



INTUCKER

DECEMBER 2024 | VOLUME 8 | ISSUE 7

SEASON OF GIVING TUCKER COMMUNITY SPREADS HOLIDAY CHEER



ELECTED OFFICIALS

Frank Auman
Mayor

Roger W. Orlando
District 1 - Post 1

Cara Schroeder
District 2 - Post 1

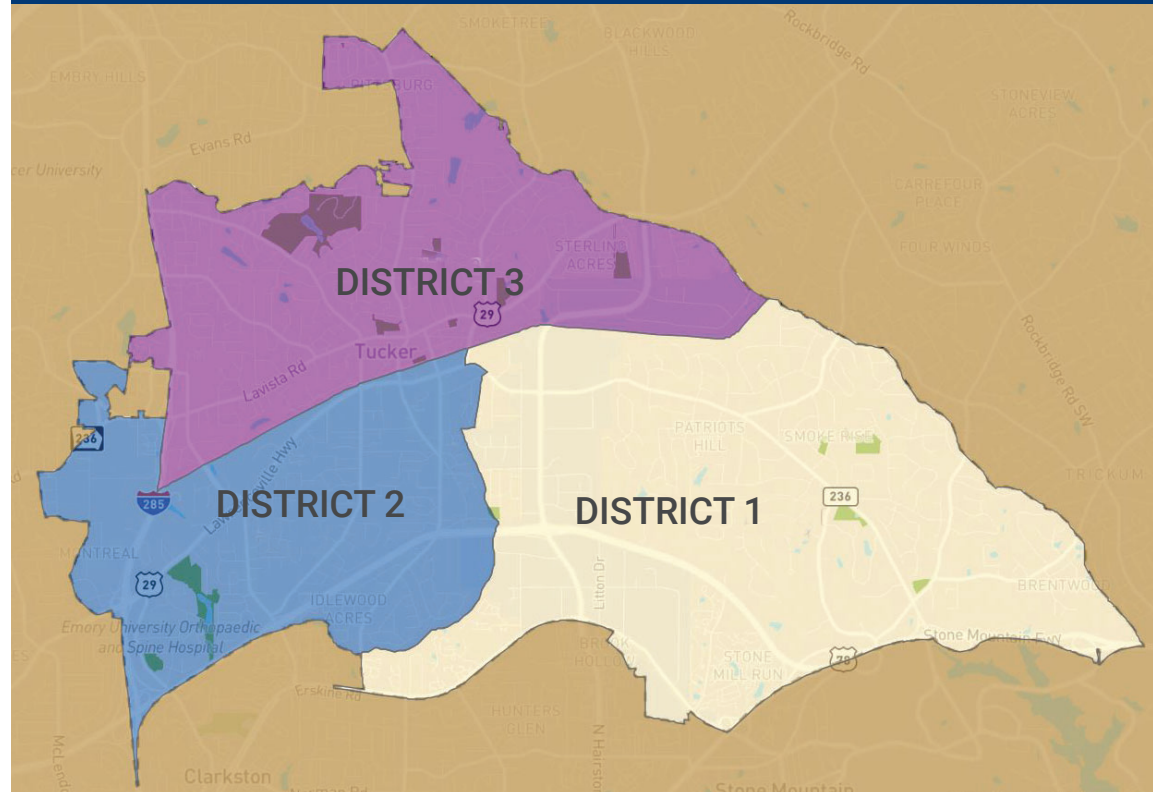
Alexis Weaver
District 3 - Post 1

Virginia Rece
District 1 - Post 2

Vinh Nguyen
District 2 - Post 2

Amy Trocchi
District 3 - Post 2

DISTRICT MAP



2024 HOLIDAY ORNAMENT



CITY SOCIALS



nextdoor

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FROM THE MAYOR

FRANK AUMAN



The end of the year is a natural time for reflection on what we've accomplished, and what's at the top of our list for the new year. But some years just seem to go by faster than others. We have done so much together in these 8-plus years, and there is so much more to do. While there are some specific projects I

personally want to see progress on, my priorities remain mostly related to how we do business as a city, how we relate to each other on Council and with our staff, and especially how we represent our constituents. I am proud of the solid foundation we have laid in that regard, and with the results it has produced for smart growth and elevating the quality of life for all of residents.

Of course, we elected officials know we are not elected because we have an all-encompassing knowledge of what should be done and how it should be done. We face so many and so various a set of challenges that we must lead with, rely on our principles, and learn to apply them to what comes our way. Principles like "staying in our lane", doing the job we were elected to, balance and even-handedness, being responsible with taxing and spending, and staying true to the law and to our charter. We have an incredible staff to help guide and educate us on the legal, technical and practical aspects of the decisions we make. They bring their expertise to us so that we can serve you to the best of our ability, applying those principles whatever the particular issue. As we begin the new year, we will do so with nearly 100% of our staff working directly for the city. This is a big change from our beginnings, when virtually 100% of our staff was contracted with private companies. Over the years we have brought staff members on as full-time city employees and next month we are bringing in fourteen more, leaving a few key, strategic roles in the hands of experts. This is the natural progression of the newer cities in the metro area, and we are excited for this sign of growth and maturity as a city.

The end of the year is also a great time to show love to our neighbors. You may have heard me say that government is not capable of loving its neighbor – love is not in government's DNA, but it is in yours and mine. I challenge you this season to find ways to show your appreciation for others and for each one's special place in our community. In this issue, we have a feature on how to give back to your neighbors and provide a helping hand if you are able. But remember too that spreading joy and bringing a smile to a person's face does not mean you have to spend money. Time is just as precious and more meaningful. One of my family's favorite Christmas traditions has been to sing and ring the bell for the Salvation Army. Times have changed for the Salvation Army, and for malls and retailers. So this year, look for a Virtual Red Kettle on my social media – chip in if you can, and post your own VRK if you like!

It is thrilling that I can start my last year as Mayor at a high point of our success, and I'm so proud of our accomplishments and growth. I am looking forward to serving you in the coming year. Thank you for your continued confidence, and I pray you have a blessed, happy and healthy holiday season.



FEATURE STORY

SEASON OF GIVING

THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO SPREAD JOY AND HOLIDAY CHEER. TUCKER IS AN AMAZING AND GIVING COMMUNITY WITH LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES TO CELEBRATE, GIVE AND RECEIVE WITH GRACE AND LOVE.

VOLUNTEER

ANGEL TREES

Angel Trees are holiday giving programs that support children in need and can be found at most local churches and some organizations like the Salvation Army. Each tag on the tree represents a child who may be lacking in holiday cheer. Donors can choose an angel tag, which lists the child's age, gender, and gift wishes, and purchase the requested items. This simple act helps spread holiday cheer to children who may otherwise go without.

BLOOD DRIVES

One thing that we all have that is always in need is our own blood. An easy and free way to give back to others is to donate your blood with the Red Cross. Visit redcrossblood.org to find a blood drive near you and on a date that is convenient.

MAIN STREET THEATRE CAROL-OKE

Join your neighbors and friends to sing Happy Holidays on Main Street with the Main Street Theatre Players. December 12 at 7 p.m. and December 14 at 4:30 p.m. Plan to meet at The Corner Cup at the north end of the street. If they aren't there, just follow the sound of singing!

NETWORKS – GOOD NEIGHBOR SHOP

NETWorks Cooperative will host their Good Neighbor Shop at Pine Creek Center, 4320 Cowan Road, Tucker GA 30084 December 12-14. For more details and to sign up to volunteer in the shop or donate, visit networkscoop.org/Christmas.

OMEGA SUPPORT CENTER – HOLIDAY GIVEAWAY

Omega Support Center is hosting their 8th Annual Holiday Giveaway December 20-23, providing gift bags for 30084, 30087, 30341 and 30345. There is no cost but registration is required. For more information, registration to receive, donate or volunteer, visit omegasupportcenter.org





TREAT YOURSELF

It is easy to forget oneself in the flurry of buying presents, hosting dinners and serving others. Be sure to take some time for yourself, relax and enjoy the season.

TUCKER COMMUNITY SINGERS A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

Join us for an enchanting afternoon filled with festive music and holiday cheer.
December 14 at 4 p.m., First Christian Church of Atlanta, 4532 Lavista Road



ISSA CHRISTMAS PAJAMA PARTY

The Faith Center is hosting its annual Issa Christmas Pajama Party December 6 starting at 6 p.m. Women aged pre-teen to adult are invited for a transformative evening of celebration, connection and fun. For more info & to register for this free event, visit faithcenterinc.org/events



Photo Credit - the Faith Center

ACROSS ALL
CULTURES AND
AROUND THE
WORLD THERE
ARE DOZENS
OF HOLIDAYS IN
THE MONTHS OF
NOVEMBER AND
DECEMBER.
HOWEVER YOU
CELEBRATE,
WE WISH YOU
PEACE AND JOY.

CITY HALL UPDATE

CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

The City of Tucker offices were closed on November 11 in observance of Veterans Day so the regularly scheduled City Council meeting was held on Tuesday November 12 at Tucker City Hall.

Mayor Frank Auman participated via Zoom as a councilmember and ceded the meeting to Mayor Pro-Tem Cara Schroeder. After unanimously approving the evening’s agenda and the consent agenda, the Council then heard three presentations. The City was pleased to host the presentation of the Georgia Recreation and Parks Association’s Volunteer of the Year to the Friends of Tucker Parks group. Made up of 75 plus dedicated people, the Friends of Tucker Parks groups have been invaluable partners with the City of Tucker with their time, talent and sweat equity.

DeKalb County Watershed presented the upcoming project of installing pump stations and reversing the flow that currently goes from DeKalb to Gwinnett to remain in Gwinnett. The County is seeking an easement from the City of Tucker to build one of the pump stations in Henderson Park.

TSW then provided an update on the City Standards Guidebooks that City staff will use when designing projects on public land. The Council was able to provide feedback on options for gateway signage and wayfinding signs.

The presentations were followed by a second read and public hearing of a Special Land Use Permit application to allow a multi-family use abutting a residential zoning district and a concurrent variance. The Council then motioned and voted 5-2 to defer the application to the December 9, 2024 meeting for the opportunity to meet with the owner and learn more about the plan.

The Mayor and Council then had a first read and public hearing for a rezoning application to allow the parking of commercial vehicles and outdoor storage on Hammerhill Road. Another first read was of an ordinance to amend the Tucker Code Chapter 40 to provide for certain procedures relating to community redevelopment tax incentives.

The last item of business for the evening was a contract amendment with Atlas Technical Consultants for the stormwater inventory and assessment for an additional \$127,674. The Council voted unanimously to approve the amendment.

The City of Tucker’s Mayor and Council meet the second and fourth Mondays of each month at City Hall, 1975 Lakeside Parkway, 350B, Tucker, GA 30084. All meeting agendas and streamed meetings can be found at tuckerga.gov.

Due to publishing deadlines, this magazine is not able to report on the second meeting of the month. Please check for wrap-ups on the website.



DATES TO KNOW

- **DECEMBER 2**
Downtown Development Authority
- **DECEMBER 3**
Zoning Board of Appeals
- **DECEMBER 9**
City Council Meeting
- **DECEMBER 11**
Municipal Court
- **DECEMBER 18**
Municipal Court
- **DECEMBER 19**
Planning Commission
- **DECEMBER 28 & 29**
City Buildings Closed in Observance of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day



NEWS FROM CITY HALL

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The City of Tucker has a robust budget process that starts in February and is finalized in June each year. The fiscal year budget is for the operating budget and addresses the day to day spending to keep our government working.

A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a long-term strategy that outlines an organization's planned investments in infrastructure, facilities, and other capital assets over a period of 5 to 10 years. The CIP prioritizes projects based on factors such as importance, feasibility, and alignment with the organization's goals, while also detailing anticipated costs, funding sources, timelines, and expected outcomes. The primary purpose of a CIP is to ensure the maintenance, upgrading, and expansion of infrastructure and assets in a way that supports future needs and operational efficiency, without overburdening the budget.

Local governments are encouraged to adopt comprehensive, fiscally sustainable, multi year capital plans to effectively manage their capital assets. Infrastructure, technology, and major equipment form the backbone of public services, so the procurement, design, construction, maintenance, and operation of these assets must be carefully planned and managed.

The City of Tucker has been developing a CIP dashboard for the Council, staff and community to track the larger scaled projects and identify funding needs. Once the set-up is complete it will be embedded on the City website, updated in real time and will be an exciting way to track projects. The software will also streamline the monthly financial reports and annual budget book.



SHOP LOCAL

Happy Holidays Tucker! 2024 City of Tucker ornaments will be available at the following locations:

Georgia Gifts and More
5001 Lavista Road

Wine & Whimseys
2344 Main Street

OUR GIFT TO YOU?
A SPECIAL LIMITED
TIME OFFER

Buy a 2024 ornament and receive a retired City ornament from years gone by.

Offer good while supplies last and limited to one free ornament per ornament purchased.



BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

DA FOODIE SPOT ATL

Da Foodie Spot ATL is a vibrant restaurant in Tucker, known for bringing a burst of flavors to the local community. Offering a variety of exciting options, from foodie boxes with wings and egg rolls to their refreshing Foodie Juice, Da Foodie Spot ATL delivers a jam-packed flavor experience.

"It has a lot of flavors," said Rashon Taylor, owner of Da Foodie Spot ATL. "Just some really good food. We make sure everything is fresh every day, and we want to keep giving people the best food we can offer."

Taylor explained that his restaurant specializes in fun foods that foodies love. His journey into creating unique culinary experiences began with his previous restaurant, where he learned to experiment with different flavors and understand what customers enjoy. Before Da Foodie Spot ATL, Taylor ran Stuffy Dawg ATL, a gourmet hotdog restaurant that opened in 2021. However, he discovered that hotdogs weren't as popular in Georgia as he had hoped.

This led him to pivot and cater to a broader audience by offering foods that resonate more with local tastes. Taylor chose Tucker as the ideal location for his new venture, noting that it was a place where he could introduce a variety of flavors to a community that appreciates good food.

"The customers here are lovely," Taylor said. "We come from the southwest of Atlanta, where we also have great customers. But here in Tucker, they're patient, polite, and we rarely have any issues. We really love the customers here."

At Da Foodie Spot ATL, the menu features a diverse range of dishes, including pasta, egg rolls, sandwiches, fries, and wings. One standout item is the surf & turf, which combines grilled steak with shrimp, broccoli, onions, bell peppers, cheddar jack cheese, and honey garlic sauce. To complement these bold flavors, the restaurant also offers its signature Foodie Juice — a blend of blueberry raspberry lemonade with strawberries and pineapple. The Foodie Juice has become another fan favorite, with many customers praising its refreshing taste.

Another popular treat at the restaurant is the banana pudding, which Taylor says consistently receives rave reviews. He is proud to be able to serve such flavorful dishes and have a positive impact on the community. Serving delicious food has always been his passion, and he's thrilled to have found his place in Tucker.

"It feels good," Taylor said. "It's an honor. It's something I always aspired to do growing up — to be a positive influence on my community. The fact that I get to do that here in Tucker is something I'm really excited about and grateful for."

Visit Da Foodie Spot ATL at 1861 Mountain Industrial Boulevard, Suite 104, Tucker, GA 30084 and on socials with the @dafoodiespotatl handle and most delivery apps."



CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

FRIENDS OF TUCKER PARKS

Last month, the Friends of Tucker Parks organization received the Georgia Recreation and Parks Association's Volunteer of the Year award, announced at the state conference and presented at the Tucker Council meeting on November 12.

Founded in 2010 through a joint vision of multiple community groups, the Friends of Tucker Parks is a volunteer led 501c3 with a mission to preserve, protect and improve all parks located in Tucker, Georgia in partnership with the City of Tucker government. They are the umbrella or parent organization to the underlying "Friends of" groups for each park in the City. Together, they unify their voices in advocacy for all of Tucker's parkland, leverage state and local grant opportunities, and pour on the sweat equity.

Throughout the years and hundreds of volunteer hours, the Friends of Tucker Parks has made a positive impact on the City's parks while providing opportunities for service hours. The board members meet on a monthly basis with all the Tucker park "Friends of" groups and City staff to plan the bi-monthly cleanup days. This consistent and open collaboration has allowed for numerous successful projects including but not limited to:

- Annual MLK, Jr Day of Service events
- Restoration projects at Johns Homestead Park
- Created a Commemorative Park Amenity Program
- Supported other organizations in events like Tucker Day, River's Alive and the Great American Cleanup.
- Workdays to clear invasive plants
- Guided walks as part of the "Tucker Walks" program
- The Master Gardeners care for the Native Plant and Wildlife Walk at Henderson Park

The Friends of Tucker Parks group is the perfect example of what a Citizen of the Month can do and be. They are the embodiment of the Tucker Way and I am blessed to be part of it.

Nomination by Shawn Stone

FRIENDS OF PARKS GROUPS

- › FITZGERALD PARK
- › HENDERSON PARK
- › JOHNS HOMESTEAD PARK
- › KELLEY COFER PARK
- › LORD PARK
- › MONTREAL PARK
- › PROBST PARK
- › ROSENFELD PARK
- › SMOKE RISE CROSSING PARK
- › TUCKER NATURE PRESERVE
- › WILLIAM MCKINLEY PETERS PARK



SCHOOL NEWS

CONGRESSMAN HANK JOHNSON VISITS LIVSEY

The purpose of this space is to highlight, uplift and promote the schools in the Tucker Cluster. Education will never come under the purview of city government in Georgia (it is not allowed by the State Constitution), but the City of Tucker is proud of the local schools and support them as we are able.

Throughout the school year there are many opportunities for the schools and the city to collaborate. Staff members will attend career days at elementary schools and the middle school, while the high school hosts the City's annual Manufacturing Day event every fall.

Last month provided a unique opportunity for both the City and Livsey Elementary School. Tucker's Mayor and Council hosted a special visit with Congressman Hank Johnson. While preparing for the visit, staff became aware that the Congressman's mother had been the first Black teacher to teach at Livsey. Arrangements were quickly made, and it was a great experience for the Congressman to visit his mother's old place of employment. The icing on the cake was a personal connection with a former student's father. Congressman Johnson's mother had even attended the wedding of the former student!



Congratulations to our Math and Literacy Leader Schools!

We want to congratulate the **forty schools** that were recognized by the Georgia Department of Education as being Math and Literacy Lead Schools based on improving achievement. Congratulations scholars, teachers, and school leadership!



CONGRATULATIONS to Tucker Middle School and Livsey Elementary School for receiving Math Leader Awards from the Georgia Department of Education.

Tucker Middle School was recognized for exceptional achievement on the Algebra: Concepts and Connections End-of-Course exam.

Livsey Elementary School was recognized for high growth in Math skills for the fifth grade.

AROUND TOWN

UPCOMING CITY EVENTS

HOLIDAY CELEBRATION



North Pole
at Tucker

December 7
4-7 p.m.



CHURCH STREET GREENSPACE
4316 CHURCH STREET

TUCKER PARKS AND RECREATION



HOLIDAY PICKIEBALL TOURNAMENT

TUCKERGA.GOV/PARKS/EVENTS

3071 LAWRENCEVILLE HWY

JANUARY 15

MLK DAY

Join us in honoring
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
with a Day of Service
at Johns Homestead

**TRAIL
MAINTENANCE**

MAKE IT A DAY ON, NOT A DAY OFF

JAN. 10 & 24 - FEB. 7 & 21

**FRIDAY
NIGHTS @
TUCKER
REC**



City of Tucker

Winter Concert Series



TUCKER Community Corner

HOLIDAY ACTIVITY PAGE

Crossword Puzzle
and
Spot 10 Differences

