



CITY OF LAUREL

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Craig A. Moe
Mayor

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April 29, 2019

Laurel City Council President Frederick Smalls
Laurel City Councilmembers
8103 Sandy Spring Road
Laurel, Maryland 20707

Dear President Smalls and City Councilmembers,

I am pleased to present the FY2020 City of Laurel Proposed Budget. It is presented without a tax rate increase, maintaining the City's real property tax rate at \$.71 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation. The Personal Property tax rate will remain \$1.69 per \$100 of assessed value. The tax rate for the Special Taxing District is \$0.03 per \$100 of the full cash value assessment. The proposed budget continues all City services at current service levels.

Just as in every year of my tenure as Mayor, the development and preparation of this budget began with focus on efforts to reduce expenditures, eliminate duplication and streamline services. Management Staff was directed to identify where efficiency could be improved and to set goals to further enhance our services.

I am pleased to announce all City employees will receive a two-and-one-half percent Market Adjustment. As negotiated, the Laurel Police Department Fraternal Order of Police (FOP11) Collective Bargaining Agreement calls for a two-and-one-half percent Market Adjustment for each of the three contract years with FY2018 being the first year of the contract. The merit step increase will remain at two-and-one-half percent for all City employees, contingent upon receipt of a satisfactory performance evaluation. In accordance with legislation recently passed by the Maryland General Assembly, the City meets the required minimum wage of \$11.00/hour.

Continued in the proposed budget are the Mayor's Economic Development efforts; the "Government to the People" Program, including extended Tuesday evening hours which makes passports and finger printing services, as well as permits and facility rentals available to the public after normal business hours; the continued expansion of the use of the City's web site, social media platforms, and printed media to provide public information, online payments and applications for services and permits; and improved emergency notifications. Additionally, funds are included to cover the ongoing costs for system and software maintenance and upgrades. I have also included funds for an Annual Report to be prepared and mailed out to the entire community; we all do good things and have a responsibility to let the citizens of Laurel know how their tax dollars are spent and programs provided to them.

In FY2020 the City will hold its General Election for all City of Laurel elected offices, funds to support this election are included in the proposed budget.

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An upgrade to the City's software in FY2019 included a new permits management component, which will improve the efficiency of our processes in the Department of the Fire Marshal and Permit Services and the Department of Economic and Community Services, allowing us to maintain data in electronic format, integrated with our approved records retention program.

Significant file management and records retention for other important City documents began in FY2019 and continues in an effort to bring efficient storage of records, a much needed reduction of paper copy storage and reorganization of our Archives Room. Historic documents, such as the City's original Charter, and historic record books were identified and are set to be preserved in an environmentally friendly manner. Funding for this very important project in included in the City's Capital Improvement Program.

Many great things were accomplished by working together this past year; We successfully requested and were granted State funding of \$325,000 for a new Multi-Service Center and \$250,000 for enhancements to the Stephen P. Turney Recreation Complex; We received the Main Street Maryland Designation, added a new monument to our memorial gardens to honor the great works and writings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., held the second Annual Community Health Fair, worked with the campaign to Keep Kids Alive Drive 25 in Laurel, unveiled the newest tool for flood mitigation by adding a water mark in Riverfront Park, received the Tree City USA designation for the 26th straight year, added Closed Captioning to Laurel TV programing, and created a new Business Resource Center located in the Municipal Center and much more. As you can see, working together does make a difference!

The FY2020 Capital Improvement Program includes \$452,500 for fleet equipment - replacement of a leaf vacuum, dump trucks, a backhoe as well as vehicles for inspectors, park maintenance, and police vehicles.

Additionally, the FY2020 Capital Improvement Program is focused on City Street improvements, public technology enhancements, public safety technology equipment, City facility and parks improvements, hazard mitigation, the planning of the City's first Multi-Service Center.

While we continue to be in a position to be affected by outside sources and events, I remain confident of Laurel's future and visions for FY2020 to be one of continued advancements for City of Laurel residents and businesses.

The Moe Administration has been working for the past six months on the development of a Succession Plan, to identify, train and educate possible future leaders of our City government. You will see that tuition and training funds have been allocated to assist those employees who wish to succeed to leadership positions within our organization.

As you know, and with your support, Chief Russell Hamill will fill the vacant position of Chief of Police in June. As the new Chief becomes acclimated to the City's Police Department processes and procedures, I have asked him to consider a reorganization of our police department structure to better serve the community and meet the future needs of the Police Department.

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We continue to enhance our City Recycling Program to include the addition of Organic Composting. A pilot program has been implemented as a way to gauge effectiveness and will be a way to further reduce tipping fees and improve environmental awareness in our City and State.

In 2020, the City of Laurel will celebrate its 150th Anniversary. Celebrations and community events are now in the planning stages, to provide a yearlong calendar of exciting festivities aimed at highlighting and memorializing our great City's history. The proposed budget provides \$30,000 for these celebrations, activities, and events.

The year 2020 is also the year of the Census! Public input is invaluable to this process and the Department of Economic and Community Development and Office of the Mayor are taking the lead on getting the word out about how important it is for all our citizens to be counted.

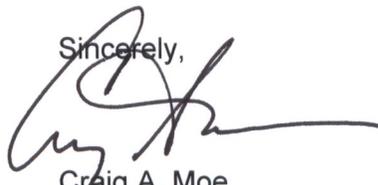
We will continue efforts to promote the economic viability of the City, enhance the economic stability of the City and continue to encourage and support existing businesses, promote the attractiveness of the City for new and relocating businesses, as well as promote new development. The business networking program has been very successful and will continue in FY2020.

For the fifth year, Councilmembers will be able to access the Mayor's proposed budget for review on their City issued iPad, furthering our goal to be paperless in City Government while saving tax payer dollars.

It's an exciting time in Laurel! There are many family community activities and events planned for residents and visitors to Laurel which will be continued; Main Street Festival, July 4th Celebration, Mayor's Open House, Main Street Trick-or-Treat, Holiday Festival and Parade, National Night Out, LakeFest and much more. We will also continue our commitment to our youth with the Laurel Helping Hands Youth Services Bureau and the Laurel Police Department's DARE Program in schools.

I would like to thank members of the City Council for your support during the last year and your commitment to provide the very best services to our residents and businesses. Thank you to the City's dedicated employees who demonstrate a strong work ethic every day and show great pride in the performance of their duties. I look forward to your review and adoption of the FY2020 General Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program.

Sincerely,



Craig A. Moe
Mayor