



THE LAUREL LEDGER

OFFICIAL NEWS FROM THE CITY OF LAUREL, MARYLAND



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: KEEPING US CONNECTED!

Seeking Input!

The City of Laurel Department of Information Technology has working relationships with most broadband internet and cellular service providers that operate within Laurel, and is launching an initiative to help ensure that those providers can better serve our residents. Reliable connectivity is essential for work, education, emergency services, and community engagement – yet there are some areas in the City that experience spotty mobile signals or limited options for broadband internet.

To accurately identify those coverage gaps, we're launching an initiative to identify areas in the City that are underserved by broadband internet providers, or have poor cellular coverage from their carriers. We are asking Laurel residents to help by reporting areas of concern at www.cityoflaurel.org/connectivity.

This survey is one part of a broader initiative to ensure that everyone in Laurel has equitable access to modern connectivity.

As your local IT Department, we're committed to advocating for improvements that benefit the entire Laurel community. By sharing your experiences, you empower us to encourage providers to invest in expanding service where it's needed most.

Visit <https://www.cityoflaurel.org/connectivity> to submit reports and to learn more about our Laurel Connectivity Initiative!

Cyber Safety Tips

The holiday shopping season has arrived, and the Department of Information Technology has some important advice to help you avoid scams while shopping online. According to the Federal Trade Commission, scams and fraud resulted in a staggering loss of over \$8.8 billion last year. Thus, it's essential to prioritize your safety during online purchases, whether it's the holidays or year round. Cyber criminals are constantly searching for weaknesses in your devices or internet connections and may attempt to steal your personal and financial information through fake websites or charities.

The best defense against these threats is awareness:



- **Create Strong Passwords:** Avoid reusing passwords across accounts. Consider using a password manager to generate and store complex, unique passwords.
- **Activate Multifactor Authentication (MFA):** MFA adds a critical layer of protection by requiring a second form of verification (e.g., a code sent to your phone or app).
- **Think Before You Click:** Be cautious with links in emails, texts, or social media ads. Phishing attempts often mimic trusted brands!
- **Regularly Software and Devices Updated:** New vulnerabilities are discovered every day. Regularly install updates for your operating system, browsers, and antivirus software to protect against the latest threats.
- **Shop Only Through Trusted Sources:** Stick to retailers you can verify. Look for "https://" in the URL and verify the site's legitimacy before entering personal or payment information. Watch out for lookalike web sites!
 - **Phishing:** Be skeptical of emails or messages that create urgency or ask for sensitive information, especially with banks and retailers. When in doubt, go directly to their website instead of clicking links.
 - **Use Credit over Debit:** Credit cards typically offer better fraud protection and make it easier to dispute unauthorized charges. Monitor your accounts regularly to catch suspicious activity early!
 - **Secure your Wi-Fi:** Avoid shopping on public Wi-Fi. If necessary, use a VPN to encrypt your connection.
 - **Data Breach Check:** Check to see if your email has been involved in a data breach at www.haveibeenpwned.com.

Keep security as your top priority, adhere to best practices, and if you're ever in doubt, it's best to avoid the risk. Safe Shopping!

ELECTION RESULTS 2025

The results are in! The City of Laurel held their General Election for the five (5) Council seats on November 4, 2025. As of the time of this publication, following are the Unofficial Election Results, which were to be certified on November 6th:

- **At-Large:** * **Bencis D. Smith:** 641 (I) Christine M. Johnson: 621 (3 Write Ins)
- **Ward 1:** * **(I) Adrian G. Simmons:** 547 * **(I) James Kole:** 475 Sheila Carroll (Withdrawn): 181
- **Ward 2 (Uncontested):** * **(I) Kyla M. Clark:** 493 * **(I) Jeffrey W. Mills:** 452 (17 Write Ins)



We wish all the best to our newly elected officials, who will be sworn in on November 24th, as they serve the citizens of Laurel. Call 301-725-5300 ext. 2120 if you would like to speak with your representative.



It's Easy Being Green!



STOP TRASH OVERFLOW...COMPOST AND RECYCLE!



With organics recycling now in full swing, some residents may have noticed a sticker on their trash...before you see red, read further! Managing trash overflow is as easy as 1, 2, 3. (1) remove all food waste and other organic materials (paper napkins, pizza boxes, corn husks, etc.) and put into the tan cart; (2) put all recyclable materials in the blue cart (cans, glass/plastic bottles and newspaper/flyers, etc.); (3) limit black cart items to items that are not recyclable or allowed in organics recycling – diapers, tissues, paper towels with chemical cleaners on them. Carts are available in different sizes to fit your needs. Find you are having a lot of recycling or composting items filling up your carts now that you are separating out these materials from the regular refuse stream? Residents can have more than one blue and tan carts. We are here to help! If you are still having questions about what you can and can't recycle/compost, download the Recycle Coach app or ask for a 2025 Municipal Calendar! Both the app and the calendar show you the best way to recycle, compost and reduce trash overflow. If you need a larger cart or additional recycling or composting carts, e-mail DPW@laurel.md.us. And with Halloween behind you, now is a great time to compost your pumpkins (remember to remove all wax and candles before putting your pumpkins in your curbside cart)!

Another Great Season Comes to an End: Our Farmer's Market last day was October 30th, with a special "Encore" date in the Patuxent Greens Community. A special shout-out to Berman properties for allowing us to use their parking lot. We had a wonderful season and enjoyed our returning vendors and loved hosting our new additions. Be sure to check out our Facebook page, @LaurelMarketOnMain, and our City web site, www.cityoflaurel.org/1617/Laurel-Farmers-Market, for updates about next year's Market. And most of all, thank YOU for supporting our vendors!

Join us in December for a **Sustainable Year in Review** party. During the meeting, residents will see our successes, learn about new initiatives (Native Plants Landscaping for Stormwater Runoff) and give us ideas on what you want us to focus on next year. We will review the Sustainability Plan and will form additional focus groups to work on specific actions highlighted in the Plan. Everyone is welcome! If you are interested in participating in a work group, please contact greenliving@laurel.md.us. The full plan is available on our Green Living Resource page at www.cityoflaurel.org/green.

We are here to help! Questions about organics recycling? Recycle right? Check out the Green Living Resource Page at cityoflaurel.org/green, and follow us on Facebook at [@SustainableLaurel](https://www.facebook.com/SustainableLaurel). This is a place where we can share ideas, highlight upcoming events and residents can stay informed on all things Sustainable. Happy Recycling Month!



TECNOLOGÍA DE LA INFORMACIÓN: ¡CONECTADOS!

El Departamento de Tecnología de la Información de la Ciudad de Laurel colabora con la mayoría de los proveedores de internet de banda ancha y telefonía celular que operan en Laurel y está lanzando una iniciativa para garantizar que estos proveedores puedan brindar un mejor servicio a nuestros residentes.



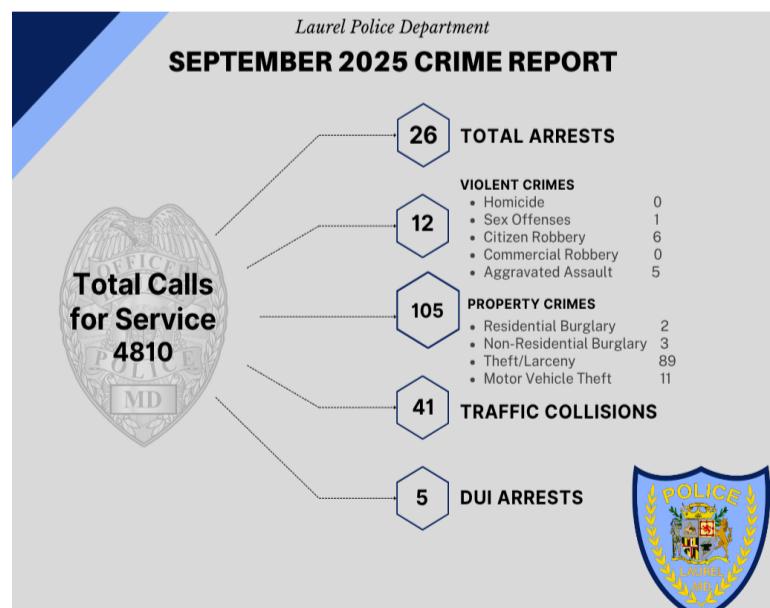
Para identificar con precisión las zonas sin cobertura, estamos lanzando una iniciativa para identificar las áreas de la ciudad con cobertura deficiente de internet de banda ancha o con mala cobertura celular. Solicitamos la ayuda de los residentes de Laurel reportando las áreas problemáticas en www.cityoflaurel.org/connectivity. Esta encuesta forma parte de una iniciativa más amplia para garantizar que todos en Laurel tengan acceso equitativo a la conectividad moderna.

Como su Departamento de TI local, estamos comprometidos con la promoción de mejoras que beneficien a toda la comunidad de Laurel. Al compartir sus experiencias, nos ayudan a incentivar a los proveedores a invertir en la expansión del servicio donde más se necesita.

LAUREL POLICE MONTHLY CRIME REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2025

List of Laurel Police Crime Reports can be found at 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.

For full agendas, visit www.cityoflaurel.org.

Adopted Legislation:

- **Ordinance No. 2046** - to modify the Operation of the City of Laurel Employees Retirement Plan to Document a Cost-of-Living Adjustment for Retirees of January 1, 1994 to December 31, 2014.
- **Ordinance No. 2047** - to modify the Operation of the City of Laurel Employees Police Retirement Plan to Document a Cost-of-Living Adjustment for Retirees of January 1, 1994 to December 31, 2014.
- **Ordinance No. 2048** - 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, 2024 through June 30, 2025 and to Provide an Effective Date.
- **Ordinance No. 2049** - 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.

Bid Recommendations:

- **Information Technology** - Laurel Police Dispatch Furniture Replacement.

Appointments/Reappointments:

- **Lakisha Muhammad** - Historic District Commission (10/15/2025-10/15/2028)
- **Abisola Ude (Reappointment)** - Education Advisory Committee (10/15/2025-10/15/2027)
- **Ed Rowe (Reappointment)** - Public Safety and Transportation Committee (10/15/2025-10/15/2027)
- **Diane Van Hassel (Reappointment)** - No-Kill Community Animal Shelter CAC (10/15/2025-10/15/2027)
- **Maria Gonzales Jackson (Reappointment)** - Education Advisory Committee (10/15/2025-10/15/2027)
- **Jennifer Shannon (Reappointment)** - Arts Council (10/27/2025-10/27/2027)
- **Don Gavelek (Reappointment)** - Public Safety and Transportation Committee (10/27/2025-10/27/2027)



Scan the QR Code for the online volunteer application and start to get involved in your community!



Contact the Council:

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

Council President Kyla Clark (Ward 2) kclark@laurel.md.us	Ward 1 Council members James Kole jkole@laurel.md.us Adrian Simmons asimmons@laurel.md.us
Ward 2 Council member Jeffrey Mills jmills@laurel.md.us	At Large Council member Christine Johnson cjohnson@laurel.md.us

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



Government Meetings (Dates and Times Subject to Change)

November 2025 Mayor and City Council Meetings

- ◆ **November 10th** - Virtual Mayor and City Council Meeting (6:00pm)
- ◆ **November 24th** - In-Person Mayor and City Council Meeting (6:00pm)

November 2025 Boards and Commissions

- ◆ **November 18th** - Planning Commission (CANCELLED)
- ◆ **November 19th** - In-Person Master Plan Committee (6:00pm)
- ◆ **November 25th** - In-Person Historic District Commission (6:00pm)
- ◆ **November 27th** - Board of Appeals (CANCELLED)

December 2025 Mayor and City Council Meetings

- ◆ **December 3rd** - Virtual Work Session (6:00pm)
- ◆ **December 8th** - Virtual Mayor and City Council Meeting (6:00pm)
- ◆ **December 22nd** - Mayor and City Council Meeting (CANCELLED)

December 2025 Boards and Commissions

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

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

- ◆ **November 7th** - **Harvest Moon Hayride** - 6:00 - 9:00pm - Riverfront Park (Starts at parking lot behind Outback Leather) Cost \$5/person on site.
- ◆ **November 11th** - **Veterans' Day** - City/Passport Offices will be Closed. Visit www.cityoflaurel.org for details on adjusted collections.
- ◆ **Nov. 24th/25th** - **Observance of Thanksgiving** - City/Passport Offices Closed. Visit www.cityoflaurel.org for details on adjusted collections.
- ◆ **November 29th** - **Small Business Saturday**, 9am - 12pm, 378 Main Street (Laurel Farmer's Market Lot) Get your passports and free swag!
- ◆ **December 6th** - **Holiday Parade/Armory Illumination** - Parade: 3:45pm; Festival: 4:00pm. Visit from Santa at Laurel Armory, 422 Montgomery St.
- ◆ **December 12th** - **Employee Holiday Party at 1pm** - City/Passport Offices Close Early.
- ◆ **December 23rd** - **Holiday Movie, "Elf"** - 6:00pm - Partnership Activity Center, 811 5th Street.
- ◆ **December 25th** - **Christmas** - City/Passport Offices will be Closed. Visit www.cityoflaurel.org for details on adjusted collections.
- ◆ **Senior Services** offers classes, trips and events for those Laurel Community members 55 and up! Find out more at www.cityoflaurel.org/parks.



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.



QR code to
Green Living website
for more information.

Universal
Human Rights
Month



December

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2 Virtual Work Session-6pm	3 Master Plan Committee Meeting - 6pm	4 Leaf Vacuuming Ends Friday, December 5th with extension TBD	5 Holiday Parade/Armory Illumination - 422 Montgomery St. Parade: 3:45p Festival: 4pm
7	Virtual Mayor and Council Meeting-6pm	8 Planning Commission - 6pm	9	10	11	12 City Employee Holiday Party - 1pm City Offices Close Early
Hanukkah	14	15	Historic District Commission-6pm	16	17	18 Board of Appeals - 6pm
Winter Solstice	21	22 Holiday Movie - 6pm (Elf) 811 5th St. Mayor/Council Mtg - CANCELLED	23	24 No change to Wednesday collection	25 Christmas Thursday Trash/Recycling/Composting collected on Wednesday Community Centers CLOSED	26 No change to Friday collection
28	29	30	31			Refuse/Recycling/Composting holiday schedule December 25th.

How did you do with your 2025 Green Goals?
What will you do in 2026?



CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE. PLACE ON YOUR REFRIGERATOR.



PUBLIC WORKS



301-725-0088



DPW@laurel.md.us

Emergency Management: Holiday Safety Tips (Preparedness Countdown!)

Holiday Preparedness Countdown

Check out our preparedness gift giving guide below!

1 Keep turkey fryers at least 10 feet away from your house.	2 Do not overfill a turkey fryer with oil. Test the amount with water.	3 Fully thaw your turkey before frying to reduce splattering.	4 While Black Friday shopping, keep an eye on your belongings.	5 Park in well-lit areas and pay attention to your surroundings.	6 Shop online with reputable retailers via encrypted websites.	7 Plan out your holiday display to avoid overloading outlets.	8 When using a ladder, always maintain 3 points of contact.
9 Turn off all decorations before leaving or going to bed.	10 If traveling, plan ahead and leave early to avoid traffic.	11 Designate a sober driver to ensure everyone arrives safely.	12 Review TSA's security screening and carry-on tips prior to flying.	13 Ensure toys are age-rated for safety to avoid choking hazards.	14 When giving riding toys, include safety gear like helmets.	15 Give the gift of preparedness with an emergency supply kit.	16 Keep your tree at least 3 feet away from heat sources i.e. fireplaces.
17 Place breakable ornaments out of reach of small children.	18 If using a artificial tree, confirm that it is fire resistant.	19 Wash your hands frequently when handling food.	20 Use separate cutting boards for raw meat and fresh produce.	21 Leftovers are safe for 3 - 4 days when properly refrigerated.	22 Test your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.	23 Create an emergency plan with your family and practice it.	24 Stay safe and be well this holiday season!

**Happy Holidays from the
Department of Emergency Management!**

CITY CONTACTS

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