, wrote the government's brief in the historic *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* case, when the Supreme Court ordered school desegregation "with all deliberate speed" (Elman's phrase). Elman was an attorney in the Department of Justice's Office of the Solicitor General, which takes the lead in government litigation before the Supreme Court. He had been an editor of the Harvard Law Review and had clerked for Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter.

1955: In the name of desegregation, Montgomery County shut River Road School. Since 1912, this had been the sole source of education (elementary only) for local Black children, many of whose families had their homes in what is now Kenwood. The two-room schoolhouse, built in 1926 to replace a 1912 wood hut, was where the tall radio mast rises now behind McDonalds. Displaced, several of the children came to Somerset Elementary, its first Black students.

1957: The first edition of the Town Journal was published. Its editor was Washington Post columnist Hobart Rowen.

1960: The Town's population, propelled by the development of Lower Somerset, had grown to 1,444.

1961: Somerset School's first Black teacher, Shirley Gordon, arrived. She taught 2nd and then 1st grades. Ms. Gordon moved on in 1966.

1963: Recognizing that ongoing actions to block the development of the final 30-acre expanse bordering Lower Somerset could not succeed indefinitely, Somerset's then-mayor Warren Vinton proposed to accept an offer from the developers. Somerset would get 12 acres of the land, primarily woodland along Little Falls Branch, but also acreage for a swimming pool. The developers would build three big apartment blocks on the remaining 18 acres. By now, though, lawyers representing Friendship Heights and Chevy Chase were involved. The resulting legal maze was so tangled it was another 21 years before the deal could go through.

1965: The Town purchased the "Little Red House" at 4510 Cumberland Avenue to serve as a Town Hall. Built in 1902, the house aptly fits our historic Town.

1966: Friendship Heights' first high-rise block was erected, the 17-story Irene on Willard Avenue, looming over Warwick Place and Uppingham Street.

1971: Somerset Pool opened – built on five acres that then-Mayor Jerald Goldberg persuaded the developers to cede even though the 1963 deal was still in legal limbo.

1977: Somerset worked to shore up its Wisconsin Avenue boundary, buying the rectangle between Dorset and Cumberland Avenues. Its name, Capello Park, honors James Capello, the Town's Clerk-Treasurer from 1940-1976.

1981: Somerset finally secured its boundary. With much help from the State Board of Public Works, the Town bought the 1.79 acre plot on the southern corner of Dorset and Wisconsin Avenues.

1984: In January, decisions by the Maryland Court of Appeals brought to a close the decades-long zoning battle, the longest in Maryland's history. Mayor Vinton's deal could finally go through. The developers could start to construct their apartment blocks. The 12 acres of woodland Somerset got in return were named Vinton Park in his honor.

1988: The first speed bumps were laid on Dorset and Cumberland Avenues.

1988: As the first of three Somerset House high-rise apartment blocks was going up, Town residents feared their occupants would, by sheer numbers, come to control our Town Council. In a referendum, they voted four-to-one to “de-annex” those acres, redrawing Somerset’s new southern boundary to straddle Little Falls Branch.

1989: A major windstorm toppled many trees, downed overhead power lines, damaged dozens of houses, blocked the Dorset Avenue and Cumberland Avenue entrances to the Town, and caused a six-day power outage.

1997-8: A survey by parents found that of the school’s 391 students, 121 came from 45 foreign countries.

2003: After multiple additions and renovations — 1949, 1951, 1958, 1971 — the old Somerset Elementary School building was finally demolished, to be replaced by the present structure.

2006: Somerset celebrated its centennial with trolley-bus tours of the historic district, tours of historic houses and banners on our streetlights.

2012: The pool got a new pool house. Its open and airy design won the architects numerous awards.

2019: The Town began multi-year structural renovations of our beautiful but aging Town Hall. Ties were installed to bind its bulging exterior walls. First-floor offices were updated, and the big meeting room was illuminated by tall windows. In what had been an attic, a new second floor now housed an office for the Mayor, plus a room for the Town’s archives.

2020: Somerset rallied its community spirit to cope with coronavirus. There were community mask-making efforts, drive-by celebrations of graduations and birthdays, virtual Town Council and committee meetings, Zoom candidate forums, mail-in ballots, and a virtual Fourth of July celebration.

2020: The U.S. Census gave Somerset a snapshot of who we have become:

- **Multinational:** one in six of our residents is foreign born, of whom just under half have chosen to become U.S. citizens. One in six residents speaks a language other than English in their homes.

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- **Multiracial/multiethnic:** While predominantly White, our residents include 102 who describe themselves as of “mixed race,” 43 select Asian, 19 select Black, and two are from Pacific islands; 94 select Hispanic or Latino as their ethnicity.
 - **Well-educated:** more than nine in ten adults have a bachelor’s degree or higher; two-thirds have gone on to earn a graduate or professional degree.
 - **At work:** One in five adults works in Federal, state, or local government; the same proportion works in the non-profit sector; one in five runs their own business. Close to a third work from home.

2023: Somerset residents voted to lower the voting age for Town elections to 16, and the Town Council created the Somerset Youth Council for high school students in grades 9 through 12. The goal of the Council is to give Somerset’s youth the chance to have a real impact on the community, to learn about local government, and to have a voice in shaping our Town’s future.

2023: Somerset launched a new and much improved website and established its social media presence on the Town of Somerset website, the Town Pool website, Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), Threads, LinkedIn, YouTube and Nextdoor. Other platforms would follow.

TOWN HONOREES

Somerset has thrived thanks to the efforts of so many of its residents. The community has a tradition of recognizing those who have made special contributions by naming features of the Town in their honor.

- Mayor **Warren Vinton** and Clerk-Treasurer **James Capello** were the first to be noted, with Vinton Park and Capello Park.
- A plaque at the pool commemorates Mayor **Jerald Goldberg**, who oversaw construction of the pool on land he helped to acquire.
- **Walter Behr**, Somerset’s longest-serving Mayor, marshalled the effort to exclude Somerset House high-rises from the Town’s boundaries. Walter Behr Path runs, fittingly, alongside the Town Hall, and commemorates his three decades as Mayor. In addition, remembering Mayor Behr’s passion for tennis, our courts also bear his name.
- A plaque on the bench by the pool commemorates **Alan Proctor**, who as a Council member energetically oversaw, among other advances, the design and building of our new pool house.

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- **Judy Frankel's** long service on the Council is remembered in the Town Hall's archive room.
 - **Barbara Zeughauser's** and **Franny Peale's** work on restoring our Town Hall is commemorated in its main meeting room.
 - **Marnie Shaul's** years as a Council Member and Council President are honored by Marnie Shaul Path. Winding up from the pool to Friendship Heights, the path symbolizes Marnie's tireless work connecting Somerset to our neighboring communities.
 - Two benches have been donated in memory of Somerset residents. First, on the corner of Wisconsin and Dorset Avenues, is a bench dedicated to **Hobart & Alice Rowen**. Second, on Dorset Avenue near the Founder's Exhibit, is a bench dedicated to **Tarunica V. Dehejia**.

GOVERNMENT

Since 1906, Somerset has been an incorporated town led by a Mayor and Town Council. The Mayor is elected for a two-year term, oversees the ordinances and regulations governing the Town, and serves as the administrative head of Town government. The Town Council consists of five members who are elected at large for staggered two-year terms. The Council approves the annual budget and all contracts, reviews and approves building permits, and makes laws. Somerset is served by a variety of committees comprised of Town residents. Additionally, Town Council members represent the Town on local and county boards and committees.

All Somerset residents 16 or older are eligible to vote in Town elections. All residents 18 or older are eligible to run for office.

The Town Council meets on the first Monday of each month except when this date falls on a holiday and another date is set. The preliminary agenda for each monthly meeting is published in the Town Journal. The final agenda is sent out by email prior to the meeting and is provided on the Town website. Agendas, and background materials prepared for the Council Members on the agenda items, and the minutes from the meetings are posted on the Town's website at https://townofsomerset.com/government/council_agendas__minutes.php. Links to recordings from Zoom Council meetings can be found there as well. In addition, recordings from Zoom Council meetings can be found on the Town's Youtube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/@townofsomerset>). All residents are welcome to attend the Council and Committee meetings.

Somerset has many committees which focus on a broad variety of Town issues and interests. The Mayor establishes the committees and appoints members and committee chairs, subject to the Council's approval. The committees usually have five to nine members of which one is the committee chair. In addition, each year the Council agrees on Council Member liaison and alternate assignments to the committees. The committees have official agendas that are developed by the chairs and sent out by email by the Town Manager before the meetings. Two committees, the Board of Supervisors of Elections and the Audit Committee, are in the Town's Charter.

FEDERAL, STATE, AND COUNTY OFFICIALS

GOVERNOR

Wes Moore

410-974-3901

<http://governor.maryland.gov/contact-the-governors-office/>

LT. GOVERNOR

Aruna Miller

410-974-2461

lt.governor@maryland.gov

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Anthony G. Brown

410-576-6300

oag@oag.state.md.us

COMPTROLLER

Brooke E. Lierman

410-260-7801

mdcomptroller@marylandtaxes.gov

U.S. SENATORS

Benjamin L. Cardin

202-224-4524

www.cardin.senate.gov

Chris Van Hollen, Jr.

202-224-4654

www.vanhollen.senate.gov

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE 8TH DISTRICT

Jamie Raskin

202-225-5341

<https://raskin.house.gov/>

STATE SENATOR: DISTRICT 16

Ariana B. Kelly

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STATE DELEGATES: DISTRICT 16

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COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc B. Elrich

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TOWN OF SOMERSET OFFICIALS**MAYOR**

Jeffrey Z. Slavin

202-549-2299

mayor@townofsomerset.com

TOWN COUNCIL

council@townofsomerset.com

TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

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TOWN MANAGER

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DEPUTY TOWN MANAGER

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deputy@townofsomerset.com

TOWN ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Linda Williams
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town@townofsomerset.com

TOWN COMMITTEES AND MEMBERS *(The Committee Chair is listed first.)*

Audit: *All positions vacant*

Board of Supervisors of Elections: Sherry Bindeman Kahn, Jim Berry, Kirsten Khanna, Greg Locraft, Susan Puritz

Budget: Ann Bolten, Jon Medalia

Communications: Leslie Caplan, John Barry, Cinzia Furlanetto, Ilene Heller, Joanne Steller

Environment: Barton Rubenstein, Ivar Andersen, Patty Friedman, Cinzia Furlanetto, David Kathan, Yogesh Rajkotia, Ralph Wooden

Equity and Inclusion: (Chair vacant), Fayez Choudhury, Kirsten Darling, Jill Herscot, David Sacks, Soching Tsai, Clara Weiss

History and Archives: (Chair vacant), Patricia Barry, Donna Harmon, David Kathan

Newcomers: Phyllis Wiesenfelder, Maya Hyman, Alan Kaplan, Kathryn Schwartz, Ayasha Williams-Sharon

Parks and Natural Resources: Josh Rosenthal, Patty Freidman, Rob Hyman, Kelly Swain

Pool: Matt Zaft, Debbie Berger, Barbara Condos, Hali Edison, Alexis Ettinger, Russell Green, Nate Hurst, Cathy Pickar, Walt Whalen

Public Safety: Kumar Vaswani, Lucy Freeman, Steve Friedman, Archana Gregersen, George Wyeth

Revenue: Nick Fox, John Barry, Kris Garin, Anne Hawkins, Sloane Hurst

Swim Team: Dario Fuentes, Ann Bolten, Gayle Horn, Michael Roark, Kenny Rovak, Kelly Swain, Matt Zaft

Tennis: Carrie Wofford, Mary Barton-Dock, Matt Fink, Frank Joseph, Jim Losey, Abby Nolan, Steve Shapiro, Kathryn Williams

Traffic: (Chair vacant), Sherry Khanna, David Liebovitch

YOUTH COUNCIL: Peter Kumar (Grade 11), Ari Peters (Grade 11), Pierpaolo Baldassari (Grade 10), Aubrey Green (Grade 10), Sara Guinand (Grade 10), Kalman Levitin (Grade 10), Tabitha Cutler (Grade 9), Zoe Gibson-Johnson (Grade 9)

SOMERSET REGULATIONS

PERMITS

Permits are required for:

- Installing or replacing exterior components for HVAC systems and generators;
- driveway replacements;
- any construction, including fences and walls; and
- tree removal. A Town of Somerset permit is required for removal of any trees on private property that are four inches (4") or more in diameter as measured four and one half feet (4.5') above the average surrounding ground. **No permit is required for tree pruning on private property.** However, residents are not allowed to prune the Town trees lining our streets. Tree contractors must have a Maryland tree expert license number. The Town has its own arborist for the oversight of Town trees. Contact the Town Hall for more information. Detailed information on planting and removal of trees can be found on the Town's website. If a tree falls down because of a storm, please contact Mayor Slavin or the Town Manager.

This is not a complete list of permit requirements. A complete list, permit application forms, related explanatory information, and a fee schedule are available on the Town's website. For any permit questions, contact the Town Hall.

NOISE CONTROL REGULATIONS

Construction noise is restricted to 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. weekdays, and 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Saturdays and holidays. No exterior construction is permitted on Sundays.

Gas-powered leaf blowers are not permitted. Noise from lawnmowers, electric leaf blowers, chain saws and similar equipment is permitted only from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekdays and from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on weekends. In case of severe noise problems, call the Town Hall. After business hours, call the Mayor's cell phone.

PETS/ANIMALS

- All dogs must be exercised on leashes, even when jogging with their owner. Dogs are not allowed on school property. Cats are not permitted to roam off owners' property. Pets may not run loose on Town land. (Somerset follows the Montgomery County Code regarding pets.) Owners are responsible for cleaning up after their pets or risk County fines. Excessive barking is against the law and should be reported to the Town Hall.
- For any threatening situation or animal cruelty in progress, including a dog locked in a hot car, call **911**.
- For dead animal pickup, call **311** during business hours.
- For urgent and non-urgent animal issues, including a loose animal, cases of animal neglect, injured animals and defecation or odor complaints, contact Office of Animal Services at **301-279-8000**.
- To report a lost pet, call Montgomery County Animal Services & Adoption Center at **240-773-5900**.
- For additional information on Montgomery County's laws on such issues as unwanted noise, animal trespassing, and unwanted contact, please refer to the County's website at **<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/animalservices/asd/laws.html>**.

RIGHT-OF-WAY AND OVERGROWN VEGETATION

The Town Code prohibits plant growth on a resident's private property from extending into the right-of-way in such manner that interferes with pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Please ensure that any structure, wall, fence, tree, hedge, shrubbery, or any other plant growth located on private property adjoining a right-of-way is maintained in such a manner and at such height that a clear and unobstructed view of the right-of-way is available to pedestrians and vehicular traffic.

COUNTY SERVICES

POLICE OR FIRE DEPARTMENT

If you see something suspicious, or if there is an emergency situation, call 911 for police, fire, or ambulance service.

Social services, schools, courts, building inspections, and planning and zoning services are provided by Montgomery County. In addition to Montgomery County's regulation, the Town has separate regulations for buildings and renovations.

TOWN SERVICES

REFUSE, RECYCLING AND GARDEN WASTE

- Household refuse, recyclables, and garden waste are collected **every Tuesday**, unless Christmas, New Year's Day, or July 4th fall on that day. Pickup may also be delayed because of inclement weather. In either case, pickup will occur the following day (Wednesday).
- If you have a problem with refuse collection or recycling, call **Goode Trash Removal at 240-278-2698 to speak with Miguel Saavedra**, the Operations Manager who oversees Somerset's collections.
- Cuttings, grass and leaves must be in paper bags or reusable containers. Branches may be included or bundled and must not exceed 4' in length or 4" in diameter.
- Recyclables, including commingled paper, plastic (except plastic bags and number 6 plastics), metal, glass and cardboard should be placed in a blue bin. Check the Town's website to view the Recycling Guide or obtain a copy at the Town Hall.

Composting: Food scraps, meat, dairy, grains, egg shells, paper napkins and much more will be picked up and composted by The Compost Crew. To sign up for this service, contact them at <https://customers.compostcrew.com/create-account/> or call **301-202-4450**. There is no registration fee, and you will receive an air-tight 5-gallon bin. There is a \$4.00 monthly charge for a 12-gallon bin on wheels. **Pick-ups are every Tuesday, unless public holidays fall on a Monday, in which case pick-up will slide to Wednesday.**

Special Trash Collections: The Town provides four special pickups during the spring and fall for large household items that are not acceptable for regular collections. The Town frequently partners with A Wider Circle or other charitable organizations for pickups of usable items.

SNOW REMOVAL

The Town is responsible for removing snow from public sidewalks when accumulation is two inches or more, and for plowing the streets. Residents are urged to keep cars off streets to facilitate plowing. Residents may make arrangements with private contractors or individuals for help clearing driveways or walkways.

LEAF COLLECTION & REMOVAL

The Town contracts with a local company, Wray Brothers Landscapes, which provides curbside leaf pickup throughout the fall (roughly mid-October through mid-December. Exact dates vary depending on the weather and leaves). During this heavy leaf season, residents can simply rake their leaves to the curb, and Wray Brothers will come through the Town to pick them up. There is no set schedule – leaf pickup trucks come through the Town daily and prioritize areas that have accumulated leaf piles. Please do not rake leaves into the street or block sidewalks. Bagged leaves continue to be picked up throughout the season on Tuesdays as part of regular trash pickup.

OUR COMMUNITY

TOWN EVENTS

Earth Day Celebration: Somerset recognizes Earth Day each year with an event to celebrate the natural environment.

Fourth of July Celebration: Each year on July 4th the Town hosts an event for residents at the Town Hall. Weather permitting, residents usually have picnics and organized games on the lawn. There is in

addition a formal program in which residents, especially children, and local officials participate.

Newcomers' Welcome: Each September, the Town hosts a party to welcome new residents. Everyone in Town is invited.

Dog Swim: On the last day of each pool season, a dog swim is held at the Town Pool — one of the Town's most anticipated happenings!

Nonagenarians' Party: Every September, the Town hosts the Ice Cream Social for Nonagenarians and their spouses at the pool.

Community Service Programs: Each year, usually in November, the Town organizes a community service day held at the Town Hall. Non-perishable food items and coats are collected. There is also a Toys for Tots campaign during the holiday season.

Brown Bag Lunches: The Mayor invites Town residents to informal quarterly brown bag lunches with Council Members.

SOMERSET BACK TO SCHOOL CLASSIC RACE

This race along the roads in and around Somerset — 8k for committed runners, 2k for those just along for the fun — is typically held each October. The race, which has been held every year since 1988, is a fundraiser for Somerset Elementary and managed through the school.

HELPING HAND

Helping Hand assists Somerset residents with rides to doctors, business/social appointments, or shopping, when they cannot make it on their own. There are over 30 volunteers in this group.

Residents should email HHSomerset@gmail.com or call Barbara Zeughauser at 202-368-9986, Kathleen Kenyon at 301-651-0758 or Jim Berry at 240-994-3939 to make a reservation for their help.

TOWN POOL

Located at 5545 Warwick Place, the pool is open from mid-May through early fall. The pool may be used only by Town of Somerset residents and their guests. Registration for residents is at no cost; a fee of \$4.00 is required per guest per day. This must be pre-paid on the Pool website, <https://townofsomerset.membersplash.com>. Rules about the use of the pool and the picnic area are available at the Town Hall, on the website and at the pool. Private parties may be held at the pool for a fee. Contact the Pool Manager at **301-951-1141** or consult the Town's website for more information.

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- **Somerset's swim team**, the Dolphins, competes in the Montgomery County Swim League (MCSL). The team is open to any Town of Somerset resident ages 6-18 who can pass the deep-water test (swimming two lengths of the pool in any manner and treading water for 1 minute). The Minis Learn To Swim program is open to residents ages 4-7. For more information about the Dolphins or the Minis, please contact Ann Bolten, Team Operations, at 206-972-3255 or annkelly411@gmail.com. You can also visit the team's website at www.somersetdolphins.com to learn more.
 - **Water aerobics classes** are held Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings mid-June through August, and are conducted by enthusiastic, experienced, and certified teachers. A minimal fee is required. Contact Lucy Freeman at dorset4708@yahoo.com for more information.
 - **Early morning swim sessions** are held from 7:15 a.m. to 8:15 a.m. There are 12 slots open (two swimmers per lane) for two different groups:
 - Group 1: Monday, Wednesday, Friday
 - Group 2: Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday

The cost to participate is \$100 per participant. Residents can sign up using a link that will be sent out by the Town Manager approximately two weeks prior to the Pool opening. The slots will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis, and there are no drop-ins/guests allowed. Contact the Town Manager with any questions.

ADDITIONAL RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Town Tennis Courts, Cumberland Avenue: Yearly tennis cards can be purchased at the Town Hall. A family membership costs \$25. Court reservation rules are posted at the courts and are available on the Town's website. Residents seeking a coach or a Town partner can contact the chair of the Tennis Committee at carrie.wofford@gmail.com

Basketball Court, Cumberland and Wisconsin Avenues: Open to the public year-round; no reservation required. The basketball courts located at Somerset Elementary are not open to the public.

Town Communications

The Town uses a variety of means to keep its residents informed about Town activities, policies, issues under deliberation by the Mayor and Town Council, events, and initiatives in surrounding neighborhoods.

Among the Town communication methods are:

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- **Town Journal:** *The Somerset Town Journal*, published monthly, is the Town's official means of communication, covering the actions of the Mayor and Town Council, news of committees, issues, events, features about residents, and classified ads. The Journal is available online and in print. Contact Editor Leslie Caplan (**LeslieCaplan.townjournal@gmail.com**) for information. Guidelines for article submissions can be found on the Town website.
 - **Town Email Announcements:** These are sent out by the Town Manager every Friday to residents who have provided their email addresses to the Town Hall. These emails serve as official notices about Town business, such as street cleaning and closures, leaf collection, tree removal, Town Hall events, pool news, etc. Additional email notices are sent out on an as-needed basis.
 - **Website:** The Town's website, **townofsomerset.com**, provides comprehensive information on Town government, services, permits, community facilities, and events. Residents may apply for permits on the website and pay online for pool guest fees.
 - **Social Media:** The Town of Somerset maintains accounts on the following platforms, where it provides information on Town events and other information: Facebook, Instagram, Threads, X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, LinkedIn, Bluesky, Mastodon, and Nextdoor. (See *inside back cover for more information.*)

ADDITIONAL LOCAL RESOURCES

- Town residents have access to a privately-run, community-driven listserv (**somerset-list@groups.io**) for posting personal announcements and exchanging information. For more information regarding this listserv, contact Somerset resident Sarah Morse at **morsekathan@gmail.com**. This listserv is privately maintained and not affiliated with the Town of Somerset. Residents wishing to communicate with Town officials should email the Council directly at **council@townofsomerset.com**, or the Town staff at **town@townofsomerset.com**
- **Alert Montgomery:** Montgomery County has an emergency alert system that provides emergency notifications on school status (closures, delays, cancellations), weather, infrastructure issues, and severe traffic issues. Alerts are delivered to designated cell, work, or home phones via text, email, or voice message. See **<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/oemhs/alertmontgomery/>**

NOTARIES

Caroline Cooper

4918 Cumberland

301-652-5845

Carolinecooperesq@gmail.com

(Available on evenings and weekends only with an advance appointment. Contact via email.)

Esther Finkelstein

5527 Surrey

301-928-6090

Esther@fglawfirm.com

Matt Trollinger

301-657-3211

manager@townofsomerset.com

(Please call ahead)

Local Schools

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is Maryland's largest school system and the sixteenth largest of the 12,000-plus school districts nationwide. It oversees 209 schools: 137 elementary schools, 40 middle schools, 27 high schools, 5 special schools, plus two early learning centers and other alternative programs.

Enrollment in 2022-2023 was 160,554 students from 164 countries, speaking 184 languages. MCPS transports them daily in 1,268 buses. Its 2024 operating budget is \$3.165 billion. The website is ***www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org***

- Somerset Elementary School **240-740-1100**
- Westland Middle School **301-320-6515**
- Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School (B-CC) **240-740-1100**