



Season's Greetings



VOL. 3, NO. 12

DECEMBER 2024

## MESSAGE FROM MAYOR KEITH R. SYDNOR



The holidays are fast approaching, bringing cold weather and plenty of cheer! Check the City's events calendar to find activities that will keep you busy and warm with events all around the City of Laurel.

I'm proud to share that on November 7, 2024, at the Maryland Municipal League Fall Conference, the City of Laurel was honored at the Sustainable Maryland Awards Ceremony with Silver-level certification. This achievement, earned by completing sustainability-related actions worth 400+ points, reflects the hard work of our Green Team-comprising of residents, community leaders, staff, and officials, and our community partners. Together, we're paving the way for a greener future!

As the season changes, don't forget to prepare for winter weather. Visit our website for tips and resources to ensure you, your family, and your property are ready for the snow and cold. **Happy Holidays to you and your family!**

## MARYLAND SECRETARY OF THE ENVIRONMENT VISITS LAUREL!

The City of Laurel was recently graced with a visit from Maryland Secretary of the Environment, Serena McIlwain, and her team after a year's worth of conversations with Sustainable Manager, Michele Blair!

On November 21, 2024, elected officials and City staff gathered inside the Laurel Municipal Center in anticipation of the Secretary's arrival, which just happened to coincide with the City of Laurel receiving a Silver-level designation from Sustainable Maryland at the MML Fall Conference earlier this month.

Secretary McIlwain entered the Chambers with a radiant smile, greeted by a gathering of City Officials, employees, and committee members, along with pictorial storyboards that illustrated Laurel's sustainable journey over the years.

Mayor Keith R. Sydnor and City Administrator Christian Pulley welcomed Secretary McIlwain and once seated, Sustainable Manager Michele Blair expressed gratitude to Secretary McIlwain for visiting Laurel to witness the innovative ideas being implemented to maintain Laurel's green and sustainable future.

She then introduced Mayor Sydnor, who thanked the Secretary for acknowledging

Laurel's commitment to the environment. Mayor Sydnor stated, "As Mayor, I can now empower City staff to enact legislation, create community outreach programs, and excel at leading us into the next phase of our evolving, sustainable community."



Following Mayor Sydnor's remarks, he invited Secretary McIlwain to the podium. She noted that Laurel is often mentioned in her discussions about the environment, highlighting the City's leadership. She remarked, "When cities like yours step up and start thinking creatively and innovatively, using your ingenuity to find ways to make it happen...you all are setting the example for Maryland."

After her supportive comments, Ms. Blair and Mayor Sydnor took Secretary McIlwain on a pictorial journey around the chambers to showcase Laurel's sustainable achievements and future initiatives.

The highlight of the morning? Parks and Recreation Director Bill Bailey demonstrated Laurel's electric lawn maintenance equipment. Secretary McIlwain was so impressed by the use of electric power that she hopped onto the electric riding mower and took it for a spin!



A heartfelt thank you to Secretary McIlwain for her encouraging words, and we look forward to a strong partnership with Maryland to ensure a healthy environment!

## LAUREL CITIZENS UNIVERSITY CLASS OF 2024 GRADUATES!



ongoing partnership with our community, and we are excited to see where their newfound knowledge leads them in future endeavors! Congratulations LCU Graduates!

The City of Laurel proudly celebrates the Laurel Citizens University (LCU) Graduating Class of 2024! Beginning on October 3, 2024, 19 residents dedicated eight Thursday evenings to engage with each City Department, gaining insights into their functions and the services they offer to the Laurel community. This journey culminated at the Mayor and City Council meeting on November 25th, where each graduate received a plaque in recognition of their achievement. Several alumni have already stepped up to volunteer, and one has been appointed by Mayor Sydnor to the Planning Commission! Thanks to their involvement and valuable suggestions, we anticipate a promising and





# It's Easy Being Green!



## GREEN HAPPENINGS IN LAUREL!

### Sustainability Plan Launch Party!

The Sustainability Plan is in its final organizational stages and the City of Laurel is excited to have you join us for its launch next year! Details in the graphic and date and location below. See you then!

WHEN: January 30, 2025, 6:00pm

WHERE: Joseph R. Robison

Laurel Municipal Center, Council Chambers  
8103 Sandy Spring Road

**Organics Recycling!!!** Public Works crews will continue to deliver composting carts to select neighborhoods throughout the City. Residents can expect to receive: a kitchen countertop container; educational information; a refrigerator magnet; and a roll of compostable bags, along with the locking outdoor cart! The information provided makes it easy for residents to sort out what can go into their compost carts, it's that easy! All foods, even expired products, paper napkins/paper towels and pizza boxes are just some examples of what can be put in your composting cart. Remember – loose leaves and grass clippings are also acceptable in your curbside compost cart. Don't want to wait?! Sign up using the online form at [cityoflaurel.org/composting](http://cityoflaurel.org/composting) and Public Works will deliver a full kit to your home. We want to improve the program and get feedback from residents on what they would like to see, so please send an e-mail to [greenliving@laurel.md.us](mailto:greenliving@laurel.md.us). Based on your feedback, we now have smaller kitchen countertop containers and are introducing a smaller curbside cart!

Want to get the most recent information about the City's sustainability initiatives? Follow us on Facebook at @SustainableLaurel. This is a place where we can share ideas, highlight upcoming events and residents can stay informed on all things Sustainable. Also check out the new look of the Green Living web page at [www.cityoflaurel.org/greenliving](http://www.cityoflaurel.org/greenliving)!



### Our Voice, Our Future

City of Laurel Sustainability Plan

## You are Invited!

### Sustainability Plan Launch Party!

The City of Laurel invites the community to review and learn about the City's **first Sustainability Plan**. Laurel residents participating in the Focus Groups and other outreach initiatives were an integral part of the Plan development, and we invite you to be a part of unveiling the final Plan.

**Thursday, January 30th, 2025**

**Starts at 6pm**

**Joseph R. Robison**  
**Laurel Municipal Center**  
**Council Chambers**

**8103 Sandy Spring Road**  
**Laurel, MD 20707**

**Michele Blair, Sustainability Manager**  
[greenliving@laurel.md.us](mailto:greenliving@laurel.md.us) / 301-725-5300  
[www.cityoflaurel.org/1783/Sustainability-Plan-Our-Voice-Our-Future](http://www.cityoflaurel.org/1783/Sustainability-Plan-Our-Voice-Our-Future)

- Learn about the Plan, and how it was created by and for the City of Laurel Residents
- Engage with City representatives about Plan implementation
- Participate in activities to engage with Plan material under the four Pillars: **People, Peace & Partnership, Planet, and Prosperity**

People

Planet

Peace & Partnership

Prosperity

### Newly Approved Property Tax Credit!



Recently the City of Laurel City Council passed legislation aimed at improving community support and governance.

A newly approved Property Tax Credit for Prince George's County School Employees will provide financial relief to educators and school staff residing within the City limits. This initiative underscores

the City's commitment to supporting those who play a critical role in shaping the future of local students.

Additionally, the Council has completed a rewrite of the Council Standing Rules. The updated rules aim to enhance efficiency, transparency, and collaboration in legislative processes, ensuring smoother governance and better communication with residents.

These initiatives reflect the Council's ongoing efforts to address community needs and strengthen Laurel's civic framework.

### ¡Crédito fiscal sobre la propiedad aprobado recientemente!

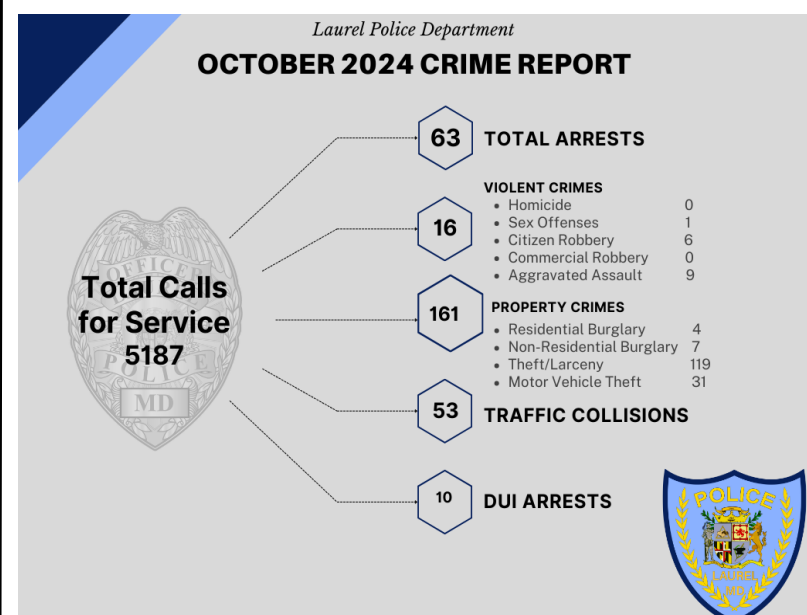
Recientemente, el Ayuntamiento de la ciudad de Laurel aprobó una ley destinada a mejorar el apoyo y la gobernanza de la comunidad. Un crédito fiscal a la propiedad recientemente aprobado para los empleados de las escuelas del condado de Prince George proporcionará un alivio financiero a los educadores y al personal escolar que residen dentro de los límites de la ciudad. Esta iniciativa subraya el compromiso de la ciudad de apoyar a quienes desempeñan un papel fundamental en la formación del futuro de los estudiantes locales.

## LAUREL POLICE MONTHLY CRIME REPORT

OCTOBER 2024

List of Laurel Police Crime Reports  
can be found at

[www.cityoflaurel.org/LPD-Crime-Reports](http://www.cityoflaurel.org/LPD-Crime-Reports).



# Laurel Council Connections

## Legislation

Listed below are recent actions taken by the Laurel City Council. For further information on any of these actions, please feel free to contact the Office of the City Clerk at 301-725-5300 x2120 or at [clerk@laurel.md.us](mailto:clerk@laurel.md.us). For the full agendas, visit [www.cityoflaurel.org](http://www.cityoflaurel.org).

### Adopted Legislation:

- **Ordinance No. 2035** - amending the General Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program for FY July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025 and to provide an effective date.
- **Resolution No. 4-2024** - to approve the rewrite of the Council Standing Rules.

### Closed Sessions:

- **Adjournment to Closed Session on Nov. 13th under the Open Meetings Act Provisions Section 3-305 (b)(7)** to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice regarding Property Standards and Section 3-305 (b)(13) to comply with specific constitutional, statutory or judiciary imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular matter or proceeding or matter.
- **Adjournment to Closed Session on Nov. 25th under the Open Meetings Act Provisions Section 3-305 (b)(3)** to consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto in order to protect the Mayor and City Council's bargaining power and **Section 3-305(b)(7)** to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice regarding the potential purchase of real property.

### Bid Recommendations:

- **Municipal Phone System Upgrade** - Department of Information Technology

### Purchase Requisitions/Fleet Acquisitions:

- **Curbside Composting Supplies** - Sustainability Management
- **Emergency Bearcat Vehicle** - Laurel Police Department
- **TYMCO 435 Street Sweeper** - Public Works
- **Street Crack Sealer** - Public Works

### Appointments/Reappointments:

- ♦ Tiara Matthews - Education Advisory Committee (11/25/24 - 11/25/26).
- ♦ Rubama Patwary - Laurel Arts Council (11/25/24 - 11/25/26)
- ♦ Roy Smith, II - Planning Commission (11/25/2024 - 11/25/2029)

### Election of Council President & President Pro-tem

- ♦ Council member Kyla Clark - President
- ♦ Council member Jeffrey Mills - President Pro-tem



## In 2025, Let's Make Volunteerism Thrive!

Jump onboard the Volunteer Train in 2025 and go online to fill out the volunteer application today at [www.cityoflaurel.org/volunteering](http://www.cityoflaurel.org/volunteering) or scan the QRCode above! Check out the list of volunteering options on our web site, and get a front-row seat to the City of Laurel volunteering extravaganza!



## Government Meetings (Dates and Times Subject to Change)

### December 2024 Mayor and City Council Meetings

- ♦ December 9th - Virtual Mayor and City Council Meeting (6pm)
- ♦ December 23rd - In-Person Mayor and City Council Meeting (CANCELLED)

### December 2024 Boards and Commissions

- ♦ December 10th - In-Person Planning Commission (6pm)
- ♦ December 17th - Virtual Historic District Commission (6pm)
- ♦ December 19th - In-Person Board of Appeals (6pm)

### January 2025 Mayor and City Council Meetings

- ♦ January 8th - Virtual Mayor and City Council Work Session (6pm)
- ♦ January 13th - Virtual Mayor and City Council Meeting (6pm)
- ♦ January 27th - In-Person Mayor and City Council Meeting (6pm)

### January 2025 Boards and Commissions

- ♦ January 14th - Planning Commission (6pm)
- ♦ January 21st - Historic District Commission (6pm)
- ♦ January 23rd - Board of Appeals (6pm)
- ♦ January 28th - Master Plan Committee (6pm)

## City Announcements & Events (Dates and Times Subject to Change)

- ♦ **Employee Holiday Party - December 13th - City/Passport Offices Close at 1:00pm.** Please plan your business with the City accordingly.
- ♦ **Photos with Santa - December 23rd - 4 - 5:30pm** at Partnership Activity Center, 811 5th Street. Free event co-sponsored by LARS.
- ♦ **Holiday Free Indoor Movie - December 23rd - 6:00pm** at Partnership Activity Center, 811 5th Street, "The Grinch"
- ♦ **Christmas Holiday - December 25th - City/Passport Offices Closed.** Trash/Recycling/Composting Collections will be adjusted that week. Visit, [www.cityoflaurel.org](http://www.cityoflaurel.org) for details.
- ♦ **New Year Day Holiday - January 1, 2025 - City/Passport Offices Closed.** Trash/Recycling/Composting Collections will be adjusted that week. Visit, [www.cityoflaurel.org](http://www.cityoflaurel.org) for details.
- ♦ **Christmas Tree Collections starting January 8, 2025** - Remove all decorations and place trees where you normally place refuse (DO NOT put in plastic tree bag). Recommended you call Public Works at 301-725-0088 for collection so trees won't be missed.
- ♦ **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday and Day of Service - January 20, 2025 - City/Passport Offices Closed.** Visit [www.cityoflaurel.org](http://www.cityoflaurel.org) for details. And keep checking our web site and social media for details about this year's Dr. King Day of Service event! Details Coming Soon!
- ♦ **Free Indoor Friday Flick - January 24, 2025 - 7:00pm** at Partnership Activity Center, 811 5th Street. "Paw Patrol Movie"
- ♦ **Teen and Adult Trips and Classes** - If you have a teen between the ages of 13 and 18 or are an adult over 18 years of age, check out the Parks and Recreation Winter Brochure! Visit [www.cityoflaurel.org/159/Parks-and-Recreation](http://www.cityoflaurel.org/159/Parks-and-Recreation) for details!
- ♦ **Senior Services Trips and Events** - Laurel Senior Services has great trips and local events for our 55 and over group. Call 301-776-6168 for details.





CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE. PLACE ON YOUR REFRIGERATOR

**DPW@laurel.md.us**