

Open Line

A Monthly Newsletter for City of Auburn Citizens

November 2020

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City of Auburn

A look inside the 2021-2022 budget

The following is a brief excerpt from the City Manager's budget message to the Mayor and Auburn City Council for the new biennial budget approved by the council in September. You can read the full message and see the full budget document at auburnalabama.org/budget.

"It is my honor to present for your consideration the proposed budget for the FY2021 and FY2022 fiscal years. ...This budget process has been one of the most unique our team has experienced. Mid-way through our current fiscal year, the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Many of our employees turned their attention to developing workplace protocols and alternate work sites and schedules to make sure we were able to continue to deliver the services our citizens expect. These actions upended the usual budget process, but we adapted, overcame and met our obligations.

This budget represents the continuing commitment of our City government to deliver superior services while striving toward excellence in efficiency and taxpayer value. Reflected in this budget are the Council's goals, priorities, tradition of fiscal discipline, as well as the City's historically conservative management policies. Fiscal sustainability in the face of a slow national economic recovery due to the impact of COVID-19 is a key factor in our budgeting strategy and, as always, input from the citizens we serve greatly directs our budget development.

...Auburn's Citizen Survey continues to play a critical role in identifying citizen priorities and is one of our most valuable feedback mechanisms for gauging satisfaction with City services. ...In conjunction with the Citizen Survey results, City Council members were polled regarding their priorities for the next biennium. ...The results of these two surveys heavily influenced the development of the FY2021 and FY2022 budget.

...In keeping with our goal to operate a lean government, personal services in the General Fund are kept below the 50% target. ...Maintaining personnel costs below 50% affords management a great deal of flexibility to adapt to changing economic conditions, which is vital as we move into the upcoming biennium. ...

Capital investments

NW Auburn Neighborhood Plan

In FY2021-FY2022, I am proposing capital investments totaling \$3 million over both years and almost \$25 million over the term of the CIP. The largest project, which is also included in the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Master Plan, is \$14 million in improvements to the Boykin Campus, which includes a museum, gym, indoor and outdoor pools and branch library. Ample

Continued on Page 2...



space for the planned expansion will be available once the Environmental Services and Public Works departments relocate to accommodate their growing needs. Various road projects are also proposed for the area, including improvements to North Donahue Drive that will ease traffic congestion and improve traffic flow along Donahue Drive from Bragg Avenue to Cary Drive.

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Master Plan

This plan covers both Parks & Recreation and Auburn Public Library facilities and is planned for a phased implementation. Projects include an inclusive playground at Town Creek Park, renovations to the Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center and the expansion of the Auburn Soccer Complex. For the upcoming biennium, an emphasis is being placed on parks, leisure and cultural projects with investments totaling \$17.3 million over FY2021 and FY2022.

Downtown Master Plan

A total of \$7.5 million is proposed to fund projects related to the Downtown Master Plan for the upcoming biennium, including \$3.7 million in federal funds to improve the intersection of South College Street and Samford Avenue, widening the sidewalk on West Magnolia from North Donahue Drive to Wright Street, traffic signal upgrades at South Gay Street and Thach Avenue and the completion of the Wright Street Parking Deck. The overall investment in the Downtown Master Plan over the term of the CIP is \$10.2 million and focuses on improving traffic flow, sidewalks and downtown lighting.

Renew Opelika Road

During this fiscal year, work began on Phase 4 of Renew Opelika Road. This project improves the section between Gentry Drive and Saugahatchee

Road. ...Phase 4, a \$1.7 million project financed in part by the Auburn Water Works Board, is expected to be completed in FY2021 and will serve as a catalyst for further revitalization of Opelika Road.

...In addition to projects driven directly by strategic plans, we are proposing a number of other capital projects related to traffic and transportation issues. This includes North Donahue Drive and Shug Jordan Parkway intersection improvements, installation of a traffic signal at Shell Toomer Parkway and South College Street and installation of a traffic signal at Farmville Road and North Donahue Drive, when it is warranted. The total proposed investment in traffic and transportation infrastructure for the next biennium is \$22.7 million. Increasing the funding in this area is a result of recommendations from the 2019 Comprehensive Traffic Study.

...As always, my recommendations for capital and service investments are rooted in long-term strategic plans and are based on priorities and desires communicated by our City Council and residents. We are fortunate to have a citizenry and governing body that has been steadfast in their priorities. Through the proposed budget, we are prepared to adapt to our changing environment and citizen expectations.

The continued commitment to operating a fiscally sound local government allows the City of Auburn to continue to move forward in providing quality public services at a level commensurate with the demands of our residents. ...I believe this budget lays a solid foundation for our strategic approach to the future.

Sincerely,

James C. Buston, III

City Manager

Veterans Day celebration canceled

In May, the annual Mayor's Memorial Day Breakfast was canceled with hopes that the City would be able to hold a breakfast honoring this year's award recipients and all our service men and women on Veterans Day. However, for the continued safety of the Auburn community during these uncertain times, all Veterans Day celebrations have been canceled. Instead, Auburn residents are invited to view a special video tribute from Mayor Ron Anders that will be posted Nov. 11 on the City's social media accounts, @CityofAuburnAL.



2020 State of the City Address

You're invited to the 2nd Annual State of the City Address on Monday, Nov. 9. Join us for the virtual event at [facebook.com/CityofAuburnAL](https://www.facebook.com/CityofAuburnAL) or [youtube.com/CityofAuburnAL](https://www.youtube.com/CityofAuburnAL) as Mayor Ron Anders reflects on all that's happened in our community over the last year. He'll talk about the successes and challenges we've faced as a community, look forward to Auburn's bright future and recognize this year's Mayor's Lamplighter Award recipients.

Board Vacancies

Two vacancies on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board will be announced at the Oct. 20 Auburn City Council meeting and will be filled at the Nov. 17 meeting. Applications will close on Nov. 9 at 5 p.m. Visit [auburnalabama.org/boards](https://www.auburnalabama.org/boards) to apply or to find more information about volunteering for one of our 22 boards and commissions.

Neighborhood Trick or Treat

Neighborhood trick or treating will be held on Friday, Oct. 30, from 6-8 p.m. because of the Auburn University home football game on Saturday, Oct. 31. This change allows our Auburn Police to focus on the safety of trick or treaters. Trick or treaters are encouraged to comply with all requirements and recommendations in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19.



Our Drive-Thru Trick or Treat event will also be held on Friday from 6-8 p.m. at the Auburn Parks and Recreation Complex, 235 Opelika Road. Find more information about Parks and Recreation's lineup of Halloween events at auburnalabama.org/parks.

Readers' Review Book Club

Are you looking for a book club to join from the comfort of your own home? Join the Auburn Public Library's Reader's Review Book Club! Reader's Review meets the third Tuesday of each month at 5 p.m. on Zoom. Book club selections are available for checkout via the Auburn Public Library's eBook and eAudiobook service, CloudLibrary, or curbside pick-up. Register using the link at auburnalabama.org/library or by emailing libraryevents@auburnalabama.org. You can look forward to diving into the following selections over the next few months:

10/20: "Becoming Mrs. Lewis" by Patti Callahan Henry

11/17: "Transcendent Kingdom" by Yaa Gyasi

12/15: "The House in the Cerulean Sea" by T.J. Klune

1/19: "The Sun Does Shine" by Anthony Ray Hinton

**2020
AUBURN
TOY
DRIVE**

**REGISTER A CHILD TO
RECEIVE A GIFT
OCTOBER 6-28**

**DONATE GIFTS
OCTOBER 1 - DECEMBER 5**

FIND DETAILS AT
AUBURNALABAMA.ORG/TOY-DRIVE

The graphic features a central text area with green and black text. It is surrounded by various holiday-themed icons: a Santa hat, a gift box with a red ribbon, a candy cane, and a snowman. Small red stars are scattered around the text.

Holiday closures & schedules

Most City facilities will be closed on Wednesday, Nov. 11, in observance of Veterans Day and Thursday and Friday, Nov. 26 and 27, in observance of Thanksgiving Day. Downtown parking will be free on each of these days.

Public Safety services, including police, fire and communications will remain on their regular schedules. Garbage, trash and recycling pickup routes will be adjusted during both weeks as follows:

WEEK OF NOV. 9-13

Monday, Nov. 9	No change
Tuesday, Nov. 10	No change
Wednesday, Nov. 11	HOLIDAY
Thursday, Nov. 12	Wednesday's route
Friday, Nov. 13	Thursday's route

WEEK OF NOV. 23-27

Monday, Nov. 23	No change
Tuesday, Nov. 24	No change
Wednesday, Nov. 25	Wednesday & Thursday routes
Thursday, Nov. 26	HOLIDAY
Friday, Nov. 27	HOLIDAY

The Auburn Public Library will be closed on Nov. 11, 26 and 27 and will close at 6 p.m. on Nov. 25. Book drops will remain open, and the online collection of e-books, e-audiobooks and digital magazines are always available.

14th annual Holiday Art Sale

Auburn Parks and Recreation is partnering with the Auburn Arts Association to host the 14th annual Holiday Art Sale on Saturday, Nov. 14, from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. This year's socially distanced sale will be held at Kiesel Park. Local artists will be selling their paintings, pottery, stained glass, photography, cards, jewelry, hats, scarves and more!

If you would like to sell your work at the event, applications will be available at auburnarts.org beginning Monday, Oct. 5. A limited number of exhibition spaces are available, so be sure to fill out and submit your application and \$50 booth fee early! The deadline to apply is Friday, Oct. 30.

For more information, contact Parks and Recreation at 334-501-2930 or webparksrec@auburnalabama.org. COVID-19 note: Everyone attending the art sale must wear a mask when entering, exiting and shopping at the sale.



NOVEMBER UPCOMING EVENTS

Due to space considerations, we are unable to publicize events that are not directly affiliated with a City department

1 2 p.m. NoloWillo Virtual Kickoff	2 Registration Begins for Winter Programs 4 p.m. Comeries Advisory Board 5:30 p.m. Ward 4 Meeting 5:30 p.m.	3 Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board 11:45 a.m. NoloWillo Virtual Write-In noon Adulting Class - Meal Planning 5 p.m. Committee of the Whole (BO) City Council 7 p.m.	4 Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m. Board of Zoning Adjustment 4:30 p.m.	5 Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m. NoloWillo Virtual Write-In noon	6 Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m. Fee Commission 11:30 a.m. Zoom Puppet Shows 3:30 p.m.	7 Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m. Every Child Ready to Read 4 p.m.
8 NoloWillo Virtual Write-In noon	9 2020 State of the City Address (BO) 4 p.m. Planning Commission Packet Meeting noon	10 Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m. NoloWillo Virtual Write-In noon Historic Preservation Commission 4 p.m. Adulting Class - Budget Basics 9 p.m.	11 Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m. NoloWillo Virtual Write-In noon Historic Preservation Commission 4 p.m. Adulting Class - Budget Basics 9 p.m.	12 Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m. NoloWillo Virtual Write-In noon Planning Commission 5 p.m.	13 Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m. Zoom Puppet Shows 3:30 p.m. City Council Agenda Review noon	14 Holly Art Sale 9 a.m.-2 p.m. @ Reed Park Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m.
15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 NoloWillo Virtual Write-In noon	18 Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m. NoloWillo Virtual Write-In noon Greenspace Advisory Board noon Library Board 3 p.m. Reader's Review Adult Book Club 2 p.m. Committee of the Whole (BO) City Council 7 p.m.	19 Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m. NoloWillo Virtual Write-In noon Water Works Board 4 p.m.	20 Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m. Zoom Puppet Shows 3:30 p.m. City Council Agenda Review noon	21 Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m.	22 Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m.	23 Outdoor Classroom Storyline 9:30 a.m. Zoom Storyline 10:30 a.m.

Programs and events are subject to change. Please visit auburnalabama.org/coronavirus for up-to-date information on program and event cancellations.



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Auburn Public Library
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City Meeting Schedule
auburnalabama.org
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Parks and Recreation
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