

**Expanding the Preamble of The Charter of the City of Annapolis**

For the purpose of expanding the Preamble of the City Charter to include statements of purpose and aspiration regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion; human, civil, and voting rights; environmental stewardship; public safety; municipal operations; the Chesapeake Bay and natural ecosystems; and the impacts of climate change; and generally related to the City of Annapolis Preamble in the City Charter.

**City Council of the  
City of Annapolis**

**Charter Amendment 3-26**

**Introduced by: Alderman Savidge**

**Co-sponsored by: Alderwoman Allsup-Johnson, Alderwoman O'Neill,  
Alderman Schandelmeier and Alderwoman Contee**

**Referred to:** Rules and City Government Committee

**A CHARTER AMENDMENT** concerning

**Expanding the Preamble of The Charter of the City of Annapolis**

**FOR** the purpose of expanding the Preamble of the City Charter to include statements of purpose and aspiration regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion; human, civil, and voting rights; environmental stewardship; public safety; municipal operations; the Chesapeake Bay and natural ecosystems; and the impacts of climate change; and generally related to the City of Annapolis Preamble in the City Charter.

**BY** repealing and reenacting with amendments the following portions of the Code of the City of Annapolis, 2026 Edition: **THE CHARTER PREAMBLE**

**WHEREAS,** The City of Annapolis is a historic and diverse municipality whose residents are entitled to a Charter that reflects their shared values and aspirations for an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable community; and

**WHEREAS,** The protection of human, civil, and voting rights is fundamental to democratic self-governance, and the City of Annapolis has a compelling interest in affirming and defending these rights for all persons within its jurisdiction, regardless of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, or immigration status; and

1 **WHEREAS,** The health and safety of Annapolis residents, employees, and visitors depend  
2 upon a municipal government that actively maintains a clean, safe, and healthy  
3 environment and that takes reasonable measures to protect the community from  
4 internal and external threats to public safety and the continuity of municipal  
5 operations; and  
6

7 **WHEREAS,** The City of Annapolis recognizes that a clean and sustainable environment is  
8 essential to the health, welfare, and quality of life of all residents, and the City  
9 bears a special responsibility as a steward of the natural systems upon which the  
10 community depends, including the Chesapeake Bay and its surrounding  
11 watershed; and  
12

13 **WHEREAS,** The impacts of climate change and sea level rise pose a direct and serious threat  
14 to the City of Annapolis, its coastal geography, infrastructure, and the well-being  
15 of its residents, and the City has both the authority and the responsibility to take  
16 proactive steps to protect the community and its ecosystems for the benefit of  
17 current and future generations; and  
18

19 **WHEREAS,** Position 1 of the City of Annapolis Charter Revision Commission's final report to  
20 the Mayor and City Council on September 13, 2021, recommends that the City  
21 Charter Preamble be strengthened, and specifically recommends that, “[a] second  
22 paragraph... be added to the existing Preamble in the Charter to broaden and  
23 modernize its scope”; and  
24

25 **WHEREAS,** The Charter Revision Commission’s recommendation to strengthen the Preamble  
26 specifically contemplated the inclusion of commitments to diversity and  
27 inclusion, human, civil, and voting rights, a safe, clean, and healthy environment,  
28 and resilience against the effects of adverse weather and sea level rise, and the  
29 language adopted herein is consistent with and in furtherance of those stated  
30 objectives; and  
31

32 **WHEREAS,** Expanding the Preamble of the City Charter to articulate these values and  
33 commitments expressly will strengthen the foundational document of Annapolis  
34 city government, affirm the aspirations of residents, and provide enduring  
35 guidance to City officials in the exercise of their public duties; and  
36

37 **WHEREAS,** The new provisions added as the second paragraph of the Preamble of the City  
38 Charter pursuant to this Charter Amendment are aspirational in nature, reflecting  
39 the City’s values and ideals, and are not intended to confer specific rights or  
40 otherwise create legally binding obligations in their own right; now, therefore,  
41

42 **SECTION I: BE IT ESTABLISHED AND ORDAINED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY**  
43 **COUNCIL** that the City Charter of the City of Annapolis shall be amended to  
44 read as follows:

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**Explanation:** ~~Strikethrough~~ indicates portions to be removed  
Underlining & Red indicate additions to the City Charter.  
[bracket] indicates a revisors note

**THE CHARTER**  
**PREAMBLE**

We, the people of the City of Annapolis, County of Anne Arundel, State of Maryland, in exercise of the ancient right to organize, maintain and perpetuate a municipal form of self-government, and to provide an orderly execution of municipal functions, to ensure accountability for public funds, to promote the general welfare, and to secure the benefits of home rule in accordance with the Constitution and laws of the State of Maryland, do re-adopt, ratify, ordain and establish as our Charter and form of government this Charter of the City of Annapolis.

In furtherance of these purposes, the City of Annapolis affirms its commitment to ensuring that all people living within its boundaries are fully and responsibly represented, and that the conduct of municipal government reflects the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The City recognizes the importance of safeguarding the human, civil, and voting rights of its residents and of maintaining a healthy and safe environment for residents, employees, and visitors. It is a purpose of this Charter to guide the City in protecting the community from internal and external threats to public safety and municipal operations. Recognizing that a clean and sustainable environment is essential to the health, welfare, and quality of life of the community, and that the City bears a special responsibility as a steward of the Chesapeake Bay and the natural systems upon which the community depends, this Charter is established to guide municipal government in protecting these ecosystems and addressing the impacts of climate change and sea level rise for the benefit of current and future generations.

**SECTION II: BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL** that pursuant to Local Government Article § 4-304(a)(2) of the Annotated Code of Maryland:

1. The City Council conducted a public hearing on the proposed charter amendment on [Insert Date].
2. Notice of the public hearing regarding the proposed charter amendment was published on [Insert Date], providing residents of the City of Annapolis with at least 21 days' advance notice.

**SECTION III: AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL** that the City Clerk shall, in accordance with Local Government Article § 4-304(b) of the Annotated Code of Maryland:

1. Post an exact copy of the charter amendment at City Hall for 40 days following the adoption of this Charter Amendment;
2. Publish a fair summary of the proposed amendment in a newspaper with general circulation at least four times, at weekly intervals, within the 40 days after the Charter Amendment is adopted; and
3. Maintain proof that the requirements were carried out and provide the information required by the Maryland Department of Legislative Services.

1  
2 **SECTION IV: BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL**  
3 that this Charter Amendment will take effect *50 days after its adoption* on *[Insert Date]* unless a  
4 petition for a referendum on the proposed amendment is submitted to the City Council in  
5 accordance with Local Government Article § 4-304(c) of the Annotated Code of Maryland.