



CITY OF LAUREL, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION NO. 1-2026 *(Revised 02/06/2026)* *Councilwoman Clark Proposed Amendments* *Councilman Simmons Proposed Amendments*

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF LAUREL, MARYLAND TO ESTABLISH A CITY OF LAUREL ADVISORY COMMITTEE RELATING TO THE REDISTRICTING OF CITY WARD BOUNDARIES

Sponsored by the President at the request of the Administration

WHEREAS, Section 603(a) of the City of Laurel Charter establishes the existing two ward boundaries in the City of Laurel ("City"); and

WHEREAS, Section 603(b) of the City of Laurel Charter mandates that not less than once after the publication of each decennial census of the population of the United States, the City Council shall evaluate the wards of the City to ensure that the representation is reasonably equal, and shall have the power to change the boundaries of the wards; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 census determined that the total population of the City as of April 1st, 2020 was **30,060**, that the population of **Ward No. 1** was **13,614** and the population of **Ward No. 2** was **16,446**; and

WHEREAS, the 2022 City of Laurel Redistricting Advisory Committee recommended no change be made to Section 603(a) of the City of Laurel Charter relating to the redistricting of City Ward boundaries; and

WHEREAS, following the 2022 Redistricting Advisory Committee recommendation, the Administration recommended that the Mayor and City Council review the City Ward boundaries again, but to do so earlier rather than waiting until the next decennial United States Census because of the significant amount of approved residential units that had yet to be constructed in the City of Laurel; and

WHEREAS, between 2022-present more than five hundred (500+) additional residential units have been constructed and occupied by residents of the City, thus adding a significant amount of possible eligible voters; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Mayor and City Council to establish an advisory committee to review existing ward boundaries, and to make recommendation(s) to the Mayor and City Council regarding options for the adjustment of ward boundaries to provide for reasonably equal ward populations; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Mayor and City Council to complete the process of redistricting so that any new ward boundaries, as may be adjusted to address the population change, be approved and in effect in time for the general election in the City of Laurel in

November, 2027.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of Laurel, Maryland that there is hereby established an advisory committee to be known as the “**City of Laurel Redistricting Advisory Committee**” (hereinafter the “Committee”), subject to the following:

1. Purpose and Duties

- a. To review the existing ward boundaries of the City as established in the City of Laurel Charter.
- b. To review the population data from the 2020 U.S. Census as it relates to the City.
- c. To review other pertinent data regarding new residential units constructed within the City limits from 2022 to present as it relates to the total population and ward boundaries of the City.
- d. To receive written or oral testimony from any person or government agency representative, including any elected or appointed official.
- e. To make recommendation(s) to the Mayor and City Council regarding the redistricting of ward boundaries, if necessary, so that each ward will contain a reasonably equal population.
- f. No funds may be expended by the Committee for any purpose without the express written consent of the City Administrator/CAO.
- g. The Committee’s authority shall be limited to acting in an advisory capacity to the Mayor and City Council as set forth in this resolution.
- h. To consider geographic compactness, communities of interest, existing neighborhood associations and boundaries, major roadways and natural geographic features, demographic diversity, and the preservation of established community connections when developing redistricting recommendations, while ensuring reasonably equal population distribution between wards.

2. Membership. The Committee shall consist of five (5) voting residents of the City.

- a. All members shall be appointed by the Mayor, confirmed by the City Council
- b. Membership shall be made up in the following manner:
 - i. The Mayor shall select two (2) voting members of the general public, from each of the two wards.
 - ii. The City Council President shall select one (1) voting member of the general public.
 - iii. One member shall be from the Laurel Planning Commission.
 - iv. One member shall be from the Board of Election Supervisors.

3. Appointment. The voting members, as well as the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, shall be appointed by the Mayor, subject to confirmation by a vote of the City Council.

4. **Meetings.** All meetings of the Committee shall be open to the public with reasonable advance notice as required by Maryland State Law, except for legally permitted executive sessions. The Committee shall keep minutes of all its meetings.
 - a. General public participation may be permitted at the discretion of the Chairperson at any open meeting and shall be allowed at any meeting convened for the purpose of taking public testimony.
 - b. The Committee shall hold at least two (2) public hearings for the purpose of taking public testimony, and there shall be at least five (5) days' notice of such hearing in the same manner as notice given for all City Council Meetings.
 - c. All public hearings and committee meetings, when possible, shall be recorded and made available on the City's website. The Committee shall publish all proposed redistricting maps, data sources, and methodologies at least seven (7) days before any public hearing for community review. All written public comments shall be compiled and made part of the public record.
5. **Staff Support.** The Mayor is hereby authorized and directed to assign staff support to the Committee, as may be required. The City Clerk and the Director of the Department of Economic and Community Development shall serve as advisors to the Committee in an ex officio, non-voting capacity.
6. **Report to Mayor & City Council.** The Committee shall make its final report to the Mayor and City Council with its findings and recommendations, including at least two (2) alternative redistricting scenarios with detailed analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of each option, demographic composition analysis for each proposed ward configuration, maps showing current and proposed boundaries, and various options regarding the adjustment of ward boundaries within six (6) months from the date all members have been appointed and confirmed by the City Council.
7. **Termination of Duties.** The Committee shall remain in force and effect for a period of three (3) months after the date of its report to the Mayor and City Council, unless extended or terminated earlier by a majority vote of the City Council.
8. **Process Integrity.** (a) The Committee shall conduct its work in a non-partisan manner, with decisions based solely on population data, geographic considerations, and community input as outlined in this resolution. (b) The Committee shall not consider the political party affiliation, voting history, or partisan advantage of any redistricting proposal. (c) All Committee members shall sign a statement affirming their commitment to a fair, transparent, and non-partisan redistricting process prior to beginning their work.

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the members of the Committee shall serve at the pleasure of the Mayor and may be removed if the Volunteer Code of Conduct is not

followed.

AND, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution shall take effect on the date of its adoption.

ADOPTED this _____ day of _____, 2026.

ATTEST:

SARA A. GREEN, CPM, MMC
City Clerk

BRENCIS D. SMITH
President of the City Council

APPROVED this _____ day of _____, 2026.

KEITH R. SYDNOR
Mayor