

Your City Hall News

March 2026

Responsible Budgeting

Preparation and Accuracy

The City of Auburn has officially begun preliminary budget preparation for the upcoming fiscal year. While many residents are enjoying the start of spring, our finance team is already hard at work laying the groundwork to ensure we continue operating in a fiscally responsible and transparent manner.

Budget development is a deliberate, multi-phase process. It begins with reviewing current year revenues and expenditures, analyzing trends in property tax collections, utility usage, and local economic activity. Department heads are asked to evaluate operational needs, capital improvement priorities, and long-term infrastructure planning. Each request is carefully reviewed to ensure it aligns with the City's strategic goals and financial capacity.

Our approach emphasizes conservative revenue forecasting and disciplined expenditure management. This means planning for essential services first—public safety, public works, parks, and administrative operations—while also identifying opportunities to improve efficiency, modernize technology, and support employee development.

Capital projects are evaluated based on necessity, timing, and long-term return on investment. By beginning this process early, we allow adequate time for data analysis, internal review, and City Council discussion before formal adoption later in the year.

Remaining fiscally responsible is not simply about balancing numbers on a spreadsheet—it is about protecting taxpayer dollars, maintaining service levels, and planning sustainably for Auburn's future growth. Through early preparation and careful stewardship, our finance team ensures Auburn continues to be a well-managed and forward-thinking community.



Priorities and Transparency

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Remaining fiscally responsible is not simply about balancing numbers on a spreadsheet—it is about protecting taxpayer dollars, maintaining service levels, and planning sustainably for Auburn's future growth.

“I know with their diligence and teamwork our City Staff and City Council have the information to make the right decisions for the City of Auburn.”- Mr. Mathews



Employee Spotlight

Parks and Leisure

Behind every successful City of Auburn event and every well-maintained park is the dedicated work of our Parks and Leisure team. Brooke and Michael play a central role in coordinating the events that bring our community together while also ensuring our recreational facilities remain safe, clean, and ready for use year-round.

From the upcoming **Auburn Ever After** celebration to our annual **Independence Day** festivities, **AuburnFest**, and **Sounding Off Christmas**, event execution requires months of logistical coordination. Brooke works closely with vendors, sponsors, performers, volunteers, and City departments to manage permits, site layouts, vendor placement, safety planning, and communications. Each event involves scheduling, budgeting, marketing coordination, and real-time problem solving to ensure residents experience seamless, family-friendly celebrations.

Michael focuses heavily on the operational side—preparing event grounds, coordinating equipment, managing facility setup and breakdown, and ensuring compliance with safety standards. From stage placement and power logistics to crowd flow considerations and post-event restoration, his work ensures every venue is functional and welcoming.

Beyond events, their responsibilities extend to maintaining Auburn’s parks and athletic facilities. This includes preparing baseball and softball fields for seasonal play, coordinating turf maintenance, inspecting playground equipment, managing reservations, and ensuring our parks remain accessible and enjoyable for residents of all ages. Ballfield preparation alone requires grading, lining, irrigation management, and ongoing upkeep to support spring and summer athletics.

The Parks and Leisure team’s work often happens behind the scenes, but its impact is visible throughout our community. Whether families are attending a signature event, children are taking the field for opening day, or residents are enjoying a weekend at the park, Brooke and Michael’s dedication helps make those moments possible.

Their commitment reflects Auburn’s broader mission: fostering community engagement while maintaining high-quality public amenities for everyone to enjoy.



Your Police Department News

March 2026



CODE ENFORCEMENT

Officer Mark Palmer

As spring approaches, the City of Auburn's Code Enforcement team is preparing for one of its busiest seasons of the year. Warmer temperatures bring new growth, outdoor projects, and increased activity throughout our neighborhoods. That is why proactive communication and consistent enforcement remain essential to maintaining the quality and character of our community.

Leading these efforts is Code Enforcement Officer **Mark Palmer**, who has been with the City for more than a year and continues to make a measurable impact every day. In 2025, Mark was recognized as the Police Department's *Civilian Employee of the Year*—an acknowledgment of his professionalism, responsiveness, and commitment to serving Auburn's residents. His approach emphasizes education first, voluntary compliance whenever possible, and fairness in enforcement.



“It is great knowing we are still in good hands with Code Enforcement in Auburn. I have always marveled at how efficient and helpful the officers are at keeping our city orderly without resorting to punishment first. They always educate me if I have an issue.”-Charlie



SPRING PRIORITIES

As we transition into spring, several focus areas become particularly important:

Property Maintenance (Weeds and Grass):

Rapid seasonal growth means lawns, weeds, and vegetation can quickly become overgrown. Property owners are responsible for maintaining grass and weeds within ordinance limits to prevent safety hazards, pest concerns, and neighborhood blight. Routine mowing and general upkeep go a long way toward keeping Auburn looking its best.

Outdoor Projects and Permitting:

Spring is prime time for home improvement. Whether installing fences, building accessory structures, adding decks, placing storage buildings, or conducting significant exterior renovations, many projects require permits prior to starting work. Permits ensure compliance with zoning regulations, setback requirements, and safety codes.

Common examples that may require permits include:

- New fences (location and height restrictions apply)
- Accessory buildings or sheds
- Deck additions or structural modifications
- Major grading or land disturbance
- Certain driveway expansions

Not every project requires a permit, but when in doubt, residents are encouraged to contact City Hall before beginning work. A quick call can prevent costly corrections later.

General Code Compliance:

With more outdoor activity comes increased visibility. Parking concerns, accumulation of debris, temporary storage containers, and signage placement are also reviewed to ensure compliance with city ordinances.

Code enforcement is not about penalties—it is about protecting property values, public safety, and neighborhood integrity. Through daily inspections, resident communication, and consistent follow-through, Mark Palmer and the Code Enforcement team help ensure Auburn remains a clean, safe, and welcoming place to live.

As spring begins, we encourage all residents to review property maintenance responsibilities and check permit requirements before starting outdoor projects. Working together, we can continue to preserve the standards that make Auburn a community we are proud to call home.

Your Public Works News



February 2026

Auburn Public Works: Road Projects Approved

The City of Auburn is moving forward with a comprehensive slate of roadway improvements for 2026. All projects previously presented have now received approval, and work will begin rolling out shortly. These investments reflect a strategic approach to infrastructure maintenance, long-term pavement management, and responsible use of transportation funding.

As outlined in the City's 2026 Road Projects presentation , the approved resurfacing and reconstruction projects include:

- **Mt. Moriah Road** – \$761,700
- **Auburn–County Line Road** – \$920,140
- **Fourth Avenue Road Improvements** – \$500,000
- **Cabots Drive** – \$148,110
- **Hickory Ridge Trail** – \$174,775
- **Sharpton Drive** – \$78,585

These corridors were selected based on pavement condition assessments identifying cracking, surface wear, and structural deterioration. For example, Mt. Moriah Road and Auburn–County Line Road exhibit significant longitudinal and edge cracking, while Hickory Ridge Trail shows “alligator cracking,” indicating end-of-life pavement conditions. Addressing these issues proactively prevents more costly full-depth failures in the future.

Previously Approved & In-House Work

In addition to the newly approved projects, previously awarded resurfacing includes:

- Sixth Avenue
- Dogwood Lane & Pinetree Lane
- River Oaks

“I can’t say enough good about the job City Council in conjunction with our Public Works department has done to get these projects planned, funded, and underway”-Robert



Upcoming Road Repairs

- Pointers Way Cul-de-sac

(Low bid total: \$273,730.80)

Our Public Works team will also continue its **in-house pothole and patching program**, targeting areas such as Sixth Street, Second Avenue, Etheridge Road, Main Street/Lyle Road, Parks Mill Road, Autry Road, Apalachee Church Road, and others. This internal maintenance effort allows the City to respond quickly to localized failures while preserving pavement life between major resurfacing cycles .

Funding & Fiscal Stewardship

The overall road replacement program is estimated at approximately **\$2.58 million**, supported through a combination of funding sources including:

- **TSPLOST** (Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax)
- **State DOT Grant** funding
- **LMIG** (Local Maintenance & Improvement Grant) funding

What Residents Can Expect

Construction activity will begin in phases over the coming weeks. Residents may notice temporary lane closures, equipment staging, and short-term traffic adjustments. The City will work closely with contractors to minimize disruption while maintaining safety for both drivers and workers.

These projects represent a significant investment in Auburn's transportation infrastructure. By addressing deteriorating pavement now, we improve drivability, enhance safety, protect vehicle wear and tear, and extend the life cycle of our roadway network.

Public Works remains committed to maintaining and improving Auburn's streets in a strategic, data-driven, and fiscally responsible manner. We appreciate residents' patience as these improvements move from approval to construction.

**Reliable Water. Safer Streets.
A Stronger Auburn.**



Your City Council News

March 2026

City Council February Recap

February 12 – Council Business Meeting

During the February 12 Business Meeting , Council conducted its second public hearing regarding the **Statewide Homestead Exemption Opt Out (House Bill 581)**, providing residents an opportunity to comment and ask questions.

Under New Business, Council approved the Consent Agenda unanimously, which included prior meeting minutes, a Kingston Cove minor plat revision for stormwater, and multiple roadway items. Road projects discussed included Auburn–County Line Road, Mount Moriah Road, and the broader 2026 Road Project List, which covers Sharpton Drive, Cabots Drive, Fourth Avenue, and Hickory Ridge Trail. Council also approved bids for **RFP26-001 Road Projects**, moving the City forward on significant infrastructure improvements.

February 26 – Council Workshop Meeting

At the February 26 Workshop Meeting , Council held its third public hearing regarding the **Statewide Homestead Exemption Opt Out (House Bill 581)** prior to taking formal action later in the meeting.

Under New Business, Council reviewed and unanimously approved several operational items, including:

- A Georgia Power Distribution Facility Construction Agreement
- Equipment repairs for the Public Works Department

Council also considered a re-application for an alcohol license from Nemrut, LLC.

Under Voting Items, Council unanimously approved:

- The Statewide Homestead Exemption Opt Out (House Bill 581)
- The Barrow County SPLOST Agreement

These approvals support both the City’s financial planning framework and continued coordination with county-level funding initiatives.

Together, these meetings advanced major infrastructure projects, clarified procedural governance matters, and finalized action on the Statewide Homestead Exemption Opt Out. The City remains committed to transparent decision-making and continued investment in Auburn’s infrastructure and long-term financial stability.



Rockin' Run 5 K

Auburn's Rockin' Run 5K – Run for a Great Cause!

Get ready to lace up your running shoes and join your neighbors at **Auburn's Rockin' Run 5K**, coming up on **Saturday, March 7, 2026!** The race starts and finishes at **Auburn City Hall at 1 Auburn Way**, with **race day registration opening at 8:00 AM** and the **5K beginning at 9:00 AM**. (runsignup.com)

Now in its **second year**, the Rockin' Run is a community-focused 5K that brings together walkers, runners, and families for a morning of fitness, fun, and fellowship. The course winds through nearby neighborhoods, offering participants a scenic tour of Auburn's streets while promoting health and community spirit.

A Race With Heart

What makes this race extra special is its purpose: the Rockin' Run benefits **Path United**, an organization dedicated to supporting children and families through on-site community centers within mobile home parks. Path United provides research-based youth programming, nurtures positive relationships, and partners with schools, churches, businesses, and volunteers to help young people thrive. By participating, runners and walkers are directly supporting these efforts to build a stronger, healthier community.

More Than Just a Run

In addition to the run itself, the event includes a **fun, family-friendly atmosphere** with awards presented to top finishers in multiple age and gender categories. There's something for everyone—from seasoned runners to families enjoying a brisk morning stroll. Participants who register early are also eligible for official race T-shirts (availability subject to registration deadlines).

For more information or questions about the Rockin' Run 5K, please contact **Staci Waters** by email at swaters@cityofauburn-ga.org or by phone at **470-834-7077**.