

Open Line

A Monthly Newsletter for City of Auburn Citizens

May 2011

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City of Auburn



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City Receives High Marks in 2011 Citizen Survey

City services are a thread woven throughout the fabric of a community, with citizen feedback one of the most valuable assets a City government can receive in creating a quality community patchwork. Feedback received each year in Auburn's annual Citizen Survey emphasizes areas of progress along with areas in need of improvement. The survey results enable City officials to hear a collective voice from Auburn citizens and to stay connected with those they serve.

Citizen satisfaction with the state of City services measures very highly in the 2011 survey. The overall City services with which residents were most satisfied were: the quality of the City's library facilities (90%), the quality of the City's school system (89%), police, fire, and ambulance services (88%) and parks and recreation programs and facilities (82%). Citizen satisfaction increased significantly in 27 areas including the quality of the City's leadership (+9%) and the transparency of City government (+6%). Satisfaction with the City's crime prevention efforts, street maintenance and curbside recycling services increased by 5% in each area.

Perhaps the most significant gauge of citizen satisfaction can be found in how citizens view the quality of life in the community. This year, an overwhelming majority of citizens (91%) said they are satisfied with the quality of life provided in Auburn. Citizens delivered a tremendous vote of confidence in local government by ranking their satisfaction with the overall value received for City tax dollars and fees at 78%, up 4% from last year and 33% above the national average.

While overall citizen satisfaction is high, there are areas in which citizens would like to see continued emphasis from the City. Much like last year, residents would like to see attention directed to the following areas: 1) flow of traffic congestion management (56% satisfaction), 2) the maintenance of city streets and facilities (70% satisfaction) and 3) quality of the school system (89% satisfaction).

Employees in Auburn's Public Works Department have heard the call and have embraced the challenge to improve traffic flow and maintenance of city streets, implementing a number of improvement projects since the last survey:

- Traffic signals were added at intersections of North College Street - Shelton Mill Road and East Glenn Avenue - Airport Road
- The timing of traffic signals at intersections around Village Mall were coordinated to improve traffic flow
- A project to add illuminated street signs to several downtown intersections is underway
- A left turn lane, an additional thru lane, and a right turn lane were added at the intersection of Shelton Mill Road and East University Drive
- A left turn lane was added to all four sides of the intersection of East University Drive - South Donahue Drive
- Construction began on the Interstate-85 Exit 51 interchange with the Alabama Department of Transportation constructing the exit
- After more than a year of construction and improvements, the new bridge on North Donahue Drive will re-open in June.

Education remains a top priority among City leaders as Auburn prides itself on maintaining quality learning opportunities in both primary and secondary education. Auburn City Schools have been ranked among the best in the country over the years. This past year was no exception as Newsweek Magazine ranked Auburn High School in its Top 400 public high schools in the nation. On the state level, the school system was ranked 2nd and became home to the 2010-2011 State Teacher of the Year, Phil Rodney Wilson. City officials continue to support Auburn schools, annually allocating \$7 million of the City's General Fund Budget to Auburn City Schools. City officials are working closely with the School Board to find the best way to address the growing student population and facility needs.



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City employees are dedicated to providing excellent customer service. This year's citizen survey reports that 81% of residents who contacted the City during the past year felt the department they contacted was responsive to their issue. While customer service was positive overall (22% above the national average), there is room for improvement and City staff will continue to strive to bring customer service ratings in all areas closer to 100%.

Mayor Bill Ham, Jr. commented on the survey results by saying "Council priorities are guided by our residents through this survey. We're fortunate to have highly professional employees working daily with citizen satisfaction in mind. We'll continue to listen as citizens tell us what they think makes Auburn a great place to live, work and raise children."

While the Citizen Survey conveys a variety of messages to City staff, we hope it communicates an underlying message to our citizens as well. The message: we want to hear from you. The City's ability to adapt and change in a positive direction is only as strong as the feedback received from its citizens. Thank you to all of Auburn's citizens who participated in this year's Citizen Survey.

The 2011 Citizen Survey was conducted by the ETC Institute, a research firm hired by the City of Auburn. ETC Institute mailed a seven-page survey to a random sample of 1,500 households within the City of Auburn. Approximately seven days after the surveys were mailed, residents who received the survey were contacted by phone. Of the households that received a survey, 277 completed the survey by phone and 353 returned it by mail for a total of 630 completed surveys (42% response rate). Full survey results are available online at www.auburnalabama.org/survey.

13th Annual Mayor's Memorial Day Breakfast

The City of Auburn and the Auburn Veterans Committee cordially invite citizens to attend the 13th Annual Mayor's Memorial Day Breakfast on Monday, May 30 at 8 a.m. at the Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center. This annual event is held to honor the United States Military and those soldiers who have made the supreme sacrifice. Tickets for the breakfast are available at City Hall for \$25 each or \$250 for a table of 10. Proceeds from ticket sales go to the Auburn Veterans Memorial Fund.

Auburn University graduate and NASA astronaut Henry "Hank" Hartsfield will be the guest of honor and the recipient of the 2011 City of Auburn Distinguished Veteran Award. Hartsfield received his commission through the Auburn University Reserve Officer Training School and entered the U. S. Air Force in 1955. Later, Hartsfield became a NASA astronaut in September 1969. He retired from the United States Air force in 1977, and continued to work for NASA in a civilian capacity for the next 21 years.

Immediately following the breakfast, at 10 a.m., the City of Auburn will hold a memorial wreath laying ceremony at the Auburn Veterans Memorial Monument, located at the northeast corner of Ross Street and Glenn Avenue. Ceremony attendees are encouraged to park at the Douglas J. Watson Municipal Complex and Felton Little Park. During the ceremony, Ross Street will be closed from Glenn Avenue to Harper Avenue to allow for parking for the disabled.

Please join us on Monday, May 30, as we honor the men and women who have courageously served our country. For more information, please visit www.auburnalabama.org/veterans or contact the City of Auburn Economic Development Department at 501-7270.



2011 Bike Bash

Grab your bikes and join the City of Auburn and the Auburn Bicycle Committee for the 12th Annual Bike Bash on Saturday May 7th in beautiful Downtown Auburn! Bike Bash is a community event designed to promote bicycle safety, and encourage bicycling as a fun and healthy leisure activity. Bicycle rides will be offered for beginners and advanced riders alike. The event features bicycle safety inspections, helmet fittings, and door prizes. Participants are encouraged to pre-register. Registration will be held the day of the event, beginning at 7:00 a.m. For more information, or to download a pre-registration form, visit www.auburnalabama.org/cycle and click on the "Bike Bash" button.



City Grants Trash Amnesty May 2-6

Spring cleaning is just around the corner. The Auburn City Council has approved the City's 7th Annual Trash Amnesty Week for the week of May 2-6, 2011. During Trash Amnesty Week, the fees normally assessed to residents for the collection of oversized yard debris and other bulky waste will be waived. Citizens are asked to pay close attention to the following guidelines when placing items out for collection:

- Debris should be placed at the curb no later than 6:00 a.m. on your regularly scheduled collection day. Please avoid placing items on or near mailboxes, utility poles, or other fixed objects. All items should be properly contained or bundled so they do not fall into the street or down storm drains.
- The City will accept yard waste, appliances, and bulky items for collection. No household garbage, hazardous waste, or other unacceptable waste should be placed out for collection with debris.
- Debris should not be placed in the roadway, on or around storm drains, near utility lines, on utility boxes, or on vacant lots.
- Limbs and other debris should be no longer than 5 feet in length.
- To facilitate wood debris and metal recycling efforts, please separate all wood debris, including limbs and grass clippings from metal items.

Due to the large volume of debris expected during Trash Amnesty Week, citizens may experience a delay in the collection schedule. Every reasonable effort will be made to maintain the regular collection schedule.

For more information, please contact the City of Auburn Environmental Services Department at 501-3080 or visit the City of Auburn website at www.auburnalabama.org/es.

Board Vacancies

- Two vacancies on the **Board of Education** will be filled at the May 3, 2011 City Council meeting.
- One vacancy on the **Indian Pines Recreation Authority** will be announced at the May 3 meeting and will be filled at the June 7, 2011 City Council meeting.
- Two vacancies on the **Auburn Downtown Redevelopment Authority** will be announced at the June 7 meeting and will be filled at the July 5, 2011 City Council meeting.
- One vacancy on the **Planning Commission** will be announced at the June 21 meeting and will be filled at the July 19, 2011 City Council meeting.



Citizens interested in serving are encouraged to contact their City Council member or notify the City Manager's Office.

SummerNight 2011

Join the City of Auburn, Auburn Arts Association, and Downtown Auburn Merchants for SummerNight 2011 on June 17 from 6 – 9:30 p.m. in downtown Auburn. This FREE community event features art-work and music from area artists on display throughout downtown. Area artists, downtown businesses, and restaurants are encouraged to participate. Applications are available online at www.auburnalabama.org/arts and are due by June 3. For more information, contact the Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center at 501-2963.



MEETING SCHEDULE

MAY

- 2 Cemeteries Advisory Board**, 4:00 p.m., Dean Road Recreation Center, 307 South Dean Road
- 3 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board**, 5:15 p.m., Dean Road Recreation Center, 307 South Dean Road
- City Council**, 7 p.m., Douglas J. Watson Municipal Complex, Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 4 Board of Zoning Adjustment**, 4:30 p.m., Douglas J. Watson Municipal Complex, Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 6 Tree Commission**, 11:30 a.m., Chamber of Commerce Conference Room, 714 East Glenn Avenue
- 10 Greenspace Advisory Board**, 11:30 a.m., City Meeting Room, 122 Tichenor Avenue
- Historic Preservation Commission**, 4 p.m., Douglas J. Watson Municipal Complex, Development Services Building, 171 North Ross Street
- Board of Education**, 6 p.m., AHS Multi-Media Room, 405 South Dean Road
- 12 Planning Commission**, 5 p.m., Douglas J. Watson Municipal Complex, Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 17 City Council**, 7 p.m., Douglas J. Watson Municipal Complex, Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 19 Water Works Board**, 4 p.m., Bailey-Alexander Complex, Water Board Conference Room, 1501 West Samford Avenue
- 24 Bicycle Committee**, 7 p.m., Douglas J. Watson Municipal Complex, Development Services Building, 171 North Ross Street
- 26 Library Board**, 2 p.m., Auburn Public Library Board Room, 749 East Thach Avenue

Meeting times and places are subject to change.

For more information, including a map of City meeting locations, please visit www.auburnalabama.org/boards.

Travel With Care

The City of Auburn and Auburn University are partnering to present a safety and alternative transportation campaign entitled "Travel With Care" this Spring. The awareness campaign targets all modes of transportation. It is aimed at increasing awareness about pedestrian safety; such as important points for use of crosswalks, pedestrian crossing signals, and reflective materials for nighttime visibility.

Drivers and pedestrians must be alert when approaching crosswalks. Research suggests that pedestrians may have a false sense of security at marked crosswalks. Because of this, they sometimes step out into the crosswalk without looking for cars first. Never step off the curb in front of a moving vehicle. The rule of thumb is to look left, then right, then left again before you enter the crosswalk. As you're crossing, don't forget to check over your shoulder for turning vehicles. Contrary to popular belief, pedestrians do NOT have the right-of-way at a crosswalk; they only have the right-of-way if they are already within the crosswalk.

Studies show that pedestrians walking in dark colored clothing at night are first seen approximately 55 feet away, giving the driver traveling at 25 mph less than one second to react. A driver traveling at 25 mph needs over 150 feet to stop safely. The law requires that you wear reflective materials or lights when walking or riding at night or early morning when it is dark. For more transportation safety tips, go to the Web site www.travelwithcareauburn.com.



Memorial Day Holiday Schedule

City Hall will be closed on Monday, May 30 in observance of Memorial Day. Public Safety services, including Police, Fire, and Communications, will remain on their regular schedules. The collection of garbage, trash, and recycling the week of May 30-June 3 will change as follows:

City Hall Closed: Monday, May 30

<u>Normal</u>	<u>Holiday Trash Collection</u>
Monday	Tuesday, May 31
Tuesday	Wednesday, June 1
Wednesday	Thursday, June 2
Thursday	Friday, June 3

Collection carts and recycled materials must be placed at the curb by 6 a.m. on your holiday pick-up collection day. All carts and collection bins must be removed from the curb by 6 a.m. the following day. For more information, please contact the City of Auburn or visit our website at www.auburnalabama.org/es/holiday.asp.

City of Auburn Storm Drain Marking Project

As a part of its ongoing education and outreach initiatives, the City of Auburn's Water Resource Management Department (WRM) encourages citizens to participate in its Storm Drain Marking Project. This project involves the placement of watershed-specific markers on stormwater inlets throughout the City. These markers educate citizens about the connection our storm sewer system has with the surrounding water bodies and emphasizes the importance of stormwater management. Citizens can participate in one of two ways; 1) organize installation of markers with assistance from WRM staff or 2) request Storm Drain Marker Kits and install them at your convenience. This is an opportunity for citizens of all ages to actively participate in education about our local environment.* Please call the City of Auburn Water Resource Management Department at (334) 501-3060 or email dballard@auburnalabama.org for more information. *May meet various Merit Badge criteria for boy scouts and girl scouts.

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Open Line Feedback

Do you have any suggestions, feedback, or story ideas that you would like to share? If so, please contact us at openline@auburnalabama.org or call 501-7255.

up COMING EVENTS

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

Auburn Public Library



Baby Time - Tuesdays at 10:00am for babies ages 6 – 18 months and their caregivers. For more information, log onto www.auburnalabama.org/library or contact Auburn Public Library's Youth Services at 501-3196.



Toddler Time - Wednesdays at 10:00am for toddlers ages 18 months – 3 years and their caregivers. For more information, log onto www.auburnalabama.org/library or contact Auburn Public Library's Youth Services at 501-3196.

Preschool Time - Thursdays at 10:00am for preschoolers ages 3 – 5 years and their caregivers. For more information, log onto www.auburnalabama.org/library or contact Auburn Public Library's Youth Services at 501-3196.

Home School Lego Club - Available to children ages 7-13 years old the 2nd and 4th Thursday at 2:00 p.m. For more information, log onto www.auburnalabama.org/library or contact Auburn Public Library's Youth Services at 501-3196.

May 4...Magic Tree House Club - Students in grades Kindergarten – 5th Grade are invited on Wednesday, May 4 at 3:30 to participate in the Magic Tree House Club. The program features reading and a craft. For more information, log onto www.auburnalabama.org/library or contact Auburn Public Library's Youth Services at 501-3196.



May 5...Teen Cafe - Teens in grades 8-12 are invited to the Teen Cafe on Thursday, May 5 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. For more information, log onto www.auburnalabama.org/library or contact Auburn Public Library's Youth Services at 501-3196.

May 10...Puppet Show - Children, ages 3-11, are invited to a puppet show on Tuesday, May 10 at 3:30 p.m. For more information, log onto www.auburnalabama.org/library or contact Auburn Public Library's Youth Services at 501-3196.

After School Lego Club - Open to children ages 7-13 years old on Thursday, May 12 at 4:00 p.m. for the After School Lego Club. Be sure to bring your own Legos. For more information, log onto www.auburnalabama.org/library or contact Auburn Public Library's Youth Services at 501-3196.

May 19...American Girl's Club - Students in grades Kindergarten – 5th Grade are invited on Thursday, May 19 at 3:30 to learn about girls who grew up in various times in history. For more information, log onto www.auburnalabama.org/library or contact Auburn Public Library's Youth Services at 501-3196.

May 23...Summer Reading Program - registration begins. For more information, log onto www.auburnalabama.org/library or contact Auburn Public Library's Youth Services at 501-3196.

**There will be no programming from May 22nd-30th as the Library Youth Services prepares for summer activities.*

Parks and Recreation



Now Showing...Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center Exhibition - Mark your calendar for the following Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center Exhibition. The exhibit is free and open to the public Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. For more information, log onto www.auburnalabama.org/arts contact the Arts Center at 501-2963.

13th Annual Juried Art Exhibition, May 9 - June 24. A competitive exhibition open to artists and craftpersons residing or employed in Lee County.

May 2...Registration for Summer Camps and Programs - Register for summer camps and summer programs beginning May 2 at 8 a.m. at the Dean Road Recreation Center. For a complete listing of summer events, be sure to pick up a copy of the Parks and Recreation Summer Brochure, available April 25. For more information, visit www.auburnalabama.org/parks or contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930.

May 5, 12, 19, & 26...May Sundown Concert Series at Town Creek Park - Enjoy four evenings of entertainment at Auburn's newest park... Town Creek Park. Nestled in the middle of Auburn, Town Creek Park is the perfect setting to enjoy the sounds of local and regional musicians. Bring the family, a picnic, and your lawn chairs and enjoy a free, relaxing evening of entertainment before the dog days of summer set in. Speaking of... don't forget to bring your favorite four-legged friends! Join us every Thursday evening in May from 6 - 7:30 p.m. For more information, contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930.

May 13 - 15 & 19 - 22...AACT Spring Production - Join the Auburn Area Community Theatre (AACT) for their spring production, "Love, Sex and the I.R.S." May 13 - 15 & 19 - 22 at the Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center. This hilarious comedy of confusion is sure to be a crowd favorite! Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$8 for students and seniors. For more information, contact the Arts Center at 501-2963.

May 14...19th Annual Fishing Rodeo Sponsored by Evans Realty - Join Auburn Parks and Recreation as we cast into summer with the 19th Annual Fishing Rodeo, sponsored by Evans Realty, on Saturday, May 14 from 8 - 11 a.m. Join us at the lake at Auburn Technology Park South on Technology Parkway. Bring your lucky fishing pole and we will supply the bait. Over \$300 worth of door prizes will be given out to lucky participants and prizes will be awarded to the Biggest Fish and Smallest Fish caught. The first 150 children will receive a tackle box, courtesy of Evans Realty! This event is a great chance to bring kids and their parents together with America's favorite pastime...FISHING! So don't miss out on your chance to reel in the biggest catfish of the year! Please note, there is a limit of five fish/child and parents must accompany their children at all times. Registration is \$5, payable the day of the event. For more information, contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930.

May 21...Swim Registration - Registration for swim lessons, Auburn Aquatics Swim Team, and Auburn Dive Team will be held on May 21 from 1 - 3 p.m. at Samford Pool. Participants should wear appropriate swimwear for testing. For more information, visit www.auburnalabama.org/pools or contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930.

May 25...Auburn City Pools Open - Auburn City Pools open for the season on May 25. Daily admission is \$2/person. Children 1 & under are free. Season passes are available for \$50/each or \$100 for a family pass (parents and children). For more information, visit www.auburnalabama.org/pools or contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930.