



# Laurel Dispatch

Government to the People

Winter 2017 Volume 2, Issue 1

## More Solar-Powered Crosswalks Come to Laurel



You're going to start seeing more solar-powered crosswalks pop up over town as the City of Laurel is continuing its effort to improve pedestrian safety.

Two new innovative solar-powered crosswalks are now up and running on Old Sandy Spring Road and Berry Leaf Drive near Sweitzer Park.

To operate the signal, push the button to activate the lights. That will give pedestrians 30 seconds to cross the road safely after checking to make sure it is safe to cross.

The City of Laurel now has four intersections protected by LED crosswalks.

They are located at Fifth and Main Street; B and Main Street; Cypress Street and Laurel Lakes Avenue; Old Sandy Spring Road and Berry Leaf Drive.

There is also a solar-powered signal at Lafayette Avenue and Main Street to warn trucks of the height restrictions at the CSX underpass.

## Tax Distribution Error Leads to Laurel Repaying Over \$360,000



The Mayor and City Council of Laurel has been notified by the State of Maryland's Office of the Comptroller that the City of Laurel Local Income Tax distribution for the tax years of 2010-2014 was overpaid by \$362,351.

A percentage of income tax paid to the State of Maryland by Laurel residents is passed along to the City, and is used in the general operating budget.

The City will be required to repay this amount to the State of Maryland over a ten-year period beginning in 2024.

The Administration will work with the City Council on a repayment schedule that will have the least impact on City services.

The Administration will also work with the Office of the Comptroller to understand how this error occurred and what actions have been taken to prevent this error in the future.

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### Government Meetings

#### January

1/4	Work Session - 7pm
1/9	Mayor and City Council Meeting - 7pm
1/10	Planning Commission - 7pm
1/13	MLK, Jr. Wreath Ceremony - 4pm
1/16	M.L.King, Jr. Day - Offices Closed
1/17	Historic District - 7pm
1/23	Mayor and City Council Meeting - 7pm
1/26	Board of Appeals - 7pm

#### February

2/1	Work Session - 7pm
2/7	Historic District - 7pm
2/13	Mayor and City Council Meeting - 7pm
2/14	Planning Commission - 7pm
2/20	Presidents' Day - Offices Closed
2/23	Board of Appeals - 7pm
2/27	Mayor and City Council Meeting - 7pm





#### March

3/1	Work Session - 7pm
3/5	Annual Open House
3/13	Mayor and City Council Meeting - 7pm
3/14	Planning Commission - 7pm
3/21	Historic District - 7pm
3/23	Board of Appeals - 7pm
3/27	Mayor and City Council

*A Great Place To Live, Work and Play*











## Laurel Police **Department**

### **Winter Safety Tips**

-  The Laurel Police Department wants to remind residents to not leave your vehicle running and unsecured when warming it up on these cold mornings. We have numerous stolen autos every year where citizens thought no one would steal their vehicles. Car thieves take advantage of the opportunity and can take the vehicle right from in front of your home.
-  During the winter months the roads can be very slick. Please keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front of you and remember that slick roads and ice can be hidden underneath the snow.
-  During snow storms and night time driving, do not be afraid to utilize your flashers. They help other drivers to see you and can save a life.
-  This winter is expected to be a cold winter with very low temperatures. Please check the temperatures before leaving home and bundle up accordingly. Pace yourself on shoveling snow and give yourself plenty of time on traveling.

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### **Winter Driving Safety Tips**

-  Before driving in the snow or any long trip, make sure that you do a maintenance check on your vehicle. Check your tires, battery, belts, hoses and fluids.
-  Plan your route ahead of time and give yourself extra travel time.
-  Keep warm clothing in the vehicle, along with a survival kit containing an ice scraper, shovel, sand, tow rope, flares, flashlight, first aid kit, food and blankets.
-  Always clear any snow and ice from all lights, windows, mirrors and the roof before driving. Make sure you wait for the interior windows to clear of fog, so you will have good visibility.
-  Make sure that the windshield washer fluid reservoir is full and is rated for freezing temperatures.
-  Slow down in snow and icy conditions, make all turns slowly and remember that it takes longer to stop on slippery surfaces. Use the three-second rule.
-  Know the proper handling procedures for a skidding vehicle. When you lose traction, remember to keep your foot off the brakes.
-  Remember that bridges and overpasses usually freeze before other roadways and may contain black ice. Drive slowly across these areas.
-  If you get stuck or stranded, stay with your vehicle for warmth.
-  The best thing to do in wintry weather is to stay off the roadways during snowstorms until the roads have all been cleared.

## Keep Your Home Safe

- Avoid tall and thick shrubs that cover your windows and doors. It is also good to avoid tall privacy fences. Both of these items allow burglars to conceal themselves.
- Install good exterior lighting and make sure to leave exterior lights on at night and use motion activated floodlights near major entrances such as the front and rear doors and on the garage.
- Close your blinds and curtains when you are not at home.
- Switch up your routine so that burglars do not know your schedule and alert neighbors when you are going away on a trip.
- Ensure that you lock all of your windows and doors.
- Use timers for indoor lights and consider leaving a radio or TV on when you are away.
- Dogs can also be a good deterrent, especially a dog that barks.
- Stop your mail and newspaper delivery when you are away on vacation. Also, don't leave out your trash and recycle bins.
- Install a double cylinder deadbolt on your doors. Security doors or burglar bars on the ground floor are also a good addition.
- Always try to make your home look as if someone is inside. Most burglars like to go to vacant homes that don't have dogs, alarm systems, security doors and flood lights so they can get in and out without being detected.



### Laurel Police Department

Barkman-Kaiser  
Public Safety Complex  
811 5th Street  
Laurel, MD 20707

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

Email: [lpd@laurel.md.us](mailto:lpd@laurel.md.us)  
Crime Tips: [tips@laurel.md.us](mailto:tips@laurel.md.us)

### PASSPORT OFFICE

#### Hours of Operation

Closed for Lunch

12:00 - 1:00pm

Monday - Friday

Mon/Wed/Thurs/Fri

10:00 AM - \*4:30PM

Tuesdays

(Special Evening Hours)

10:00 AM - \*6:30 PM

*\*Times reflect when last application is taken*

#### Service Fees

Passport Fee  
(Check/Money Order ONLY)

Age 16 & Over

\$110.00

Under Age 16

\$80.00

Expedite Fee

(Add to Passport Fee)

All ages

\$60.00

Application Fee

(Cash/Credit ONLY)

\$25.00

#### What documentation is required?

##### Proof of U.S. Citizenship

1. A previous U.S. Passport.
2. If you were born in the U.S., a certified copy of your birth certificate issued by the State, County or City of your birth.
3. If you were born abroad, bring a certificate of naturalization, or a certificate of birth abroad.
4. All children, 15 years and under, must appear with a parent or legal guardian.

##### Proof of Identity

1. A previous U.S. Passport.
  2. A certificate of naturalization or citizenship.
  3. A valid driver's license, government or military ID or other photo ID.
- Two (2) identical full front poses, 2" by 2" color photographs on white or light-colored backgrounds.

For Passport Information, Call

301-725-5300

# Economic and Community Development

## **City of Laurel Historic District**



The City of Laurel Historic District Commission (HDC) was established in 1975 to promote the preservation of Laurel's historic sites and buildings in order to safeguard the heritage of the City's built environment. The Commission's authority is derived from Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland and Article I, Division 13 of the City of Laurel Land Development Code. The Commission is empowered to hold public hearings for the purpose of reviewing architectural and design elements for buildings in the Historic District and granting certificates of approval in accordance

with the City of Laurel Historic District Commission Design Guidelines (Art. I, Div. 14, City of Laurel Land Development Code). The City of Laurel Historic District consists of seven individual, but contiguous, districts as established in Sec. 11-2 of the City of Laurel Municipal Code. Located in the northernmost part of the City, all of these districts fall under the design review authority of the Historic District Commission. For a map and more information regarding the Historic District, please visit the City of Laurel website at <https://www.cityoflaurel.org/boards/commissions/historic-district-commission>.

## **City Limits and Property Zoning Finder**

The Department of Economic and Community Development has jurisdiction, including zoning authority, over approximately 4.3 square miles along the Patuxent River located in northern Prince George's County, abutting Howard and Anne Arundel Counties, and is described and delineated in the Article 200 of the City Charter. The City's website has very useful information and features regarding the City limits, including the City's Master Address List and a fun tool - the Property Zoning Finder - that allows the user to type in an address and find out the zoning, parcel information, property owner information, and even a link to the City's Unified Land Development Code that pertains to the specific property! Check both features out at: <https://www.cityoflaurel.org/ecd/city-limits-and-addresses>.

## **Main Street Affiliate Program**

The City of Laurel has applied to be a part of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development Main Street Affiliate Program. This Program is the first step to becoming a designated Maryland Main Street. If accepted into the Program, the Department of Economic and Community Development will have access to Affiliate Program Services for the Main Street commercial corridor, including assistance in creating a revitalization plan, on-sight design assistance, commercial revitalization training, and education about State and Federal Programs, grants, and loans. Our goal in applying to this Program, is to create a downtown commercial district that supports our community through economic vitality and historic preservation.

## **Main Street Economic Development Programs**

The Mayor and City Council approved an ordinance to amend the Main Street Economic Development Program which was originally created in 2012. The Main Street Relocation Grant will now be available to apparel and shoes stores, bakeries, coffee shops, full service and fine dining restaurants, gourmet food shops, grocery stores, health clubs, yoga studios, ice cream shops and entertainment businesses. The Retail Storefront Façade Improvement Program will now provide property owners with a grant of up to \$5,000 to make renovations to the exterior of their commercial properties. This will help with the upkeep of Main Street. The amendment will also eliminate the signage and commercial property improvement rebate portion of the Program.

## Fire Marshal/Permit Services

Now that winter has officially arrived, it is important to remember that snow, icy conditions and dangerously cold temperatures can occur at any time. Please try to follow these safety tips:

- Keep an emergency supply kit in your home that includes a battery-powered radio with extra batteries, canned food and a manual can opener, flashlights and battery-powered lamps for power failures, wood for fireplaces, and rock salt to melt ice and sand to improve traction.
- Make sure your car is in proper working condition and includes blankets, warm clothing, booster cables and tools, bottled water, dried fruits and nuts, a first aid kit, a fire extinguisher, flashlights and batteries, a shovel and ice scraper.
- Wear layers to protect yourself from the cold. A hat, scarf and mittens are also essential protection against winter weather.

### **Snow and Ice Removal**

Sec. 18-181.2 of the Municipal Code states that the owner or occupant of a property is responsible for the removal of snow and/or ice from any sidewalk abutting the property. Removal of snow must be completed within 12 hours of the cessation of any snowfall. Likewise, removal of ice must be completed within 12 hours of the formation of such ice.

Due to the public safety issues attributed to snow and ice, any violation issued must be corrected immediately. Failure to comply can result in a fine being levied against the property owner.

### **Portable Generators**

Useful during power outages, many homeowners are unaware that the improper use of portable generators can be risky. The most common dangers associated with portable generators are carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, electrical shock or electrocution and fire hazards. Downed utility lines, power company blackouts, heavy snow falls or summer storms can all lead to power outages. Many people turn to a portable generator for a temporary solution without knowing the risks. Generators should be operated in well ventilated locations outdoors away from all doors, windows and vent openings. Never use a generator in an attached garage, even with the door open and place generators so that exhaust fumes can't enter the home through windows, doors or other openings in the building. Make sure to install carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in your home. Follow manufacturer's instructions for correct placement and mounting height. Turn off generators and let them cool down before refueling. Never refuel a generator while it is running. Store fuel for the generator in a container that is intended for the purpose and is correctly labeled as such. Store the containers outside of living areas.



### **Carbon Monoxide**

Often called the invisible killer, carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas created when fuels such as gasoline, wood, coal, propane, etc. do not burn. In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuel are potential sources of CO. Carbon Monoxide incidents are more common during the winter months, and in residential properties. As mentioned above, make sure to have working CO alarms in the home on every level and outside each separate sleeping area. CO alarms have varied expiration dates, but if unsure consider replacing it and test CO alarms at least once a month. If the CO alarm sounds, immediately move to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window/door and call 9-1-1. And NEVER leave a vehicle in the garage to warm it up.

## Public Works

The 2017 Calendars have been delivered to all single family and townhomes and the new calendar has everything you need to know about recycling, Public Works events and all City contacts. If you have not received your calendar, please call Public Works at 301-725-0088 or e-mail them at [dpw@laurel.md.us](mailto:dpw@laurel.md.us)



**CHRISTMAS TREE COLLECTION:** During January, trees will be collected on Wednesdays of each week. Please place your tree wherever you normally place your trash. For further information, please call the Department of Public Works at 301-725-0088.

### When is a Snow Emergency in Effect?

The City's Snow Emergency Plan goes into effect whenever a Snow Emergency is declared for Prince George's County. Also, the Mayor may proclaim or end a Snow Emergency.

Snow Emergencies are announced on most local radio and television stations. Laurel TV, Channel 996(HD) or 71(SD) on Comcast and Channel 12 on Verizon, will broadcast snow-related announcements and closings.

During a Snow Emergency, parking is prohibited on the even-numbered side of designated City Snow Routes. All other posted parking restrictions remain in effect. Parking is prohibited on both sides of the street along State and County Snow Emergency Routes. You may also receive a telephone message from the City advising you to remove vehicles if they are parked on a Snow Emergency Route. Remember ODD is OK! Based on the anticipated severity of the storm, temporary parking restrictions may be in effect in certain neighborhoods. Public Works will install signs prior to the snow event, so keep your eyes open and watch for those special postings!

Should you have any questions about the Snow Emergency Plan or if you cannot find your street and/or development on the Snow Emergency Map, please call the Department of Public Works at 301-725-0088 Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 4:00pm (TTY/Text users call via Maryland Relay). Public Works is staffed during all snow emergencies. For your convenience you can also e-mail Public Works at [dpw@laurel.md.us](mailto:dpw@laurel.md.us).

### Clearing Sidewalks

City Ordinance requires all owners and occupants to clear ice and snow from sidewalks fronting their property within 12 hours after the cessation of snowfall or ice accumulation. Failure to clear your sidewalk may result in a fine. Please clear your sidewalk for the convenience and safety of pedestrians. Don't shovel ice and snow from your driveway or sidewalk onto the street. It causes a traffic hazard that must be plowed and salted again.



# Parks and Recreation

It's time to usher in a new year and the Department of Parks and Recreation has something for everyone! If you have a few holiday pounds to shed, why not buy a fitness room membership or sign up for one of the Department's many fitness programs! It's the perfect time to join a sports league or just drop into the centers for basketball or volleyball. Don't forget about your four-legged friends, they need exercise too and the Dr. Bruce Morley Dog Playground is just the place!



When it's cold outside, warm up inside with one of the many activities for all ages. Kids ages 9-13 can use their Annual Passes for free admission to Middle School Madness every Friday night at the Laurel Armory Community Center. Enjoy video games, movies, pool and ping pong in our gaming lounge. Drop into one of our many free games

clubs at the centers as well! Older teens can't forget about our Weekend Teen Club, Friday nights at the Robert J. DiPietro Center, just use your annual pass!

Bring the kids out on January 13th to the Laurel Police Department's Partnership Activity Hall located at 811 Fifth Street, for a free showing of the popular children's movie, "Secret Life of Pets." The movie begins at 7:00pm and you can bring your own snacks or purchase something from our concession table! Also, mark your calendars for February 10<sup>th</sup>, when we will be showing "Zootopia" at the same time and same place!



Join us at the Municipal Center on Sunday, March 5, 2017, from 1:00 - 4:00pm for the Laurel Civic Improvement Committee's Annual Open House. Representatives from local government, a variety of civic organizations and clubs and some local businesses will be on hand to meet you and answer questions. Bring the whole family and enjoy entertainment and light refreshments.

Looking for a place to hold your next party or event? The Department has venues of all sizes available for rental. Whether it's a small intimate gathering or a larger get together, the Department of Parks and Recreation can help fill your need.

## Contact Us!

### General Information

Phone 301-725-5300  
Fax 301-490-5068

### Mayor

Phone Ext. 2125  
laurelmayor@laurel.md.us

### City Council

Phone Ext. 2121  
laurelcouncil@laurel.md.us

### City Administrator

Phone Ext. 2203  
Cadmin@laurel.md.us

### Budget and Personnel Services

Phone Ext. 2236  
Msaylor@laurel.md.us

### Communications

Phone Ext. 2208  
LaurelPIO@laurel.md.us

### Economic and Community Development

Phone Ext. 2313  
Jbrock@laurel.md.us

### Emergency Services

Phone Ext. 2244  
Sallen@laurel.md.us

### Fire Marshal and Permit Services

Phone Ext. 2238  
FMPS@laurel.md.us

### Information Technology

Phone Ext. 2310  
kfrost@laurel.md.us

### Parks and Recreation

Phone Ext. 2308  
JBarr@laurel.md.us

### Public Works

Phone 301-725-0088  
DPW@laurel.md.us

### Police Department (non emergency)

Phone 301-498-0092  
LPD@laurel.md.us

# Communications

Laurel TV has an easy way for you to watch Laurel TV programming where you want it, when you want it!

Once you subscribe to our YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/LaurelTVOfficial>, every time we upload a new government meeting or local news story or feature, you'll get notification!



After you have subscribed, please take a few minutes to watch some of the local programming brought to you in 2016:

- Laurel TV Specials on the Zika Virus, the Presidential Election 2016, the Main Street Festival and the history of the Emancipation day festivities;
- Features on important Laurel residents like the walk honoring Jim McCeney;
- Or stories highlighting our local schools like Bond Mill Elementary's Destination Imagination Competition, Pallotti High School's Pack and Pray and the Laurel High School's Bill and Melinda Gates Scholarship winner.

Find those stories and so much more on our Laurel TV YouTube Channel.

There is so much going on, you'll want to subscribe today and stay in the know! If you are interested in volunteering for Laurel TV, apply online at [laurelvtv.org](http://laurelvtv.org)! And don't forget to leave information about your community events on our media line at 240-294-1307.

Catch up on all the local news by tuning into Laurel TV!

You can watch on  
Comcast,  
Channel 996(HD) or 71(SD)  
Verizon,  
Channel 12  
or watch them live via  
web streaming at  
[LaurelTV.org](http://LaurelTV.org)







# Mayor's Message

Happy New Year!

The Mayor and City Council are here to support and represent the community, so if you have any issues or concerns please contact my office or a member of the City Council.

My office will continue community events such as "My Time with the Mayor" and "City Hall in the Park." This year's dates and locations are as follows:

**Mayor Craig A. Moe**  
Phone: 301-725-5300 ext. 2125  
Email:  
laurelmayor@laurel.md.us

**Laurel City Council**  
301-725-5300 ext. 2121  
council@laurel.md.us

Michael R. Leszcz  
At-Large  
President

Valerie Nicholas  
Ward 1

H. Edward Ricks  
Ward 1

Donna Crary  
Ward 2

Frederick Smalls  
Ward 2

### 2017 My Time with the Mayor Program

Monday, February 13	Barkman-Kaiser Public Safety Complex
Monday, April 10	Anderson-Murphy Community Center
Monday, June 12	Laurel Municipal Center
Monday, August 14	Robert J. DiPietro Community Center
Wednesday, October 11	Parks & Recreation Maintenance Facility
Monday, December 11	Greenview Drive Cabana

### 2017 City Hall in the Park Program

Wednesday, April 19	Cypress Street Athletic Field/Park
Wednesday, May 17	Discovery Community Park
Wednesday, June 21	Greenview Drive Pool/Park
Wednesday, July 19	Wellington Pool/Park
Wednesday, August 16	Centennial Park
Wednesday, September 20	Emancipation Community Park

Watch for press releases and Facebook and Twitter posts for reminders!

As we usher in 2017, a quick look around town will show you great progress in our economic development endeavors, improved and enhanced infrastructure, creatively designed parks and recreational sites as well as our initiatives in maintain a safe, clean and well-groomed city. Old buildings are giving way to new ones; redevelopment initiatives continue; public safety and improvements to our roadways and parklands are as high on our list as ever! And inside your local government, our City teams are working hard to see to it that your City tax dollars are wisely and purposefully used.

The City's Annual Open House scheduled for Sunday, March 5, 2017 at the Laurel Municipal Center. We'll showcase the best civic organizations and volunteer opportunities available in and around Laurel. It's a family fun day with lots of to learn about and lots of people to connect with. I hope you'll be there!

See you around town!

Craig



8103 Sandy Spring Rd  
Laurel, MD 20707

Phone: 301-725-5300  
Email: laurelmayor@laurel.md.us

Twitter: @cityoflaurel  
Facebook: City of Laurel  
Maryland City Hall