

# The Town of Laurel Park

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR THE TOWN OF LAUREL PARK

## WHAT'S INSIDE

- TOWN PROJECTS AND ISSUES UPDATES
- LAUREL GREEN PARK TEMPORARY CLOSURE DATES
- HAZARDOUS WASTE AND PAINT DISPOSAL EVENT
- WILDFIRE MITIGATION COST-SHARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
- ANNUAL MULCH SALE
- JUMP OFF ROCK HALF MARATHON & 10K RACE

## Community Updates

Our Town is very busy! With all of the activities, we want you to know about some significant issues.

### **STORMWATER IMPROVEMENTS (Grant funded)**

Culverts, inlets and edge-of-roadway improvements will commence in July and be complete in September of this year.

### **PAVING**

A substantial investment in our road improvements will commence in August and complete in September. These expenses have already been budgeted.

### **BICYCLE PASSING LANE (Partially Grant funded)**

The first uphill passing lane will be included with paving activities this year. The lane is located on Laurel Park Highway, near the Ransier Dr. intersection.

### **TOWN HALL**

Architects have been interviewed to help determine the need and estimate the cost of building a new Town Hall. Only preliminary evaluations will proceed at this time. Once Council finalizes this year's upcoming budget, they will determine any need to move forward.

Continued

**ECUSTA TRAIL (Grant funded)**

The first phase of the Ecusta Trail will commence this summer and be complete by the end of 2023.

**LEAF PICKUP**

The maintenance department completed leaf pickup on February 8th. This was 2 weeks earlier than in 2022.

**LAUREL GREEN STREAM RESTORATION (Grant funded)**

The stream between Laurel Green and Lakemoor Condominiums will be restored and renovated to minimize erosion and create an educational environment. Work will start in March and be finished in June of this year. The park will be temporarily closed during part of these construction activities (scroll down for map).

**HIGHWAY 64 IMPROVEMENTS**

Land acquisition is underway. Work is not expected to start until 2024 and be complete in 2025. Our Town has been setting funds aside for nearly 5 years to help with landscaping within the roadway easement.

**COATS FACTORY**

Coats vacated their factory at the end of 2022. The facility is for sale and several developers have shown interest in the property.

**PROPERTY RE-EVALUATIONS**

The County sent out property re-evaluations the first part of February. This is not a tax bill. Council and Staff have started budget preparations but will not determine the new tax rate until June after we have adopted our annual budget.

**SANITARY SEWER**

Council and staff are meeting with consultants to determine options and grant opportunities, or other appropriations.

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## MULCH

### This year we're going to do the sale of mulch a little differently.

Instead of setting a date and time for people to line up, we will accept orders in-person between the hours of **10am-2pm M-F, starting now**. If you can't get by the office during those hours, feel free to put your order form and payment in an envelope (or staple check to form) and drop it in the black drop box and we'll mail you a receipt.

There will be a limit of 6 loads, but we will keep a list of people that would like to be contacted, as we will likely have some left over.

Order Forms are available at Town Hall just outside of the main entrance, inside at the counter, or on our website.



## Commissioner's Corner

George W. Banta, Commissioner



### Caution - Road Construction Ahead

Caution - Road Construction Ahead is a sign we all hope to see popping up around town this spring. The top priority in Laurel Park for the current fiscal year is road resurfacing and infrastructure improvements. Over the past several months, the Town has been closely working with WGLA Engineering to update our road improvement plan and identify the roads to be resurfaced this summer. The road improvement plan is kept current and reviewed annually so we can best focus on key areas of concern. It is clear that road resurfacing is one of the major needs within Laurel Park. This year, the Town has allocated a little over \$1,000,000 for road resurfacing projects. The majority of the dollars are coming from our general fund. Some additional monies are made available for paving through the state of North Carolina's Powell Funds.

Prior to starting the repaving project this summer, many of our roads require improvements to the ditch-banks and shoulders to enhance stormwater flow. Additionally, approximately 50 culverts are in need of replacement or repair using an internal liner to better manage drainage and runoff. Starting this spring and prior to paving, work will begin on culvert replacements and linings. The Laurel Park Public Works department will make some of the culvert repairs while the larger projects will be completed by outside contractors. Funding for stormwater improvements will come from the Town's share of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds in the amount of \$742,000.

The Town is currently in the process of completing all of the details necessary to put the bid packages together and award contracts for the road work and culvert repairs. For Laurel Park, this is one of the largest infrastructure projects we have undertaken. We continue to keep roads and infrastructure improvements as a top priority within the Town and remain focused on the most effective ways to fund these projects. To keep our residents informed, we hope to post the road resurfacing and culvert replacement plan on the Town's web site in the very near future.

## Brush Collection

Place brush out March 11-26

Pick up begins March 27

Beginning the week of March 27th, Public Works will collect brush placed by the roadside for the spring brush collection. *Brush placed out after March 27th will not be collected.* This process takes about a month to complete, so please be patient!

Bagged leaves are collected first. Please use paper bags and submit your requests through the Town website or call Town Hall for collection within 3 business days.

Tips for a successful pickup:

- Place by the roadside, not obstructing traffic
- Limbs should not be more than 3 in. diameter
- The Town will not collect brush from a major landscape or clearing operation
- Brush may not be placed at any time other than the designated fall/spring pickup

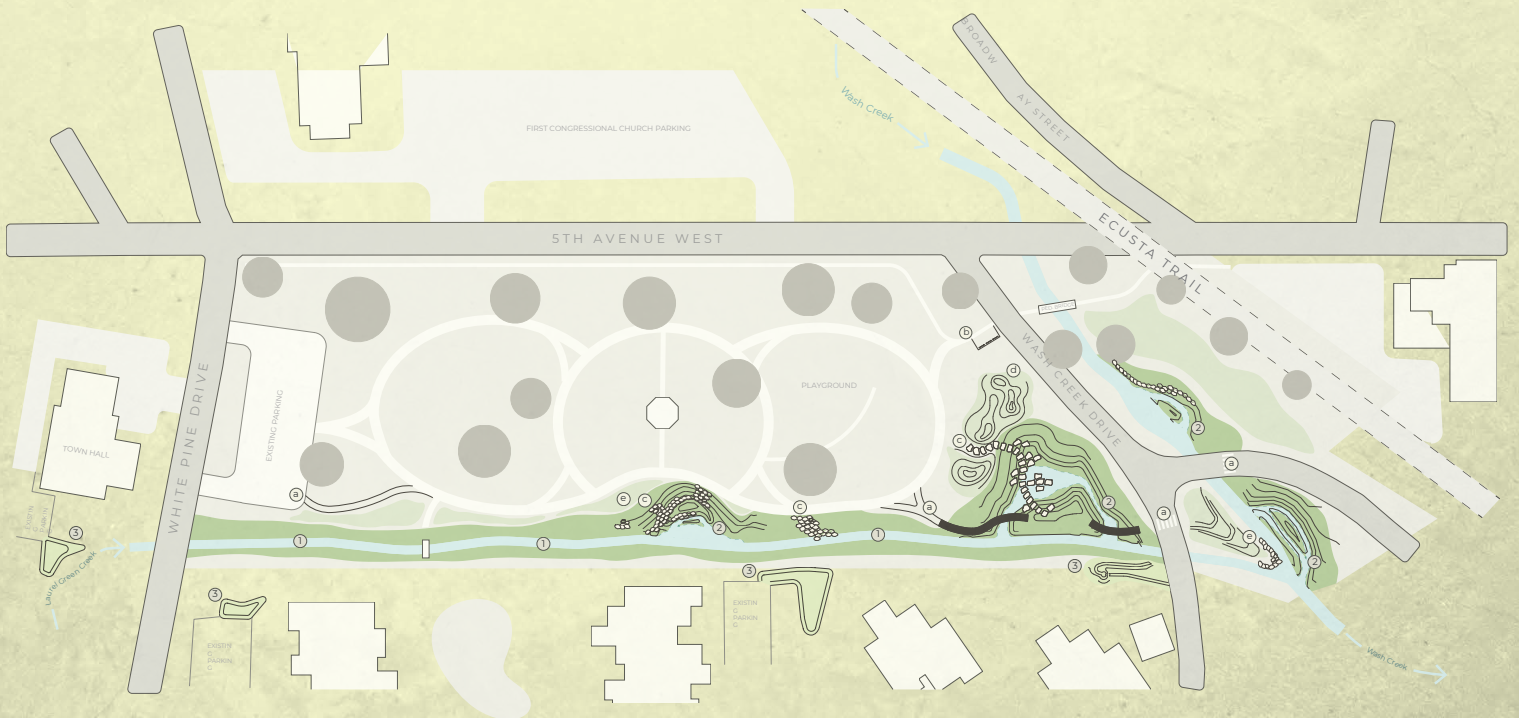
### ***Did You Know?***

**You can report road and sign issues on our website?**

**Just go to [www.laurelpark.org](http://www.laurelpark.org) and choose the "How Do I" dropdown.**

**There you can choose "Report street/road issues".**

# Laurel Green Creek Restoration Project



**LAUREL GREEN CREEK RESTORATION PROJECT OBJECTIVES INCLUDE:**  
 Channel stabilization  
 Establish native riparian habitat  
 Slow down water from rainfall runoff

- RESTORATION FEATURES :** ① IN-STREAM RESTORATION    ② FLOODPLAIN ACTIVATION    ③ STORMWATER GARDENS
- NEW AMENITY FEATURES :** ④ TRAILS AND PATHWAYS    ⑤ BIKE INFRASTRUCTURE    ⑥ CREEK ACCESS POINTS    ⑦ PLAY MOUNDS    ⑧ VIEW POINTS



**Laurel Green Park will be closed from mid-March (potentially as early as the 13th) through June 30th for creek restoration.**

# Please help save our Trees



DON'T FORGET ABOUT OUR INVASIVE VINE  
MATCHING FUND DRIVE



IF YOU'D LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE, PLEASE MAKE  
CHECK OUT TO THE TOWN OF LAUREL PARK

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## Job Opportunities with the Town of Laurel Park

The Town of Laurel Park is currently in the process of accepting applications for  
the the following positions:

Finance Officer  
Public Works staff

If you, or anyone you know is interested in applying, please see the complete job  
descriptions and application at [www.laurelpark.org](http://www.laurelpark.org)

# Friends of Laurel Park

The Friends of Laurel Park have a busy 2023 calendar of events underway, beginning with the first-ever free indoor winter concert that was held Feb.24 with local musicians Joel Helfand and John Perkins at the First Congregational Church.

Beginning April 15th, five more concerts are planned with a variety of music and bands at Jump Off Rock. **Save the dates: April 15, May 13, June 10, Sept. 16, Oct. 6.**

We will also host a historical bus tour again, with dates still to be decided in July or August.

On **March 25th 10 am - 12 pm**, The Friends are **hosting a workshop at town hall, with Will Coffee presenting ways to control invasive plants within the town.**

At least one Naturalist event will occur at Rhododendron Lake Nature Park involving naturalists Mike Erwin and Eric Young, in either late April or early May.

The Friends continue to work with the Parks & Greenways Committee on footpath developments, and Jim Wilson continues to serve as the FLP representative on the town's Centennial Committee.



# WHAT'S BUZZIN'

## Bee City USA - Laurel Park Steering Committee member needed and welcomes your help!

We are organizing a steering committee to do what we can to sustain critical populations of native bees by adding native plants and nest sites, and reducing pesticide use.

**We want to be part of the solution, not the problem!**  
**WILL YOU HELP US?**

**Join us for our meeting on Tuesday, March 28th at 4:00 at Town Hall**



We are also interested in knowing if there are any beekeepers in Laurel Park.

Please send an email to [tamin@laurelpark.org](mailto:tamin@laurelpark.org) or call 828-693-4840 if you would be willing to join us in our efforts or know of a beekeeper.

**Why bees?** Simply put, pollinators are crucial to food and flower production. We need them and they need our help as their populations are in serious peril all over the world.



## ARBOR DAY IS APRIL 28TH

**PARKS AND GREENWAYS, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE FRIENDS OF LAUREL PARK, WILL BE HOLDING AN EVENT TO MARK THE OCCASION. STAY TUNED AND CHECK FOR DETAILS ON OUR WEBSITE!**

## Stay in the Laurel Park Loop!



Meeting agendas and minutes can be found on our website [www.laurelpark.org](http://www.laurelpark.org) Click on the "Government" tab then choose "Agendas and Minutes"



Find us on Facebook at Town of Laurel Park, North Carolina

## BLACKBOARD CONNECT

Follow this link and sign up to be notified of trash day changes, Town emergencies and special events by email or text

<https://laurelparknc.bbcportal.com/>

## Parks & Greenways Board TRAILS UPDATE

On Feb 11, the P&G board and Boy Scout leader David Lily briefed and lead about 10 Boy Scouts and parents to complete the switchback trail at Glenn Rock. This involved bench-cutting the trail, installing Locust log stairs, clearing leaf debris from the spring, clearing large rocks for future sitting areas and hauling cut branches and old logs out of the area for composting.

On Feb 21, the board met with Southwinds Landscaping to initiate contracted construction of the upper entrance platform off Echo Circle, rock slab traversal path, stairs, spring capture pond and sitting areas.

Work at Glenn Rock Park should be complete this Spring and provide a nice wooded hiking trail from Echo Circle, through Glenn Rock Park, across Hebron Road to the Silver Spring Trail parallel to Westwood Drive.

**The P&G Board is looking for residents that are qualified to provide advice on stormwater drainage at the Laurel Green playground and/or structural advice on the existing playground equipment.**

**Please contact [tamin@laurelpark.org](mailto:tamin@laurelpark.org)**

## BLUEBIRD PROJECT

Blue bird season is underway in our parks! We are focused on providing optimal habitats to encourage Eastern Bluebirds to claim Laurel Park as their home.

Volunteers check boxes late February through June, making sure invasive birds and other predators do not take over the native species nesting sites. Watching eggs successfully hatch is a rewarding process for our monitors! Currently we have twelve volunteers monitoring thirty nesting boxes spread throughout Laurel Park.

We would love to help more residents learn about and enjoy the birding opportunities in Laurel Park. Monitoring boxes is a wonderful experience for both families and retirees. Be sure to contact us at [Teachph5@aol.com](mailto:Teachph5@aol.com) if you are interested in learning more.

**Would you like a bird box for your home?** Your Parks and Greenways Board is planning to host a box-building workshop later this spring, just in time for Mother's and Father's Days. Materials will be provided at minimal cost for participants to leave the workshop with their own box and pole!

Watch the Laurel Park website for more information.

## Jump Off Rock Half Marathon & 10K

**Beautiful, Fast, Fun & Spectator Friendly Event**

**There will be 10k Cash prizes for the overall top three, male/female winners!**

**Saturday, May 13, 2023**

An endurance running event like none other, the 3rd Annual Jump Off Rock Half Marathon presented by Hunter Subaru and 10k presented by Pardee UNC Health Care, is one of the fastest half marathon races in the south and runs "downhill to downtown."

*Both races are now USATF Sanctioned!*

For more information and to register, go to <https://jumpoffrockhalfmarathon.com/>





## Mountain Valleys' RC&D Cost-Share Assistance for Laurel Park Residents

[Mountain Valleys Resource Conservation & Development](#) is offering two mitigation cost-share assistance programs for Laurel Park residents. Eligible applicants can receive a 50% reimbursement for reducing wildfire risk within 100 feet of their homes and 10 feet of driveways, including, tree and brush thinning, dead vegetation removal, pruning trees and shrubs, cleaning gutters, and treating invasive Miscanthus grass (aka Chinese Silvergrass, pampas grass). Reimbursements are capped at \$2,000 (50% of \$4,000 project). Preference is given to homes within a moderate-to-high wildfire risk area.



Before/After  
Wildfire mitigation  
project example

Details and applications are available online at:

[Wildfire mitigation cost-share assistance](#)

(Deadline – April 30, 2023)

[Miscanthus grass cost-share assistance](#)

(Available through June 2024)



Chinese Silvergrass  
AKA Pampas grass

**\*See flyer on next page for more details**



### VHFD Reminds You to Test Your Alarms and Check your Address Visibility

Daylight Saving Time starts on March 12th and as we move our clocks forward, we should replace batteries in our smoke and CO alarms and test them.

Also, when is the last time you checked the house numbers on your mailbox or on your house? Make sure they are clearly visible so that emergency vehicles can easily spot your address in case of emergency.

For any questions or additional information contact Fire and Life Safety Officer  
Chris McDowell at 828-692-2581 ext 105



RHODODENDRON  
LAKE  
IN THE 1920S





**50% OFF**

**Reduce Your Home's Wildfire Risk**

Anything that can burn is fuel for a fire. You can create defensible space by maintaining a buffer between your home and hazardous fuels.

Mountain Valleys offers 50% reimbursement for residents in 8 counties to hire a contractor or rent equipment to reduce hazardous fuel (vegetation) near the home.

## PROJECT EXAMPLES

Clearing Gutters and Roofs  
Thinning Trees and Vegetation  
Pruning Branches  
Removing Vegetation Debris  
Treating Miscanthus Grass



Available in Madison, Buncombe, Henderson, Transylvania, McDowell, Rutherford, Polk, and Cleveland Counties. Residents **MUST** apply and sign an agreement before project begins. Projects are within 100 feet of the home or 10 feet from the driveway. Reimbursements are capped at \$2,000 for residents and \$4,000 for communities.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

828-206-6159

wildfire@mountainvalleysrcd.org  
www.mountainvalleysrcd.org/forest

**TUESDAYS**

# Henderson County Solid Waste

March

**14th**

**SPRING 2023**

## **HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE & PAINT COLLECTION EVENTS**

April

**11th**

May

**9th**

**8AM-12PM**

**\*\*Must be a Henderson County Resident to participate, Proof of residency required\*\***

### **Liquid Paint & similar items**

**Cost: \$2 per 1 gallon, \$10 per 5 gallon**

**30 gallon limit per person**

**Drop off: Transfer Station (side gate)- 800 Stoney  
Mountain Rd.**



### **Chemicals, Cleaners, & Pesticides**

**Cost: Free**

**Drop off: Convenience Center- 265 Convenience  
Center Dr.**



**For more information  
[www.hcrecycles.org](http://www.hcrecycles.org)  
828-694-6524**

Pesticide Disposal  
Assistance Program





# Emergency Preparedness Are You Ready?

By Commissioner Deb Bridges

The Town of Laurel Park is in the process of developing an [Emergency Operations Plan \(EOP\)](#) in accordance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) comprehensive framework of policy and guidance for state and local disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation operations. Once completed and approved by the town council, Laurel Park will be well-positioned with county, regional, and state emergency response agencies and services. The fundamental purpose of an EOP rests on exercising and maintaining preparedness as a first line of defense when disaster strikes or emergency situations arise. Having a plan in place and ready to deploy or initiate at a moment's notice results in significantly faster response times and increased recovery rates.

You will be hearing more about the EOP as town staff, department heads, and county officials continue to work on this very important project. In the meantime, you might think about your level of preparedness; and, perhaps, coming up with an EOP for your own household or business.

Here are some resources and links with downloadable materials for individuals, families, and business owners:

## [Are You Ready? An In-Depth Guide to Citizen Preparedness](#)

This downloadable booklet is an A-to-Z comprehensive guide covering everything from power outages to cyberattacks. In addition to preparedness, other features include planning, taking action, recovering, insurance claims, and even disaster assistance.

## [ReadyNC.gov](#)

Planning and preparation information, current emergency and weather alerts, live traffic updates, power outages, and more. Also available as a mobile app for both iPhone and Android phones.

## [Laurel Park Emergency Notifications – Blackboard Connect](#)

Blackboard Connect is a system used by the Town to send instant information via email, phone calls, and text messages. Used for emergencies and service notification. Also available as a mobile app.

## [Duke Energy Safety & Emergency Preparedness](#)

## [National Fire Protection Association Wildfire Preparedness Tips & Resources](#)

## [American Red Cross How to Prepare for Emergencies](#)








## [American Red Cross Disaster Preparedness Plan](#)

## [Smart911](#)

Smart911 allows citizens to provide the additional details that 9-1-1 call takers may need in order to assist them during an emergency. Smart911 is free, private, and secure. ([Click here](#) for Henderson County's Smart911 sign-up.)



# CALENDAR

March 1		Begin buying Mulch
March 11-26		Place Brush by the Roadside
March 16		Town Staff Meet and Greet in Town Hall Meeting Room
March 27		Spring brush collection begins
April 7		Good Friday - Town Offices Closed
April 20		Community Class - Policing 101 in Town Hall Meeting Room
May 13		Jump Off Rock Half-Marathon & 10k Race

## Public Meeting Schedule

### Special Town Council Meeting

March 7 @ 9:30 am (See website for Zoom sign-in)

### Town Council Work Session

March 16 @ 9:30 am

April 13 @ 9:30 am

### Town Council Regular Meeting

March 21 @ 9:30 am

April 18 @ 9:30 am

### Parks & Greenways Board

March 14 @ 9:30 am

April 11 @ 9:30 am

### Parks & Greenways Site Meeting

March 23 @ 4 pm

April 27 @ 4 pm

### Planning Board

March 14 @ 3:00 pm

April 11 @ 3:00 pm

### Board of Adjustment

March 16 @ 4:00 pm

### ABC Board - at the ABC Store

March 28 @ 8:30 am

April 25 @ 8:30 am

### Centennial Committee

March 13 @ 11:30 am

April 10 @ 11:30 am

### Bicycle Advisory Committee

March 13 @ 3:00 pm

April 10 @ 3:00 pm

## Town Contact Information

**Town Hall** **693-4840**

9:00 am – 5:00 pm Mon - Fri

**Police Office** **692-9399**

(non-emergency)

**Police Non-Emergency** **697-3025**

**Valley Hill Fire** **692-2581**

**Mayor:** J. Carey O’Cain

**Mayor Pro Tem:** Paul Hansen

### Commissioners:

George W. Banta

Kristin Dunn

Deborah Hinson Bridges

**Town Manager:** Alex Carmichael

**Police Chief:** Bobbie Trotter

**Finance Director:** Position Open

**Public Works Director:** Brandon Johnson

**Asst. to the Manager:** Jordan Jones

**Town Clerk:** Tamara Amin

Laurel Park Town Hall 441 White Pine Dr.  
Laurel Park, NC 28739