



**HELPING COMMUNITIES INVEST TODAY FOR A MORE LIVABLE TOMORROW**

## **Press Release**

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# **Laurel Receives Prestigious Sustainable Maryland Certified Award at Maryland Municipal League Conference**

**College Park, MD (October 29, 2015)** – 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 held in Cambridge this week.

**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:**

- **Adopted a Green Construction Code, requiring new construction of a non-public funded buildings to meet LEED Silver or similar requirements**
- **Home to several Maryland Green Schools – Bond Mill Elementary, Deerfield Run Elementary, Laurel Elementary, Hammond Elementary, Forest Ridge Elementary**
- **Hosts a Farmers Market on Main Street**
- **Operates a Community Garden with 56 plots**
- **Offers municipal employees a Health & Wellness Program which allows employees to accumulate points for healthful activities, with which they can earn paid time off. Employees also have free access to two fitness centers and two outdoor pools; receive a discount on all Parks and Recreation programs, and have access to an on-site Wellness Library and regular “Lunch & Learn” programs.**
- **Adopted a Green Purchasing Policy for procurement of municipal goods and services**
- **Remained a Tree City USA community for 22 years**
- **Created a Bicycle Master Plan and Map**
- **Taken the lead in developing and implementing the Patuxent River Policy Plan.**
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“We are excited to welcome more municipalities to the growing Sustainable Maryland community,” said **Dan Nees, director of the Environmental Finance Center**. “This program is a hallmark of our work at the Environmental Finance Center, guiding communities towards healthier, more sustainable futures. Each certification award represents the commitment of local elected officials, municipal staff and Green Team volunteers in these towns and cities to create a stronger, more resilient Maryland.”

**The attached photo shows Donna Crary, City Council member; Mike Leszcz, City Councilman; Jack Brock, Director of Community Planning and Business Services; Kristie Mills, City Administrator; Edward Ricks, City Council President; and Fred Smalls, City Councilman with the Sustainable Maryland Certified award at the Maryland Municipal League conference this week.**

**Also attached is Laurel’s Sustainable Maryland Certified logo.**

**For detailed information about Laurel’s sustainability initiatives,** contact Jack Brock, Director, Community Planning, at 301-725-5300 ext. 2313 or [jbrock@laurel.md.us](mailto:jbrock@laurel.md.us)

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**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: <http://sustainablemaryland.com/actions-certification/actions/>

**The complete list of 2015 newly certified and re-certified (denoted by \*) communities includes:**

**\*Town of Berlin** (Worcester County; **the very first municipality to be certified in the program in 2012, re-certified in 2015**)

**City of Brunswick** (Frederick County)

**City of Cambridge** (first municipality certified in Dorchester County)

**Town of Centreville** (first municipality certified in Queen Anne’s County)

**\*Town of Chestertown** (Kent County; first certified in 2012, re-certified in 2015)

**Town of Easton** (first municipality certified in Talbot County)

**Town of Emmitsburg** (Frederick County)

**City of Hagerstown** (Washington County)

**City of Laurel** (Prince George’s County)

**\*City of Mount Rainer** (Prince George’s County; first certified in 2012, re-certified in 2015)

**Town of Poolesville** (Montgomery County)

**\*City of Rockville** (Montgomery County; first certified in 2012, re-certified in 2015)

According to **Mike Hunninghake, Program Manager for Sustainable Maryland**, “The annual

Sustainable Maryland Certified awards are a testament to the passion and dedication of volunteers, municipal staff and elected officials on our Green Teams, and the innovative projects and plans they have completed towards improving the quality of life in their communities and reducing our collective footprint on the planet. This year, we are especially pleased by the successful re-certification of the first four Sustainable Maryland Certified municipalities from 2012, which speaks volumes about both the value communities place on our certification designation, and the sustainability of the municipal Green Team/Action Plan framework we have created here in Maryland.”

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**Sustainable Maryland Certified Municipalities as of 2015 (4th full year of the program):**

- Number of Municipalities Sustainable Maryland Certified: **30 (19% of Maryland’s municipalities)**
- Number of Municipalities Sustainable Maryland Registered: **58 (37% 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, US Environmental Protection Agency, and the Town Creek Foundation**, 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](http://www.sustainablemaryland.com)



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