

CELEBRATING OUR PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

INTUCKER

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FROM THE MAYOR

Tucker has been a place for a very long time. Although it was well-known long before, we are this year celebrating the 125th anniversary of the establishment of a train depot and a post office in the place called Tucker. Having those two things was literally what put you "on the map" in those days.

For all the time in between, many people all over the state - and even right in our area - thought we were a city. After all, we not only had a post office and a train depot, we also had Tucker High School, First Baptist of Tucker, First Methodist of Tucker and a range of shops, businesses and offices. They sat along and at the ends of Main Street, which itself was at the center of a small grid of streets and avenues. Tucker has long had all the trappings and appearances of a city.

But despite looking for all the world like a city, Tucker was never incorporated. There was no Mayor or City Council, no services provided by a city government and no borders to define who was in and who was out of the city proper. But that didn't stop people from saying they lived in Tucker, or feeling a strong affinity for their hometown. And that part is as true today as it ever was.

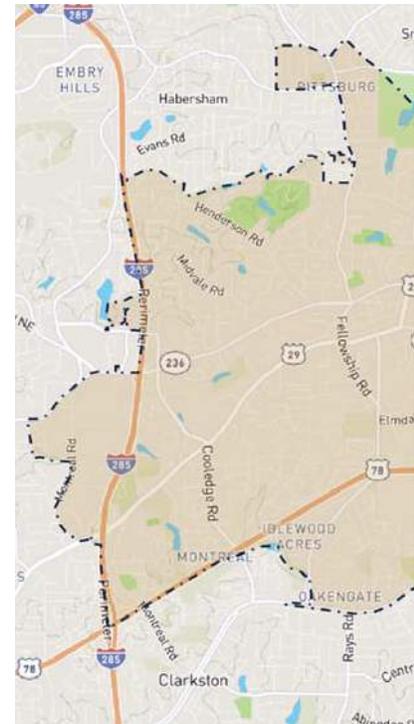
Part of the process of becoming an incorporated city was that lines had to be drawn and, if you've been here more than a year or two, you remember well the battles that went on. As with most public policy decisions, the final map and borders ended up being a political solution. And, as with most political solutions, it produced a result that only made sense in the context of politics.

Be that as it may, we have begun life as a city with what we were granted. But ever since before the beginning, there have been people and businesses who consider themselves to be in Tucker, as well as others who would like to be included. The process of including new areas within the boundaries of the City is called annexation and, since Tucker was first incorporated, we have added more than 200 residences to the city, along with a large office park, a gas station and several other businesses.

There are still lots of residents who feel they were excluded from their real hometown. These are people who want to be recognized formally as belonging to Tucker. Annexation is their answer and we have a process for getting that done. Here's how to look into it:

- Visit our website at tuckerga.gov for a simple explanation and even a video about the process.
- Call Matt Holmes at City Hall (470-273-3073). He can answer your questions and get your process underway.
- Call me or any of your City Council members and we will be glad to talk with you or even come to your home or business - if you want to gather some interested neighbors - to answer all of your questions. You can find our contact information on the City website.

Tucker has a lot to offer to its residents, and if you want to be an active part of our community, we want to welcome you. Please be in touch!



DATES TO KNOW

June 8
DeKalb Watershed
Information Meeting

June 12
City Council

June 14
Community Council

June 15
Tucker Tomorrow
Community Forum

June 20
Zoning Board of Appeals

June 22
Planning Commission

June 28
City Council



CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

May was a busy month for Tucker's City Council, as they met four times and hosted the grand opening of their new dedicated meeting space on First Avenue.

The biggest issue decided in May was the approval of Tucker's FY '18 budget. The \$7.6 million budget passed on May 22 by a 6-0 vote. It will create six new, much-needed staff positions at City Hall, as well as add another \$1 million to the City's reserves. One of the new positions being created is that of a Parks and Recreation Director, a service the City is taking over from DeKalb County.

Additionally, Council decided to approve a proposed multi-family project, the five-story Northlake Senior Apartments. The complex, which will have 90 units reserved for residents 62 and older, was

passed on a 6-0 vote. It will be located on Northlake Parkway, just across from the new Tucker Meridian Shopping Center at the old Steak & Ale site.

Council also adopted an ordinance to adjust the City's hotel/motel tax to the eight percent rate that is uniform across unincorporated DeKalb County. By one estimate, this move will create an additional \$171,000 in funds to be spent on projects in Tucker's Parks and Recreation facilities.

Finally, the Mayor issued a proclamation declaring May 22 to be James P. Jackson Day in Tucker. The honor recognizes the long-time principal of Tucker High School who is moving on this summer to a position with the DeKalb County School District.



Mayor Auman participated in the Reading Celebration on May 12 at Brockett Elementary School. The event, which provided students with free books and backpacks, was sponsored by Wipro and First Book.

CODE ENFORCEMENT WORKING TO KEEP TUCKER VIBRANT

On a warm May morning, William Wharton – armed with pen, paper and camera phone – paces the sidewalks of the Wilshire Condominiums on E. Ponce de Leon Avenue. His eyes run up, down and around the building structures, looking for any number of code violations that could pose dangers to residents or visitors to the condo complex.

"It is our goal to address any property maintenance issues that could cause a blight on the community," explains Wharton, the Code Enforcement Manager for the City of Tucker. These issues could "present a safety or structural hazard, or encourage insect or rodent infestations."

Wharton, along with Code Enforcement Officer James Duncan, are conducting the first of two sweeps this year that will target multi-family housing developments in Tucker. At Wilshire, they find issues with roofs, gutters, fences and paint, not to mention overgrown weeds and accumulated rubbish.

Whether it's this kind of proactive enforcement or just the day-to-day responding to resident complaints, Wharton says the mission remains the same.

"The goal of the inspection is to provide for the general health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the City of Tucker."

Tucker's Code Enforcement team appears in court on the third Wednesday of each month to report to a judge on different code enforcement citations they've written. These appearances will generally result in fines for the offenders, yet Wharton says the goal is to never go to court.

"The responsible party will be given a time frame to complete the necessary repairs or fixes," he says, adding "extensions may also be granted." At Wilshire, ownership of the condo complex was notified and now has the opportunity to remedy the violations before any fines are levied.

Code Enforcement is not, nor is it ever expected to be, a revenue generator for the City. Instead, Wharton and his team are out on the streets and in the neighborhoods each day trying to protect property values and keep the people of Tucker safe.

If you have a Code Enforcement complaint, you can call City Hall at (470) 273-3093 or email codecompliance@tuckerga.gov.

ON THE BEAT WITH LT. SMITH

From severe thunderstorms to tornado warnings, it's been a stormy Spring here in Tucker. With those recent weather events, a few issues have arisen that warrant mentioning to assist with safety.

- If you approach a traffic signal that is not functioning (there are no lights on at all), you are required by law to treat it as a four-way stop. If the light is on but flashing, then a red flashing light means you must stop. If it is flashing yellow, then you should slow down and be prepared to stop if you have to.
- If you are traveling in heavy rain, do not turn your emergency flashers on and continue driving. You should only turn them on if you pull onto the shoulder and are stopped. Driving with them on can cause other drivers around you to swerve at the last minute and cause an accident.
- If it's raining or the roads are still wet, you should have your headlights on. Do not drive with your high beams on if there is traffic (coming or going) in front of you.
- If limbs or trees should fall onto your vehicle or residence, please do not call the police. We are not able to write you a report and this ties up an officer from handling other calls. We should only be notified of these if there is a traffic hazard (trees or wires are down in the roadway).



[facebook.com/LtRSSmith](https://www.facebook.com/LtRSSmith)

Finally, be sure that you have an emergency plan in place for your family and that everyone is familiar with it in the event of an emergency (fire, tornado, etc.).

POLICE BLOTTER

SEXUAL ASSAULT – On May 5th, a juvenile female was walking home from the store on Juliette Road when a suspect grabbed her from behind and pulled her into the woods. The suspect attempted to sexually assault the female, who continued to punch, kick and scream at the suspect to let her go. She managed to break free from the suspect and run back to the road to get assistance. She immediately went home and told her mother who, in turn, called the police and transported her daughter to the hospital for evaluation. She was released the same day and was able to work with the police and a sketch artist to get a composite of the suspect drawn.

Once the sketch was complete, officers and detectives responded back to the scene and began canvassing subdivisions in the area and soliciting information from the public. While in the area, Officer Crego observed an individual, who looked strikingly similar to the sketch, get out of a vehicle at the gate to an apartment complex. He made contact with the subject and began a brief investigation, which then led to the notification of detectives in the area. The subject was transported back to headquarters for an interview and it was later determined that he was the suspect from the sexual assault. The suspect has since been linked to additional crimes in the area and was still on probation from a previous sexual assault.

POLICE CHASE – While at the Piccadilly on Memorial Drive and Hambrick Road, Officer Poole observed a vehicle that had been used in multiple armed robberies in the area. Once he got behind the vehicle to confirm it was the same one, the driver sped off in an attempt to flee. Because the vehicle had been used in several armed robberies and represented a clear threat to the public if not apprehended immediately, he was approved to actively pursue the vehicle. The pursuit wound its way up Hambrick Road, Roadhaven Drive, Mountain Industrial, East Ponce and finally down Kelton Drive where the driver crashed after striking a police car.

The converging officers were able to apprehend two of the suspects within minutes of them fleeing from the vehicle. After a perimeter was established and K-9 was called into the scene, the third and final suspect was also arrested. Tucker CID responded to the scene and the initial investigation indicates that the vehicle had been taken in a carjacking out of another agency. Two weapons were recovered from the fleeing suspects; one was reported stolen out of East Precinct and the other had the serial number filed off. CID is also expecting to clear up at least three armed robberies in the immediate area.

ACCOLADE PUTS TUCKER SCHOOL IN A LEAGUE OF ITS OWN

It's understandable if the Mustangs of Midvale Elementary School seem to be galloping proudly into the summer break. Administrators and faculty celebrated last month when they officially received their STEM certification from AdvancED, an international accrediting agency that works with schools in more than 70 countries.

The recognition comes after three years of hard work by educators at Midvale, specifically STEM coordinators Latoya Burse and Burian Kitchen. They introduced age-appropriate technological teaching tools, while working with industry partners – including the City of Tucker – to bring students face-to-face with real world applications of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

“We were ecstatic at the news,” Burse recalls. “After three years working toward STEM accreditation, this was the year we considered ourselves to be STEM-ready.”

While there are several other elementary schools in DeKalb County that have gained – or are working toward – STEM accreditation, Midvale becomes the first elementary school in the state of Georgia to be STEM certified, while also offering International Baccalaureate (IB) education.

“One of the main reasons we pursued STEM certification was that IB and STEM are the perfect marriage,” Burse explains. “IB is based on real-world connections, STEM is based on real-world connections. IB uses inquiry-based learning, STEM uses inquiry-based learning.”

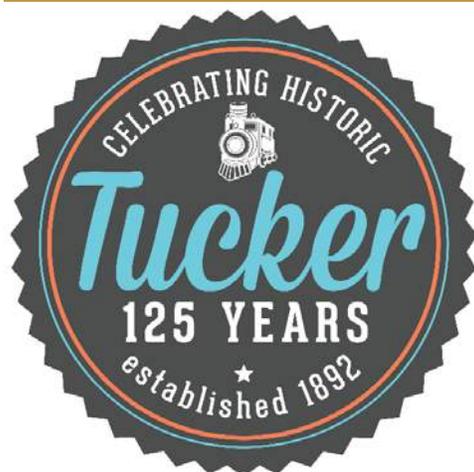
According to AdvancED, STEM certified schools must have an “ongoing commitment and capacity to prepare students for STEM fields of study and work.” While it seems far-fetched for grade-schoolers to be thinking ahead to professional careers, students at Midvale have definitely caught STEM fever.

“Principal Satterfield actually announced [the accreditation] on the intercom and we played the song ‘Celebration,’” Burse says. “As the kids were leaving for the day, we sprayed them with silly string.”

Midvale feeds into Tucker Middle School and Tucker High School, both of which have well-regarded STEM programs of their own. What does that mean? The next generation of gifted surgeons, inventors and computer programmers may just come from right here in the City of Tucker.



Tucker's Asst. City Manager Cindy Jenkins works with students at Midvale Elementary School on a STEM lesson related to Civil Engineering



TUCKER 125TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION JUNE 24TH

Come celebrate Tucker's 125th Anniversary with a party at Tucker Rec Center! Enjoy live music, food trucks, a photo exhibit and contest, a quilt show, a bouncy house and an eating competition sponsored by Local 7. Tucker Post Office will also be on hand with a commemorative Tucker 125th postmark. Tucker-themed postcards will be available!

Sponsored by Friends of Tucker Parks, Tucker Historical Society, Tucker Optimist Club, Hunt Digital Imaging, Tucker Clicks and Local 7.

TEAM TUCKER SPOTLIGHT

Courtney Lankford - Deputy Director of Community Development



OFF THE WALL

What's your favorite sport?

College football. GO DAWGS!

What is your favorite TV show?

Parks and Recreation & Madam Secretary.

How many countries have you visited ?

Fourteen, including 10 countries in Europe! My favorite was living/working abroad in London for six weeks while in undergrad.

Have any hobbies?

Working out at Eric's Fit Lab and planning my upcoming wedding!



What are your day-to-day responsibilities?

On any given day, I perform reviews of zoning and development applications, assist citizens with inquiries regarding the use of their property, prepare special reports and studies, enforce various ordinances and codes, as well as providing staff support to elected and appointed boards and commissions.

What kind of educational background do you need to get a job in Community Development?

Community Development professionals come from a variety of backgrounds. For example, city planners typically have degrees in urban planning, environmental design, historic preservation, architecture or geography.

Why did you decide to come work in Tucker?

The excitement of helping build a new city government led me to Tucker! My hope is that we can continue building on the solid foundation that the citizens have been forming since 1892 so that Tucker can continue to flourish for the next 100 years.

What is the best part about working in Tucker?

The best part is, by far, the dedicated citizens and volunteers that are so committed to this city. I also love the small town feel that the residents fight so hard to protect.



COMMUNITY FORUM JUNE 15 - 6:30PM

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH FELLOWSHIP HALL



TUCKER COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



BUSINESS OF THE MONTH IMAGE 360

For a business that has enjoyed success for going on 20 years, Image 360 celebrated a big change last month: they officially christened their new, expanded facility on Mountain Industrial Boulevard.

“We were literally busting at the seams in our old facility,” explains Operations Manager Danielle Walker, who had created graphics, as well as interior and exterior signage at the business’ Hugh Howell location since 2004. Walker acknowledges that in looking for a bigger space, they could have moved the business anywhere. But, she says, they were dead set on staying a part of Tucker.

“We just became a city, so we didn’t want to leave that environment,” Walker recalls. “We’ve been in City of Tucker since the early 2000s (and) we didn’t want to leave the community.”

Walker runs the business with her father Earl, a longtime leader in DeKalb business circles. She says the dynamic of working with family makes Image 360 unique.

“It’s always been a family affair. It hasn’t always been easy, but there’s a level of trust there that we can depend on because we are family-related and at the end of the day we know we’re working for each other.”

Image 360’s new location is 2725 Mountain Industrial Boulevard and they are online at www.image360.com/tuckerga.

CITIZEN OF THE MONTH DEBORAH ASHLEY

In 2010, Deborah Ashley had the idea for a native plant and wildlife walk to protect plants and wildlife while providing education about their importance in Henderson Park and our lives. She shared her vision with Park Pride, DeKalb County, Friends of Henderson Park and DeKalb Master Gardeners and her idea was welcomed and supported.

Today you can enjoy her vision and the hard work of volunteers when strolling along the Native Plant and Wildlife Walk (NPWW). Under Deborah’s guidance, invasive plants have been removed along a half-mile path. The area has been restored with over 150 native plants along with a kiosk of information carefully selected to help us appreciate the plants and animals around us.

Deborah is now retiring to the Georgia mountains. On May 23, she was honored for her efforts to protect our native plants and animals.

Deborah explained NPWW work will be continued by the many master gardeners and other volunteers who have supported her dream and worked alongside her. Thank you, Deborah, for making Henderson Park a better place.

Nomination by Lisa Shinew



BUILDER'S CORNER WITH STEVE HOLDER

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN FINISHING YOUR BASEMENT



The following is a list of 10 things you may want to consider when designing your basement layout for new habitable space:

- 1. Permit Requirements:** A building permit is required when finishing a basement. A floor plan with dimensions, showing the layout of the entire basement is required. Label the use of all areas and rooms. Show electrical outlets, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide alarms, lighting, fans, plumbing, furnace and water heater.
- 2. Ceiling Heights:** If the finished ceiling height is less than seven feet, please consult your local Building Department.
- 3. Emergency Escapes:** All basements and sleeping rooms must have an emergency escape window or exterior door meeting the requirements of the code.
- 4. Smoke Detectors:** Smoke detectors are required in all basements. If the finished basement contains a sleeping room, a smoke detector must be installed in the sleeping room and in the immediate vicinity outside the sleeping room. Newly-installed smoke detectors must be hard-wired with battery backup and interconnected with existing smoke detectors.
- 5. Carbon Monoxide Alarms:** Carbon monoxide alarms are required on each floor with bedrooms. They are recommended to be located no farther than 15 feet from any bedroom entrance.
- 6. Bedrooms:** Adding bedrooms requires notification to DeKalb County Watershed Management.
- 7. Insulation:** All exterior walls are required to be R-13 insulated. This includes poured concrete walls.
- 8. Space Under Stairs:** If access to the area under the basement stairs is provided for storage or other uses, the walls and ceiling of this enclosed space must be protected on the inside with ½ inch gypsum board.
- 9. Bathrooms:** Toilets must be provided with a minimum of 21 inches in front of the toilet and 15 inches from the center of the toilet to any sidewall or other obstruction. An exhaust fan is required in toilet rooms and bathrooms with inoperable windows. The fan must be vented to the exterior of the building and not terminate within three feet of any opening.
- 10. Structural Modifications:** On your floor plan identify modifications to the existing structure such as posts, beams and floor joists. Supply any engineered stamped drawings for any engineered lumber components (i.e. I-joists, laminated beams, etc.).



Steve Holder is the Building Official for the City of Tucker. He has nearly two decades of experience in building inspection.

TUCKER DAY 2017

Mother Nature was no match for the revelry of Tucker Day 2017. Despite periods of heavy rain, thousands of people from across Metro Atlanta descended on Main Street to enjoy food, fun and some great live music by local artists. The event, organized by the Tucker Main Street Alliance, coincided with the 125th anniversary of the founding of Tucker.



GET IN TOUCH WITH US !

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