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Press Release

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City of Laurel Receives Prestigious Sustainable Maryland Certified Award at Maryland Municipal League Conference

College Park, MD (October 14, 2021) – The Environmental Finance Center at the University of Maryland announced that the **City of Laurel** was one of twelve Maryland municipalities honored at the **Sustainable Maryland Awards Ceremony** at the Maryland Municipal League’s annual Fall Conference on October 12. **This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Sustainable Maryland program.**

A detailed summary of Laurel’s sustainability Actions can be found in their Certification Report, attached as a PDF.

Highlights of Laurel’s accomplishments include:

- The City began a curbside organic composting pilot program in August 2019 with 200 households participating. The compost program for the full year of 2020 collected 30 tons of food waste, resulting in a diversionary rate of \$1,928. The tonnage diverted represents the equivalent of 47,618 pounds of CO₂ saved. The pilot program was so successful that it has been expanded to include local businesses, and 300 more households.
- Implemented LED lighting replacement program for the City-owned street lights.
- Adopted legislation prohibiting plastic bags in retail establishments, and provides education on purchasing reusable, biodegradable and compostable alternatives.

“I am pleased that the City of Laurel has earned another three-year certification from Sustainable Maryland,” said **Mayor Craig Moe**. “For years, the City of Laurel has been committed to creating a healthy, sustainable environment for our current and future residents. To support and further that goal, we have created the new Environmental Program Manager position to promote and streamline all our programs to move our community towards a more sustainable future. The City is committed to working with all organizations and local governments to provide a healthy, safe environment for all of our residents. I personally appreciate all the work and resources that Sustainable Maryland provides to the local governments to help us achieve our goals.”

According to **Mike Hunninghake, Program Manager for Sustainable Maryland**, “During the first 10 years of the Sustainable Maryland program, if we have learned anything, it’s that reducing our footprint on where we live, be it a town, a county, a state or the planet, is vital to our continuation as a species. The work being done at the local level forms a foundation, by example and by action, for upward pressure on governments at all levels to take action to make our communities greener, cleaner and more resilient.”

The attached photo shows (from left) Economic Development Director Robert Love, Mayor Craig Moe and City Administrator LouAnn Crook with the Sustainable Maryland Certified award at the Maryland Municipal League conference.

Also attached is Laurel’s Sustainable Maryland Certified logo.

For detailed information about Laurel’s sustainability initiatives, please contact Michele Blair, Environmental Programs Manager, MBlair@laurel.md.us, 301-725-5300 ext. 2203

Sustainable Maryland Certification: To achieve certification, municipalities are required to form a Green Team comprised of local residents, community leaders, municipal staff and officials; complete a variety sustainability-related Actions worth **a total of at least 150 points** (including two mandatory actions and two of six priority actions), and submit the appropriate documentation as evidence that the Sustainable Maryland Certified requirements have been satisfied. The Sustainable Maryland Action Menu can be seen here: <https://sustainablemaryland.com/certification/actions>

The complete list of 2021 newly certified (denoted by *) and re-certified communities includes:

Berlin (*first certified in 2012, re-certified in 2015 and 2018*)

Brunswick (*first certified in 2015*)

Cheverly (*first certified in 2014, re-certified in 2017*)

Cottage City (*first certified in 2018*)

Emmitsburg (*first certified in 2015; re-certified 2018*)

Glen Echo (*NEW*)

La Plata (*NEW*)

Laurel (*first certified 2015; re-certified 2018*)

Mount Rainier (*first certified in 2012, re-certified in 2015 and 2018*)

North Beach (*first certified in 2017*)

Poolesville (*first certified in 2015, re-certified in 2018*)

Rockville (*2020 Sustainability Champion - highest point total; first certified 2012, re-certified in 2015 and 2018*)

Our 2021 Sustainability Champion: This year’s Sustainability Champion is **the City of Rockville** which amassed an impressive 600 points on their application, more than any other community in 2021.

A full report on each certified community's Actions can be viewed here:
<https://sustainablemaryland.com/certification/participating-communities>

Sustainable Maryland Certified Municipalities as of 2021 (10th year of the program):

- Total Municipalities Sustainable Maryland Certified: **40 (26% of Maryland's municipalities)**
- Total Municipalities Sustainable Maryland Registered: **85 (54% of Maryland's municipalities)**

About Sustainable Maryland: Sustainable Maryland is an initiative of the **Environmental Finance Center at the University of Maryland** that is designed to support Maryland's 157 municipalities as they look for cost-effective and strategic ways to protect their natural assets and revitalize their communities. Using best practices in resource areas like water, energy, planning, health, food, and economy, a municipality can earn points toward sustainability certification. **Sustainable Maryland** offers a customizable menu of concrete actions, allowing communities to select initiatives that best fit their specific needs. This free and voluntary program, with the support of the **Maryland Municipal League and the US Environmental Protection Agency** helps communities choose a direction for their greening efforts; complete their chosen actions with help from program tools, trainings, expert guidance, and other resources; and be recognized statewide for their accomplishments. For more information about Sustainable Maryland: www.sustainablemaryland.com



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