

VOLUME 4, NO. 12

DECEMBER 2025



# THE LAUREL LEDGER



OFFICIAL NEWS FROM THE CITY OF LAUREL, MARYLAND

## LAUREL CITY COUNCIL: THRIVED IN 2025!



It has been a productive year for the Laurel City Council! In preparation for the 2025 General Election, the Council adopted several amendments to the City's election laws to ensure that voting in the City of Laurel remains fair, transparent, and as accessible as possible. Visit <https://www.cityoflaurel.org/193/Legislation-and-Executive-Orders>.

The Council also introduced and passed legislation updating and clarifying the City's Organics Composting Program. Ordinance No. 2037 was adopted on July 28, 2025.

Additionally, Ordinance No. 2040, the City of Laurel's Elderly and Veteran Tax Credit Program, was adopted on March 24, 2025. Amendments were made to remove the time limit for eligibility and to clarify the property value ceiling.

The City's General Election for all five (5) City Council seats was held on Tuesday, November 4, 2025. On Monday, November 24, 2025, Mayor Keith R. Sydnor administered the oath of office to the following newly elected Councilmembers: Bencis D. Smith - Councilmember, At-Large; James Kole - Councilmember, Ward 1; Adrian G. Simmons - Councilmember, Ward 1; Kyla M. Clark - Councilmember, Ward 2; and Jeffrey W. Mills - Councilmember, Ward 2.

Following the swearing-in ceremony, the new Council elected returning Councilmember Bencis D. Smith as President. President Smith appointed Councilmember Adrian G. Simmons to serve as President Pro-Tem. The City Council wishes everyone a Happy Holiday Season and looks forward to serving the residents of Laurel in the coming months!

## HOW TO FIND WHAT'S HAPPENING IN LAUREL...

One of the most common questions we encounter is, "We didn't know this was happening! How can we find out about all the programs and events you offer?" The City of Laurel actively shares information about upcoming events across various platforms. To help you stay informed, here's a clear outline of how you can stay in the know:

- Website:** The City's calendar, available at [www.cityoflaurel.org](http://www.cityoflaurel.org), is an excellent resource for discovering local happenings. If you have an upcoming event, please email your flyer or information to [ckoubek@laurel.md.us](mailto:ckoubek@laurel.md.us). Additionally, you can receive notifications via email and text when new items are added to the calendar or website. Simply visit [www.cityoflaurel.org/list.aspx?Mode=Subscribe#calendar](http://www.cityoflaurel.org/list.aspx?Mode=Subscribe#calendar), select the items you'd like to be notified about, and they will appear in your email or texts as they are posted!
- Newspaper:** The Laurel Independent is delivered to homes within the City of Laurel and in select neighborhoods outside the city limits. Within this publication, you'll find the Laurel Ledger, your go-to source for all things Laurel! If you're reading this now, you're already receiving it!
- Social Media:** Many of our Departments are active on platforms like Facebook, X, Instagram, and YouTube. To stay informed, be sure to follow or like the following accounts: [@LaurelIPD](https://www.facebook.com/LaurelIPD), [@LaurelMaryland](https://www.facebook.com/LaurelMaryland), [@LaurelParksandRec](https://www.facebook.com/LaurelParksandRec), [@LaurelCityOEM](https://www.facebook.com/LaurelCityOEM), [@LaurelECD](https://www.facebook.com/LaurelECD), [@LaurelMarketonMain](https://www.facebook.com/LaurelMarketonMain), and [@LaurelSustainability](https://www.facebook.com/LaurelSustainability).
- Digital Signs:** Keep an eye out for digital signs located in front of various City facilities and parks, which showcase both City events and events from local non-profits.



Regardless of how you obtain your information, it's essential to stay updated! If you have any suggestions on how we can improve the way we share information with residents, please don't hesitate to reach out. You can call us at 301-725-5300 ext. 2109.

## 2025 LAUREL CITIZENS UNIVERSITY GRADUATES!

On November 24th, the City proudly celebrated the 2025 graduation of its fourth class of residents and business workers during the Mayor and City Council meeting! Thanks to the residents for their engagement and enthusiasm for the program!



This 8-week program empowers participants to gain a deeper understanding of how each Department in their local government operates. Through active participation and engagement with staff, residents and businesses become familiar with the purpose, processes, and structure of the City of Laurel government. Sessions are offered at no cost and include all course materials, a graduation ceremony, a class photo, and a diploma upon successful completion of the program. This program takes place every Fall, beginning in October. Be sure to check our website and social media around August 2026 when registration opens. Congratulations to our 2025 graduates!

Page 1



# It's Easy Being Green!

## SUSTAINABILITY YEAR IN REVIEW!



**Our Sustainability Year in Review!** Join us on December 18th, 6:00 - 8:00pm, at the Joseph R. Robison Laurel Municipal Center to hear about our sustainability progress from the City and community. During the meeting, we will review the Sustainability Plan, will hear from residents about our successes, learn about new initiatives like Native Plants Landscaping for Stormwater runoff, and you can give us ideas on what you want us to focus on next. If you are interested in participating, we will be forming additional focus groups to work on specific actions highlighted in the Plan! All are welcome! Bring your ideas for 2026 and let's keep the momentum going! Refreshments will be served, so please **RSVP by December 12th** to [mblair@laurel.md.us](mailto:mblair@laurel.md.us). To learn more, please contact us at [greenliving@laurel.md.us](mailto:greenliving@laurel.md.us). And a big thank you to everyone that filled out our short survey! It will help give us a better idea of how you, the residents, want us to keep you up to date on City events and programs!

Questions about organics recycling? **Recycle right!** Check out the Green Living Resource Page and Recycle Coach app at [www.cityoflaurel.org/green](http://www.cityoflaurel.org/green), and follow us on our Facebook page, @SustainableLaurel. This is a place where we can share ideas, highlight upcoming events and residents can stay informed on all things Sustainable. We've been working hard to update our pages, so make sure to stop by and find out how you can be sustainable, how our neighborhoods are doing on our new dashboard and find the resources you need to continue composting right!



**New Resource Guide in 2026!** We are trying something new! Look for the **2026 Guide to Services: Sustainability and Public Works**, where you will find in-depth information about how to recycle right, best practices for organics diversion, monthly event reminders and much more!

**Don't forget to "Tree-cycle!"** Once the holidays are over, reminder to tree-cycle your Live Christmas tree by placing them at the curb by 7:00am every Wednesday throughout January for recycling. Your tree will be tree-cycled into a variety of new products, like mulch, compost, or animal bedding. Remember to remove all decorations, icicles, lights, wire, tree skirts, stands and nails. And if you plan on tree-cycling, DON'T use fake snow on your tree or we won't be able to accept in January. DO NOT place your tree in a plastic bag, use an old sheet to take your tree outside, place it at curb and remove the sheet.

There is so much you can do to help make Laurel a Sustainable community! If you have any questions or need some guidance, email us at [greenliving@laurel.md.us](mailto:greenliving@laurel.md.us)! Thank you for helping us make 2025 a Green year!



## AYUNTAMIENTO DE LAUREL: ¡PROSPERADO EN 2025!

¡Ha sido un año productivo para el Ayuntamiento de Laurel! En preparación para las Elecciones Generales de 2025, el Ayuntamiento adoptó varias enmiendas a las leyes electorales de la Ciudad para garantizar que la votación en Laurel sea justa, transparente y lo más accesible posible. Además, presentó y aprobó legislación que actualiza y clarifica el Programa de Compostaje Orgánico de la Ciudad. La Ordenanza No. 2037 se adoptó el 28 de julio de 2025.

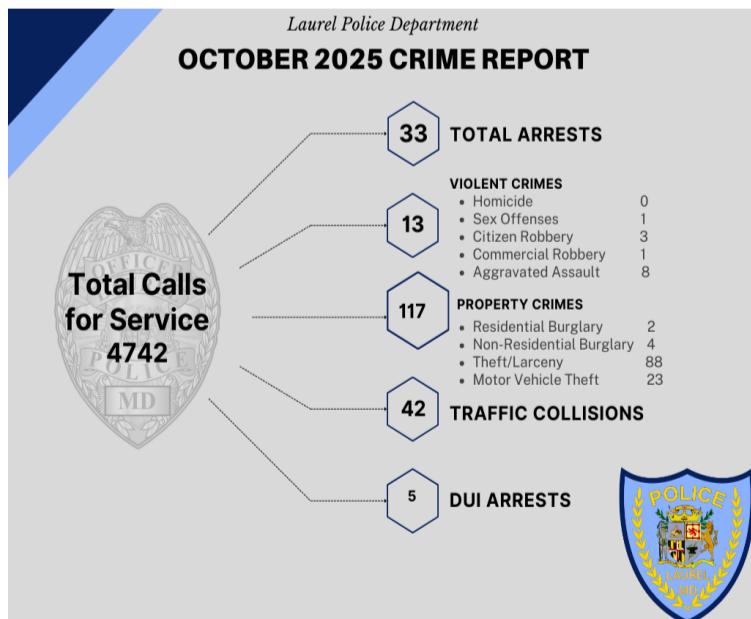


Las Elecciones Generales de la Ciudad para los cinco (5) escaños del Ayuntamiento se celebraron el martes 4 de noviembre de 2025. El lunes 24 de noviembre de 2025, el alcalde Keith R. Sydnor juramentó a los siguientes concejales recién elegidos: Brencis D. Smith, concejal general; James Kole, concejal del Distrito 1; Adrian G. Simmons, concejal del Distrito 1; Kyla M. Clark, concejal del Distrito 2; y Jeffrey W. Mills, concejal del Distrito 2.

¡El Ayuntamiento les desea a todos unas Felices Fiestas!

## LAUREL POLICE MONTHLY CRIME REPORT OCTOBER 2025

List of Laurel Police Crime Reports can be found at [www.cityoflaurel.org/1896/LPD-Crime-Reports](http://www.cityoflaurel.org/1896/LPD-Crime-Reports).



# Laurel Council Connections

## Legislation

Listed below are recent legislative actions taken, if any, by the Laurel City Council during the past month of Mayor and City Council meetings. For further information on any of these legislative actions, please feel free to contact the Office of the City Clerk at **301-725-5300 x2121** or at [clerk@laurel.md.us](mailto:clerk@laurel.md.us). For full agendas, visit [www.cityoflaurel.org](http://www.cityoflaurel.org).

### Adopted Legislation:

- Ordinance No. 2051** - to amend the General Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program of the Mayor and City Council of Laurel, Maryland, for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, and to Provide an Effective Date.
- Resolution No. 9-2025** - to approve and authorize the Purchase of 114 and 122 Lafayette Avenue, Laurel, Maryland, 20707, for the Purpose of Acquiring Real Property for City Operations.

### Swearing In of Councilmembers

- Bencis D. Smith - At-Large
- James Kole - Ward 1
- Adrian G. Simmons - Ward 1
- Kyla M. Clark - Ward 2
- Jeffrey W. Mills - Ward 2

### Election of President

- Bencis D. Smith - President
- Adrian G. Simmons appointed President Pro Tem by Council President Smith.

### Bid Recommendations:

- No Bid Recommendations for November.

### Appointments/Reappointments:

- Abdul Ruknudin - Senior Residents and Persons with Disabilities CAC (11/10/2025-11/10/2027)
- Roy P. Gilmore (Reappointment) - Emergency Services Commission (11/10/2025-11/10/2030)
- Jay Meashey - Director, Department of Economic and Community Development



## 2025 SUSTAINABILITY REPORT COMMUNITY GATHERING AND YEAR-IN-REVIEW

**Thursday, December 18th**  
**6:00 - 8:00pm**

**Joseph R. Robison Laurel Municipal Center  
Council Chambers  
8103 Sandy Spring Road**

Join us for food, community, and a look at the sustainability progress made in the City of Laurel during 2025!



### SCHEDULE:

- 6:00pm - Meet and Greet
- 6:30pm - Highlights and progress of the 2025 Sustainability Initiatives
- 7:00pm - Community Updates
- 7:30pm - Community discussions, Q&A and 2026 goals

**Everyone is Welcome! Come Learn, Share, and Help Shape Laurel's Sustainable Future!**  
RSVP by Dec. 12th: [mblair@laurel.md.us](mailto:mblair@laurel.md.us)



### PEACE & PARTNERSHIP



If you have questions or concerns, contact your Councilmember from the list below:

<b>Council President</b> Bencis D. Smith (At-Large) <a href="mailto:bsmith@laurel.md.us">bsmith@laurel.md.us</a>	<b>Ward 1 Councilmembers</b> James Kole <a href="mailto:jkole@laurel.md.us">jkole@laurel.md.us</a>
<b>Ward 2 Councilmembers</b> Kyla M. Clark <a href="mailto:kclark@laurel.md.us">kclark@laurel.md.us</a>	Adrian Simmons <a href="mailto:asimmons@laurel.md.us">asimmons@laurel.md.us</a>

Or call the City Council Office at  
**301-725-5300 ext. 2120**.

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

### December 2025 Mayor and City Council Meetings

- December 8th - Possible Virtual Special Work Session (5:00pm)
- December 8th - Virtual Mayor and City Council Meeting (6:00pm)
- December 15th - In-Person Mayor and City Council Meeting (6:00pm)  
(MOVED from Dec. 22nd due to holiday)

### December 2025 Boards and Commissions

- December 4th - In-Person Master Plan Committee (6:00pm)
- December 9th - Virtual Planning Commission (6:00pm)
- December 16th - Virtual Historic District Commission (6:00pm)
- December 18th - Virtual Board of Appeals (6:00pm)

### January 2026 Mayor and City Council Meetings

- January 7th - Virtual Mayor and City Council Work Session (6:00pm)
- January 12th - Virtual Mayor and City Council Meeting (6:00pm)
- January 26th - In-Person Mayor and City Council Meeting (6:00pm)

### January 2026 Boards and Commissions

- January 13th - Planning Commission (6:00pm)
- January 20th - Historic District Commission (6:00pm)
- January 22nd - Board of Appeals (6:00pm)

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

- December 12th - Employee Holiday Party at 1pm - City/Passport Offices Close Early.
- December 22nd - Photos with Santa - 4 - 5:30pm at Laurel Police Partnership Activity Center, 811 5th Street. Bring a donation for LARS.
- December 22nd - Holiday Movie, "Elf" - 6:00pm - Partnership Activity Center, 811 5th Street.
- December 25th - Christmas - City/Passport Offices will be Closed. Visit [www.cityoflaurel.org](http://www.cityoflaurel.org) for details on adjusted collections.
- January 1, 2026 - New Year Day - City/Passport Offices will be Closed. Visit [www.cityoflaurel.org](http://www.cityoflaurel.org) for details on adjusted collections.
- January 19, 2026 - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - City/Passport Offices will be closed. Visit [www.cityoflaurel.org](http://www.cityoflaurel.org) for adjusted collections.
- January 19th - Dr. King, Jr. Day of Service - 10am - 2pm at the Laurel Multiservice Center, 204 Ft. Meade Rd. Community Service Hours available.
- Laurel Parks and Recreation Winter Brochure is out! All their classes, excursions, events, sports and more are listed! Family fun in the new year!



**STAY IN THE KNOW:** Scan the QR Code and it will take you to the City of Laurel's Web Site Calendar. Stay up to date on what's happening when and where in the City!



## Public Works Monthly Glance



CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE. PLACE ON YOUR REFRIGERATOR.



CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE. PLACE ON YOUR REFRIGERATOR.

### PUBLIC WORKS



301-725-0088



DPW@laurel.md.us

### Emergency Management: Cleaning Up After the Holidays!

**Post Holiday Cleaning Tips**

The holidays can do a number on your home! Between visitors, holiday feasts, and kids on school break, your home probably needs some TLC. Use these cleaning tips to stay happy, healthy, and safe in the New Year.

From boxes to wrapping paper to leftovers, we acquire many things during the holidays. Figure out what can be recycled or trashed.

Americans throw away 25% more trash between Thanksgiving and New Years Day.

Prevent house fires after Christmas by discarding your tree when it is dry. A dry tree burns very hot and fast.

Disinfect and deep clean your house's surfaces to prevent seasonal illnesses such as the flu.

Prepare your home for winter weather by reducing slip hazards. Place a boot tray or mat near entryways so wet boots don't create slippery surfaces. Keeping walkways dry and organized helps prevent falls.

**CITY OF LAUREL**  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

### CITY CONTACTS

[www.cityoflaurel.org](http://www.cityoflaurel.org)

#### MAYOR'S OFFICE

301-725-5300 ext. 2125

#### CITY ADMINISTRATOR

301-725-5300 ext. 2242

#### LAUREL POLICE

Non-Emerg: 301-498-0092  
Emerg: 301-725-3000

#### PARKS AND RECREATION

301-725-7800

#### COMMUNICATIONS

301-725-5300 Ext. 2208