

KENSINGTON

TOWN OF KENSINGTON CHEVY CHASE VIEW FOREST GLEN

Boundaries: **North:** University Blvd., Decatur Ave.; **East:** Georgia Ave., Wheaton Plaza; **South:** Capital Beltway; **West:** Rock Creek

Almost synonymous with antique dealers clustered along Howard Avenue, historic **Kensington** is a railroad town originally known as Knowles Station; the commercial area grew around a Baltimore & Ohio Railroad station built to serve 19th-century developer George Knowles (rhymes with “moles”). Though modern strip malls line the main drag of Connecticut Avenue, the historic district by the railroad tracks is rivaled only by Old Town Alexandria as the best “antiquing” area inside the Beltway.

The incorporated **Town of Kensington** has a thriving civic scene, with lots of parades and community events and good-natured contested elections. Politically a left-leaning community, Kensington is the western end of a suburban granola belt that winds through Takoma Park to Mt. Rainier and Berwyn Heights. The south part of town is officially the incorporated village of **Chevy Chase View**.

The name “Kensington” is also applied loosely to the unincorporated area between the town and Wheaton, including the hilly enclave of **Forest Glen** along Capitol View Avenue. (Sorry, no Capitol views from here in this century.) Take a wrong turn and you might find yourself in a strange, semi-abandoned storybook village with a Dutch windmill, Swiss chalet, Japanese pagoda and other specimens of far-flung architecture: the campus of the old Forest Park Seminary, originally a 19th-century resort, later a women’s school. The campus was last used as a convalescent home for wounded World War II veterans. Now, after years of neglect, the complex is being renovated as a unique housing development.

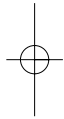
To the west of the seminary, looming over the south side of Kensington proper, is an even more unusual edifice: the Washington Mormon Temple, a white marble fortress crowned with tall golden spires. On an overcast night, the temple actually reflects enough light to illuminate the clouds.

Web Site: www.tok.org, www.chevychaseview.org

Zip Codes: 20895, 20902

Post Office: Kensington, 10325 Kensington Pkwy.

Police Station: Bethesda District, 7359 Wisconsin Ave. (commander), 301-279-8000 (Community Concerns Line)



Emergency Hospitals: Suburban Healthcare System, 8600 Old Georgetown Rd., Bethesda, 301-896-3100; Holy Cross, 1500 Forest Glen Rd., Silver Spring, 301-754-7000

Library: Kensington Park, 4201 Knowles Ave., 301-897-2211

Public High School: Albert Einstein, 11135 Newport Mill Rd., 301-929-2200

Government: 8th Congressional District; Montgomery County Council District 5; mayor and four-member town council: Town Office, 3710 Mitchell St., 301-949-2424. Chevy Chase View town council, 301-949-9274.

Neighborhood Festivals: Founders Day (May); Town Picnic (June); Labor Day parade and Paint the Town art show; Kite Festival (October). Contact the Town Office for details.

Major Park: Rock Creek (points of access off Knowles Ave.)

Community Resources: *Town Armory* community building, 3710 Mitchell St., available for rent, 301-949-2424. *Forest Park Seminary* grounds usually open for self-guided tours; for information, contact Save Our Seminary at 301-589-1715 or www.saveourseminary.org. *Washington Mormon Temple* visitors center and grounds (see **Places of Worship**).

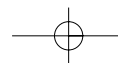
Public Transportation: MARC: Kensington (Brunswick Line); Metrobus routes L7/L8 (Connecticut Avenue); Ride On routes 5 (Silver Spring, Twinbrook), 6 (Wheaton, North Bethesda), 7 (Wheaton), 33 (Glenmont, Medical Center), 34 (Wheaton, Medical Center)

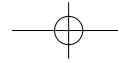
ROCKVILLE

FALLSMEAD TWINBROOK

Boundaries: **North:** Gude Dr.; **East:** Rock Creek Park; **South:** Montrose Rd.; **West:** Lakewood Country Club, Watts Branch Stream Valley Park

The **City of Rockville** is dominated by a little cluster of office towers housing county government offices, and north of downtown Rockville, light industrial sites line the railroad tracks. “Downtown” begins at the north end of the Rockville Pike commercial strip stretching south to Bethesda. “The Pike” here becomes Hungerford Drive, the city’s main street—not the pedestrian-friendly kind, but a busy six-lane thoroughfare. In residential **Fallsmead** to the west, and in **Twinbrook**, south along Veirs Mill Road, plain postwar colonials, ramblers, and split-levels made of brick and siding line the winding streets and culs-de-sac of stable neighborhoods. The prices are good as long as you’re not too close to the tracks or the constant hum of traffic on I-270, the Pike, or Veirs Mill Road.





Rockville is the population center and county seat of the most affluent county in Maryland, and the city's clout in state politics is almost equal to Baltimore's. Not surprisingly, Rockville attracts a government-related crowd—contractors, lobbyists, and ambitious lawyers. Rockville, like most of the Maryland suburbs, is overwhelmingly Democratic, but there's always a referendum or ballot initiative to keep things divisive. From May to November in even-numbered years, campaign signs bloom like weeds in front of many homes.

Web Sites: www.rockvillemd.gov, www.rocknet.org

Zip Codes: 20850, 20851, 20852

Post Offices: Rockville, 500 North Washington St.; Courthouse Station, West Montgomery Ave. & South Washington St.; Pike Station, 143 Rollins Ave.; Twinbrook Shopping Center, 2001 Veirs Mill Rd.

Police Stations: Rockville City Police, City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., 301-309-3100; Montgomery County Police Department, Rockville District, 1451 Seven Locks Rd., 301-279-1591 (commander), 301-279-1992 (Community Concerns Line)

Emergency Hospitals: Shady Grove Adventist, 9901 Medical Center Dr., 301-279-6000

Libraries: Rockville Regional, 99 Maryland Ave., 240-777-0140; Twinbrook, 202 Meadow Hall Dr., 240-777-0240

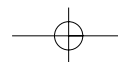
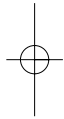
Public High Schools: Richard Montgomery (International Baccalaureate magnet providing European-style curriculum), 50 Richard Montgomery Dr., 301-279-8400; Thomas S. Wootton, 2100 Wootton Pkwy., 301-279-8550

Government: 8th Congressional District; Montgomery County Council District 3; mayor and 4-member city council: City Hall, 301-309-3000

Neighborhood Festivals: Rockville's Hometown Holidays (Washington St. & Middle Lane, May) and Spirit of Rockville (Civic Center Park, September), 301-309-3330

Major Parks: Civic Center Park/Norbeck Gardens (Edmonston Dr. off Baltimore Rd.); Rock Creek (points of access off Norbeck Rd. and Avery Rd.); Upper Watts Branch (off Nelson St.)

Community Resources: *Civic Center Park*, off Edmonston Dr. in the northeast corner of the city, includes the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre; historic Glenview Mansion, which houses an art gallery and ballrooms available for weddings and other private functions; and acres of woodland park along tributaries of Rock Creek. For more information, call 301-309-3001 or www.rockvillemd.gov. The *Rockville Little Theater Company*, 301-340-1417 or www.rlt-online.org, is based at the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre. The Civic Center also houses the Rockville Civic Ballet, Community Chorus, Brass Band, Concert Band, and a Dixieland



jazz band. The *F. Scott Fitzgerald Literary Conference* is held every fall at the Rockville campus of Montgomery College; for information, call 301-309-9461 or visit <http://peerlessrockville.org/FSF>. The *Musical Theater Center at Wintergreen Plaza*, 837-D Rockville Pike, 301-251-5766, www.musicaltheatercenter.org, offers classes in acting, dance, music, and stagecraft for children and adults; two companies in residence perform here and on stages around Washington. *Rockville Arts Place*, 100 East Middle Lane, 301-309-6900, offers classes, camps, exhibits, studio space, and a shop selling works by local artists and craftspeople. *Suto Dance Studio*, 4511 Bestor Dr., 301-871-1000, offers classes in a variety of dance disciplines and skill levels.

Public Transportation: Metro: Rockville and Twinbrook (Red Line); MARC: Rockville station (Brunswick Line); Metrobus routes: Q1/Q2 (Veirs Mill Rd.), Y7 (Norbeck Rd.), and T2 (Falls Rd.); Ride On routes: 48-52 (Olney), 44-47 & 54-59 (local)

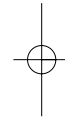
SILVER SPRING

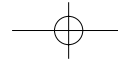
Boundaries: **North:** Dennis Ave., Columbia Pike; **East:** Prince George's County; **South:** District of Columbia, Takoma Park; **West:** railroad tracks, 16th St.

Silver Spring is the name applied loosely to most of southern Montgomery County east of Connecticut Avenue. A real estate listing for Silver Spring might turn out to be half an hour's drive north on U.S. Route 29, in the middle of nowhere, but usually the name refers to downtown Silver Spring—a distinct commercial area capping the northern tip of D.C.—or the postwar suburbs along Sligo Creek.

Downtown Silver Spring, as the home of the American Film Institute and the Discovery Communications family of educational cable channels, is emerging as the capital of the documentary film industry. Many production companies and aspiring filmmakers set up shop here in the nonfiction equivalent of Hollywood. The downtown skyline also features the huge headquarters of the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration—the folks who fly research planes into hurricanes. There are apartment towers, too, taller than those allowed in the District.

The AFI and Discovery brought retail and nightlife back to a languishing older suburb. Beloved independent local restaurants hang on against new competition from trendy chains. Commuters eat at Red Lobster; locals go to Crisfield's, a venerable seafood favorite at the busy corner of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road. Commuters go for grilled panini at Panera Bread; locals go to the vintage Tastee Diner at Georgia and Cameron Street





for a “short stack,” Key Lime pie, or fries smothered in brown gravy. (In 2000, by popular demand, this 1950s institution was saved from a wrecking ball—the whole diner was physically moved from its original location a few blocks away.) Up Georgia Avenue, near the north end of 16th Street, is Woodside Deli, another classic—crusty rye bread, pastrami, and matzo ball soup, as if transplanted straight from Baltimore. Locals and weekend crowds alike come to shop at Fresh Fields, Borders Books & Music, and Strosnider’s hardware store. Up Georgia a few blocks, City Place mall is the only outlet mall inside the Beltway.

The Silver Spring Metro station is a major transit hub. Dozens of Ride On and Metrobus lines converge here, just a few blocks from a MARC/Amtrak stop and a Greyhound station. The free VanGo circulator bus makes a loop through the downtown business district every few minutes.

The Blair Towns townhouse complex at 16th Street & Colesville Road is the first housing project in the Washington area to earn LEED certification (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) from the U.S. Green Building Council. The certification is based on energy efficiency, recycled building materials, and a transit-friendly location.

The residential neighborhoods flanking Sligo Creek Park are quintessential suburbs: detached houses built just after World War II, with front and back yards, on tree-lined streets, with lots of kids running around. Most of the houses are colonials, split-levels, and ramblers, but east of Northwest Branch and Columbia Pike there are several pockets of big, stately houses with loop driveways.

If the locals catch you saying “Silver Springs,” they’ll know you’re fresh off the turnip truck—unlike the city in Florida, there’s only one silver spring here. (It’s in a park near the NOAA complex, and was named for the shiny flecks of mica in the water.) But the Downtown Silver Spring Business District is fond of hanging banners that say “Silver Sprung,” as part of the ongoing campaign to keep “u” in Silver Spring.

Web Sites: www.silversprung.com, www.silverspringcenter.com

Zip Codes: 20901, 20902, 20910

Post Offices: Silver Spring, 8616 Second Ave.; Aspen Hill, 14030 Connecticut Ave.; Colesville, 13217 New Hampshire Ave.; Forest Glen, 2460 Linden Lane, 301-295-7594; Silver Spring Centre, 8455 Colesville Rd.; Woodmoor, 110 University Blvd. West

Police Station: Silver Spring District, 801 Sligo Ave., 301-565-7744

Emergency Hospital: Holy Cross, 1500 Forest Glen Rd., Silver Spring, 301-754-7000

Libraries: Silver Spring, 8901 Colesville Rd., 301-565-7689; Long Branch, 8800 Garland Ave., 301-565-7585



Public High Schools: James Hubert Blake (fine arts magnet), 300 Norwood Rd., 301-879-1300; Montgomery Blair (science and communications magnets), 51 University Blvd. East, 301-649-2800; Springbrook, 201 Valley Brook Dr., 301-989-5700

Government: 5th Congressional District; Montgomery County Council District 5

Major Parks: Nolte (points of access off Dale Dr. south of Wayne Ave.); Sligo Creek (points of access off Colesville Rd., Wayne Ave., and Piney Branch Rd.); Woodside (Georgia Ave. and Spring St.)

Community Resources: American Film Institute/AFI Silver Theater & Round House Theater (see **Cultural Life** chapter). *National Capital Trolley Museum* preserves the memory of street railways in Washington and offers rides in vintage streetcars: 1313 Bonifant Rd., 301-384-6088, www.dctrolley.org. *Silver Spring Shared Community ArtSpace* is used by a variety of performing arts organizations and individual performers; at City Place, 8661 Colesville Rd., 301-589-1091.

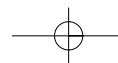
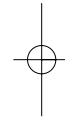
Public Transportation: Metro: Silver Spring (Red Line); MARC, Silver Spring station (Brunswick Line); major bus system hub served by 26 Metrobus routes and 19 Ride On routes

TAKOMA PARK

LANGLEY PARK

Boundaries: North: Sligo Ave., Piney Branch Rd., University Blvd.; **East:** 14th Ave., New Hampshire Ave.; **South:** District of Columbia; **West:** Chicago Ave.

In the Birkenstocks-and-incense community of **Takoma Park**, the two-party system is Democrats and Greens. City government here boycotts the nuclear industry (so you won’t find GE lightbulbs in schools or libraries) and companies that do business in Burma (so no Pepsi machines in municipal buildings). Legal aliens who own or rent homes here are allowed to vote in municipal elections and serve on the city council or school board. In addition, the city has won awards for its recycling efforts and tree conservation, and has been given the nickname “Azalea City” for the colorful bushes that bloom in many front yards in late spring. A thriving food co-op and farmers’ market meet the huge demand for natural and organic food, and the neighborhood eateries along Carroll Avenue—an authentic neighborhood main street—are careful to provide vegetarian and vegan selections. Many residential streets have “speed humps” (much bigger than speed bumps, residents explain) to keep traffic from endangering cyclists, pedestrians, and children at play.



The town didn't develop its hippie reputation by accident. Takoma Park was built in 1883 as a planned community, and the Seventh-Day Adventist Church—whose adherents are mostly vegetarian—became one of the first and biggest landowners here. With an Adventist hospital, college, bookstore, and churches here, Takoma Park naturally featured some of the Washington area's earliest health food stores, and the Woodstock generation settled here in search of silken tofu and veggie burgers. The town has always been on the leading edge of gay liberation, and many same-sex couples raise families here. Occasionally, a letter to the editor in the *Takoma Voice* reminds residents that there are a few conservatives in town, but most residents don't mind the affectionate references to their community as the "People's Republic of Takoma Park."

In 2005, Takoma Park became the first jurisdiction to adopt instant-runoff voting in local elections. Now, instead of choosing one candidate for mayor, city voters can rank each candidate in order of preference; if no candidate wins a majority of first-choice votes, the second-choice votes are counted. The system is intended to discourage negative campaigning—because candidates will not want to alienate opponents' supporters and lose second-choice votes. (For a complete explanation, contact the Center for Voting & Democracy at 301-270-4616 or www.fairvote.org—a national organization based, not coincidentally, in Takoma Park.)

Except for a few boxy apartment high-rises along Maple Avenue, Takoma Park's hilly, winding streets are lined with nice houses in varied styles: cozy bungalows, clapboard Victorians, and duplexes or big cottages that have been broken up into apartments. Annual building inspections ensure that landlords (and tenants) keep their rental units in good shape. Shaded with mature trees, the typical block is charming; in the spring and summer many yards burst with colorful blooms, particularly forsythia and azaleas. Some homes have tidy little watch-pocket yards, while others have Sligo Creek Park for a backyard.

Takoma Park straddles the original line between Montgomery and Prince George's counties; until 1996, the town government had to deal with courts, police departments, fire marshals, and other agencies in two counties. With hard-won permission from the state legislature, the town held a referendum on "unification" and voted to join Montgomery County.

Takoma Park has its own city police department and a fairly low crime rate, but the huge Salvadoran gang MS-13 is not unknown here. Crime and gang activity is a bigger concern across University Boulevard in **Langley Park**, in apartment complexes politely described as "affordable housing" and strip malls dominated by liquor stores.

The heart of Langley Park, the corner of University Boulevard and New Hampshire Avenue, is an inhospitable place to walk—it's notorious for

pedestrians getting hit by cars—but if you're driving, it's a good place to shop for international groceries. It's mostly Latino (in particular Salvadoran, Honduran, Dominican), but it's also the home of Udupi Palace, 1329 University Boulevard East—always crowded with U of M students and Indian immigrants clamoring for the cheap, authentic vegetarian Indian fare and the carryout dessert counter.

Web Site: www.takomaparkmd.gov

Zip Code: 20912

Post Office: Takoma Park, 6909 Laurel Ave.

Police Station: Municipal Building, 7500 Maple Ave., 301-270-8724 (routine) or 301-270-1100 (emergency); or call 911 and the dispatcher will refer the call to municipal police based on the address

Emergency Hospital: Washington Adventist, 7600 Carroll Ave., Takoma Park, 301-891-7600

Libraries: Takoma Park, 101 Philadelphia Ave., 301-270-1717 (municipal library; nearest county library is Long Branch, 8800 Garland Ave., 301-565-7585)

Public High School: Montgomery Blair (science and communications magnet), 51 University Blvd. East, Silver Spring, 301-649-2800

Government: 5th Congressional District; Montgomery County Council District 5; mayor and six-member city council: Municipal Building, Philadelphia & Maple avenues, 301-270-1700

Neighborhood Festivals: Jazz Festival (Takoma Ave. & Fenton St., May); Folk Festival (Municipal Building and grounds, September); Takoma Park Street Festival (along Carroll Ave., October); see **A Washington Year** for details. Also Fourth of July parade (Maple Ave.).

Major Parks: Long Branch (along Long Branch between Wayne Ave. and New Hampshire Ave.); Sligo Creek (points of access off Maple Ave., Piney Branch Rd., and Park Valley Rd.)

Community Resources: *Institute of Musical Traditions* sponsors a concert series and special events, call 301-587-4434 or visit www.imtfolk.org. The Institute is a spinoff of the House of Musical Traditions, 7040 Carroll Ave., 301-270-9090, www.hmtrad.com. "HMT" sells hard-to-find instruments, recorded music and related books and videos from around the world, and provides referrals to local music teachers. A *Tool Library* run by the Department of Housing & Community Development provides city residents with free access to hand and power tools; for more information, call 301-589-8274.

Public Transportation: Metro: Takoma (Red Line); Metrobus routes: 52-54 (L'Enfant Plaza), 62 (Georgia Ave.), F1/F2 (Cheverly), K2 (local); Ride On routes: 12-16 & 24/25 (local)