



# INTUCKER

JANUARY 2026 | VOLUME 10 | ISSUE 1



MEET  
MAYOR  
ANNE  
LERNER

# ELECTED OFFICIALS

**ANNE LERNER**  
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

## CITY SOCIALS



**nextdoor**

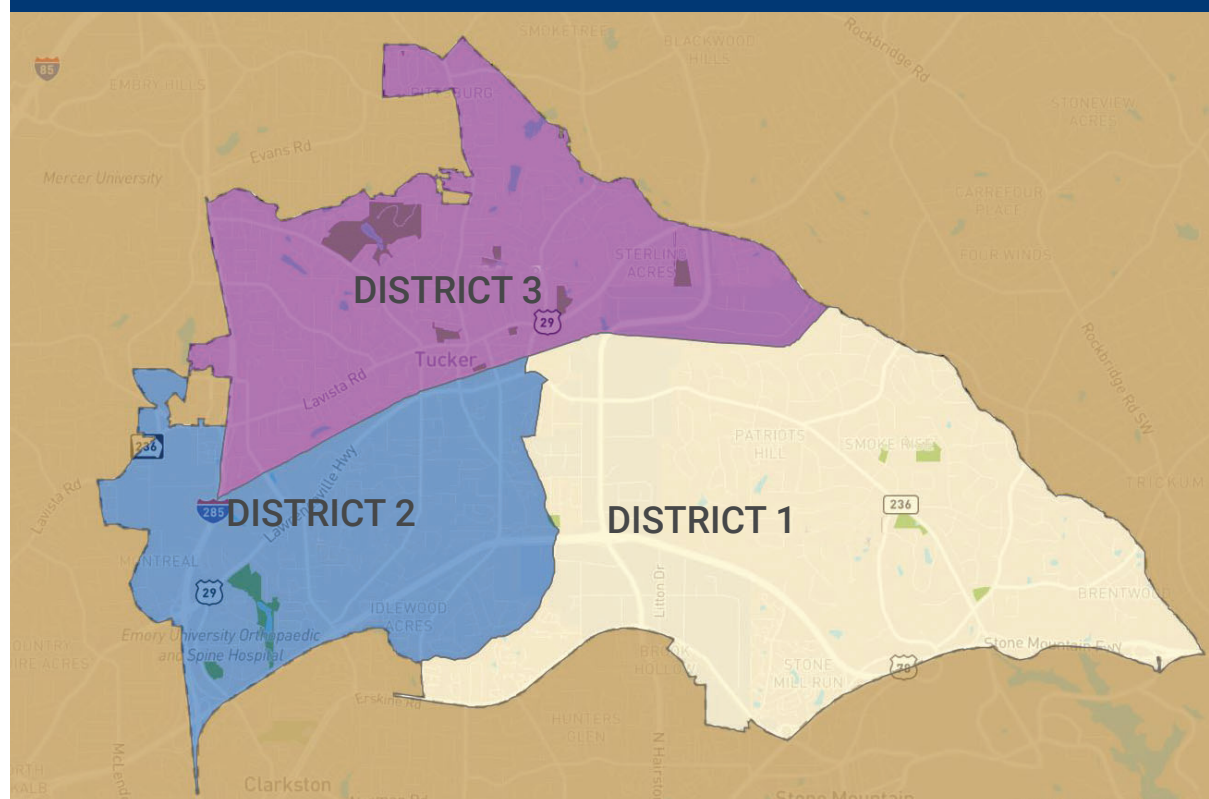
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Robin Stevens

## DISTRICT MAP



## EDITOR'S NOTE

**SONJA SZUBSKI - COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR**



New Year, new Mayor  
and new layout!

January is always a  
time for fresh starts  
and 2026 is a doozy!

While I am sad that  
the chapter of life with  
Frank Auman as mayor has  
closed, I am equally excited to welcome  
our second Mayor of Tucker, Anne Lerner.

Anne has a long and proven record of  
service, specifically in and for Tucker, that  
is hard to compete with. Having served two  
terms on the inaugural council, she did not  
stop serving Tucker in her two years off  
and has continued her service. Fresh eyes  
can bring fresh ideas and I know all of staff  
is excited to work with Anne in the coming  
four years.

The InTucker team have decided to, once  
again, change up what we share in our  
monthly magazine. Rather than replace an  
issue every four months with the Parks and  
Recreation Activity Guide, we will dedicate  
a couple pages each month for up-to-date  
programming and announcements, in  
addition to the regular page of upcoming  
events. Due to the addition of those

dedicated pages, we will cycle through  
other timely topics like project updates,  
DeKalb County School District stories, and  
spotlight new events. We will continue  
to highlight our Tucker citizens and  
businesses.

In this issue, we are pleased to not only  
introduce our new Mayor but also shine  
a spotlight on our representatives under  
the Gold Dome in Atlanta. Tucker is proud  
of those that serve our community as  
State Representatives and State Senators,  
and we make a real effort to foster those  
partnerships.

This year will also be a long celebration  
of our firsts as a young city. In November  
of last year we celebrated the 10  
year anniversary of the referendum  
to incorporate as a self-governing  
municipality. This month we celebrate  
when we took on the responsibility of Parks  
and Recreation from DeKalb County. We  
will have commemorative glasses at our  
January Winter Concert Series concerts. If  
you don't reserve your spot in time we will  
have a small amount set aside at City Hall.  
Stop by and snag one before they are gone!

Take care, friends. See you on Main Street.



# MEET THE MAYOR

## A LEGACY OF SERVICE, A VISION FOR TUCKER'S FUTURE

From the earliest days of Tucker's cityhood movement to the present moment, Anne Lerner has been a steady, influential force in shaping the city's identity, growth, and aspirations. Her leadership is rooted in decades of civic involvement, regional collaboration, and a deep commitment to the people who call Tucker home. Today, as she steps into the role of Mayor, she brings with her not only an impressive record of public service but also a clear, forward looking vision for the city's next chapter.

Her journey in public leadership began long before Tucker officially became a city. She played a key role during the cityhood movement and the complex set up process that followed, helping lay the foundation for the municipal structure residents rely on today. Once Tucker incorporated, she was elected to the Tucker City Council for two consecutive terms, where she served as Mayor Pro Tem and as the Council's representative to the Development Authority. Her time on the Council was marked by a focus on responsible growth, community engagement, and building strong partnerships across DeKalb County.

Her public service extends far beyond City Hall. She has served as a DeKalb Planning Commissioner and Community Council Member, shaping land use decisions that affect neighborhoods across the county. She is a graduate of Leadership DeKalb and the Atlanta Regional Commission's Regional Leadership Institute. Her involvement

with the Georgia Economic Development Association, Communities in Schools Atlanta, the DeKalb County Women's Commission Stakeholder Committee, and the Tucker Northlake CID Master Plan Steering Committee reflects her broad understanding of the interconnected systems that influence economic mobility, education, and community well being.

Locally, she has long been a familiar face in Tucker's civic landscape. She has served on the boards of the Tucker Civic Association, the Northlake Community Alliance, and the Winding Woods Garden Club. She has been active in the DeKalb County Neighborhood Watch for the Winding Woods neighborhood, the Tucker Optimist Club, and the American Legion Auxiliary at Tucker's Joe Pritchett Post #207.

Mayor Lerner believes in public safety, strategic economic growth, stewardship of parks and greenspaces as well as a commitment to a culture of lifelong community growth. With these key areas in mind, she looks forward to strengthening existing relationships and expanding partnerships across the region to lift up Tucker.

With a deep history of service and a clear, ambitious vision for the future, Mayor Anne Lerner stands ready to guide Tucker through its next era of growth.



## DATES TO KNOW

- **JANUARY 1**  
All City Buildings will be closed in observance of New Year's Day
- **JANUARY 6, 7 P.M.**  
Zoning Board of Appeals
- **JANUARY 9, 7 P.M.**  
Winter Concert Series  
Emerald Empire Band  
Tucker Recreation Center  
(Reservations Required)
- **JANUARY 12**  
**6 P.M. – Special Called**  
City Council Meeting for  
Swearing-In of New Mayor  
  
**7 P.M. – Regular City**  
Council Meeting
- **JANUARY 15, 7 P.M.**  
Planning Commission
- **JANUARY 19**  
**9 A.M.-NOON**  
Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
of Service at Kelley Cofer  
Park  
  
**ALL DAY – All City Buildings**  
closed in observance of  
the Birthday of Rev. Dr.  
Martin Luther King, Jr.
- **JANUARY 20, 7 P.M.**  
TKR 101  
Tucker Recreation Center
- **JANUARY 26, 7 P.M.**  
City Council Meeting
- **JANUARY 23, 7 P.M.**  
Winter Concert Series  
Way Back Band  
Tucker Recreation Center  
(Reservations Required)

## FEATURE STORY

# THE TUCKER DELEGATION

For its relative size, the City of Tucker is fortunate to be represented in the Georgia General Assembly by five state representatives and three state senators. Brief bios, contact information and observations from each Tucker delegation member are below:



**Representative Imani Barnes** is working on her PhD in public health while also working as a biomedical research scientist, youth development coach, parent and community advocate. Serving District 86, Representative Barnes recognizes the need for inclusion at the Capitol that reflects the interests of the diverse families, businesses, and underserved populations in the district.

Recently the Future Caucus, a national, nonpartisan nonprofit dedicated to activating Gen Z and millennial policymakers, recently honored Rep. Barnes with the 2025 Rising Star Award.

Looking ahead to 2026, Rep. Barnes shared these comments below:

"My priorities this coming session are to advance legislation that strengthens public health, education, and community safety across DeKalb County and the state. This includes improving access to mental and behavioral health resources, ensuring safe crisis transport for individuals in distress, expanding support for early childhood development and maternal health, and investing in workforce pathways that help families achieve economic stability.

In addition, I am focused on protecting our senior population through stronger housing protections that allow older adults to age safely and affordably in their communities. I also remain committed to my ongoing effort to codify free school meals for all Georgia students, because no child should ever have to learn on an empty stomach. My work this session continues to be guided by one principle, that healthy, safe, and supported communities lead to a stronger Georgia."

"The greatest opportunity for the greater Tucker community in the coming years is the opportunity to continue shaping Tucker as a model of collaboration between residents, small businesses, and local and state government. Tucker's strong community pride and spirit of service give us a unique foundation to grow responsibly. By focusing on inclusive economic development, infrastructure development, support for our schools, and policies that prioritize public safety and housing stability, we can ensure Tucker remains one of DeKalb County's most connected and forward-thinking communities for generations to come."

"If citizens want to make their voices heard at the state Capitol, the best way to do that is to stay engaged and communicate directly with your representatives. I encourage citizens to call, email, or meet with me and other legislators to share their perspectives on pending bills and community issues. Residents can also visit the Capitol during session, submit testimony during committee hearings, and follow legislation through the Georgia General Assembly website. Democracy only works when the people are involved, and your voice is essential to shaping Georgia's future."

Contact info: 507-B Coverdell Legislative Office Bldg., Atlanta, GA 30334, Office: (404) 656-0202, Email: imani.barnes@house.ga.gov



**Representative Viola Davis** was sworn into office as a member of the Georgia House of Representatives in 2019 and she represents the citizens of House District 87. She serves on

the House Defense & Veterans Affairs, Health, Insurance, Natural Resources & Environment, and Urban Affairs committees. A former officer in the U.S. Army, she is an honor graduate of the Medical College of Georgia with a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing with over 23 years'

experience.

Rep. Davis shared her perspectives on the upcoming legislative session below:

"My priorities this coming session are to focus on transportation, education, housing and homelessness, and economic development and environmental justice. The City of Tucker has several issues involving transportation that will affect property owners, county, and city governments. I will focus on keeping the "employers of this government", yes, the taxpayers and voters informed and updated on transportation issues. I will draft legislation to improve the funding of transportation. With the serious issue involving the DeKalb County School System, I have several pieces of legislation that will address the issue of the Superintendent and school funding.

I have a long history of attempting to protect the "American Dream of Homeownership". I have legislation that will remove corporate owned purchases from the assessment process that falsely elevated home prices because corporation buy sight unseen; I have drafted several pieces of legislation to address abusive HOA, POA, and Condo Assoc.; I have met with county and city elected officials of the issue of homelessness and the best method to decrease the numbers. I have drafted legislation to address underserved and under-resourced areas.

On the issues of economic development and environmental justice, I have drafted legislation that will address the fact that over 4.3 million people were "ineligible" to assess billions in funding within the state of Georgia. I have drafted legislation to urge a serious approach to addressing the water issues in DeKalb County."

"The greatest opportunity for the greater Tucker community in the coming years is to enhance the overall quality of life and enticing economic development within the city. The growth of the city has been impressive. I make every effort to keep open and active communication with the city to push a unified front to provide the best for the citizens. By local, state, and federal working together, we are better able to maximize the delivery to our constituents."

3. "If citizens want to make their voices heard at the state Capitol, the best way to do that is to show that they are the "Employers" of this nonprofit, public business called government. I have pushed this fact for over thirty years. I take pride in serving as an "employee" of the people, "We the People." As a veteran, I served to defend the Constitution of the United States. I have drafted legislation to show that elected officials must serve the people and the Constitution."

Contact info: 404-D Coverdell Legislative Office Bldg., Atlanta, GA 30334, Office: (404) 656-0109, Email: viola.davis@house.ga.gov



**Representative Karla Drenner** has served in the Georgia House of Representatives since 2001. Rep. Drenner represents House District 85 and sits on six legislative committees, including the Rules, Public Health, Natural Resources & Environment, Energy, Utilities & Telecommunications, Small Business Development, and Urban Affairs committees. An educator who holds two PhDs, she also serves as the chair of the DeKalb County House of Representatives legislative delegation.

Rep. Drenner's thoughts going into the 2026 Session are below:

"My priorities this coming session are to strengthen Georgia's investment in education and infrastructure while ensuring our energy future is sustainable, resilient, and equitable. I will focus on policies that protect our environment, provide stronger oversight of large-scale data center development, and expand clean energy opportunities that benefit both our schools and local communities."

"The greatest opportunity for the greater Tucker community in the coming years is to build on its tradition of civic engagement and thoughtful growth by leading the way in responsible development. As data centers and new industries expand, Tucker can model how economic progress, environmental protection, and educational excellence can work hand in hand."

"If citizens want to make their voices heard at the state Capitol, the best way to do that is to reach out directly to their elected officials, attend delegation meetings, and participate in public hearings. Consistent, informed, and respectful engagement truly shapes the decisions that affect our schools, environment, and quality of life."

Contact info: 507-H Coverdell Legislative Office Building, Atlanta, GA 30334, Office: (404) 656-0202, Email: [karla.drenner@house.ga.gov](mailto:karla.drenner@house.ga.gov)



**Representative Scott Holcomb** represents District 101 in the Georgia House of Representatives and serves on the following committees: Rules, Appropriations, Judiciary, Ways & Means, Public Safety and Homeland Security, Defense & Veterans Affairs, Higher Education, Juvenile Justice, and Technology & Infrastructure Innovation.

In the legislature, Rep. Holcomb has been a passionate advocate for reforming the state's laws and policies concerning sexual assault. He also championed legislation that allows victims of domestic violence to break their leases without an early termination penalty.

Following his military service in both the Air National Guard and as an officer in the U.S. Army JAG Corps, Rep. Holcomb founded a law firm Holcomb + Ward, LLP, a diverse practice that includes securities arbitrations, regulatory matters, and complex litigation.

Rep. Holcomb shared these thoughts for the New Year.

1. "My priorities this coming session are economic growth, education, and health care."

2. "The greatest opportunity for the greater Tucker community in the coming years is to continue to develop as a terrific place to live, work, and play."

3. "If citizens want to make their voices heard at the state Capitol, the best way to do that is to call, email, or stop by. If calling or emailing, please leave your name and home address. That helps us to know when constituents are calling and we try our best to get back to you in a timely manner."

Contact info: 511-I Coverdell Legislative Office Building, Atlanta, GA 30334, Office: (404) 656-6372, Email: [scott.holcomb@house.ga.gov](mailto:scott.holcomb@house.ga.gov)



**Representative Billy Mitchell** serves in House District 88, and he has the distinction of sponsoring the legislation to create the City of Tucker. Rep. Mitchell sits on the House Appropriations, Banks & Banking, Health, Regulated Industries, and Urban Affairs committees. Rising from his service as a city councilmember and mayor pro tem in the historic City of Stone Mountain, Rep. Mitchell was elected to be the President of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators. He has received numerous accolades in his 20-plus years in the General Assembly including being awarded the Georgia Municipal Association's "Champion for Georgia Cities" legislative service award, and the DeKalb NAACP Pat Jones community service award. Below are Rep. Mitchell's ideas for the Tucker community:

"My priorities this coming session are 1) Making certain that students get the skills and support needed for careers and that Georgia's workforce meets industry demands. 2) Addressing quality of life issues so that growth is sustainable. 3) As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I want to ensure accountability, transparency and fairness. 4) Local government dynamics (i.e., City/County/School Board), will continue to be important.

"The greatest opportunity for the greater Tucker community in the coming years is Leveraging the City's strategic location and recent planning momentum to transform key corridors and downtown into a vibrant, mixed-use,

connected community building housing variety, activating public spaces and attracting target industries thereby elevating both economic development and quality of life. As the State Representative for most of Tucker, I'm looking forward to assisting in that effort!

"If citizens want to make their voices heard at the state Capitol, the best way to do that is is a mix of direct engagement, organized advocacy and public testimony, much like the community did in concert with my efforts in sponsoring the legislation that created the City of Tucker. My email address is [billy.mitchell@house.ga.gov](mailto:billy.mitchell@house.ga.gov) and phone number is 404-656-0287. I would love to hear from you!

Contact info: 607-D Coverdell Legislative Office Building, Atlanta, GA 30334, Office: (404) 656-0287, Email: [billy.mitchell@house.ga.gov](mailto:billy.mitchell@house.ga.gov)

*(continues on page 6)*



**Senator Sally Harrell** was first elected to the Georgia Senate in 2018 to serve the 40th Senate District. She serves on the Senate Government Oversight, Health and Human Services, Higher Education, and State Institutions and Property committees. A champion of women and family issues, she currently serves as the Senate Co-Chair of the Georgia Women's Legislative Caucus and Vice Chair of both the Dekalb Delegation and the Working Families Caucus. Sen. Harrell was a member of the Georgia House of Representatives from 1999 to 2005, and prior to serving in the Legislature, Sen. Harrell was the Executive Director of the Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Georgia.

Senator Harrell shared the following comments:

"My priorities for the coming session are to: 1) tackle on-line safety for our kids, ensuring digital companies are accountable for the products they design for our children, as well as making sure AI/technology in classrooms does not hinder student learning; 2) fight for the basic healthcare needs of all Georgia residents; and 3) continue to fight to lower the cost of higher education including technical education.

"The greatest opportunity for the Greater Tucker community in the coming years is to 1) ensure that all residents have access to adequate housing options 2) continuing to create a sense of community and 'place.'"

"If citizens want to make their voices heard at the State Capitol, the best way to do that is: 1) to visit us! The Georgia Capitol is unique in that you can page us out of the Senate chamber and we will come speak to you personally! If you can't make it to the Capitol, drop us a note on a postcard. Postcards end up on our desks and are easy to read. I enjoy getting them."

Contact info: 110-D State Capitol Atlanta, GA 30334, Office: (404) 463-2260, Email: [sally.harrell@senate.ga.gov](mailto:sally.harrell@senate.ga.gov)



**Senator Kim Jackson** has represented Tucker since she was elected in 2020, and she serves on the Senate Appropriations, Children and Families, Ethics, Reapportionment and Redistricting, Public Safety, and Rules committees. Senator Jackson serves as the Senate Minority Whip, the second-highest position in the Democratic Caucus.

After earning a master's degree in divinity, she became an Episcopal priest upon completing her graduate program. Since then, Sen. Jackson has spent a decade serving in various capacities in the Episcopal Church, with her current service as the Vicar at the Episcopal Church of the Common Ground in Atlanta, where she has worked extensively to aid people experiencing homelessness in downtown Atlanta.

Going into the New Year, Senator Jackson shared her ideas as follows:

"My priorities this coming session are to protect those caught in our housing crisis, pass protections for victims of gun violence, and continue to fight for the LGBTQ community."

"The greatest opportunity for the greater Tucker community in the coming years is making your voice heard at the ballot box in 2026. Every resident of Georgia has the power to make change through their vote, and 2026 is a pivotal moment in history that we need everyone to participate in."

"If citizens want to make their voices heard at the state Capitol, the best way to do that is to come to the Capitol. My office is always open (just email my Chief of Staff that you want to come!), my staff will show you around the Capitol and teach you how things work, and you will have the opportunity to "work the ropes." The biggest way to change a lawmaker's mind is to have a conversation with them- and that can really only happen if you come see us during session. If you can't make it down- call legislators' offices, bombard their emails, and amplify your priorities on social media!"

Contact info: 303-A CLOB, Atlanta, GA 30334, Office: (404) 656-6882, email: [kim.jackson@senate.ga.gov](mailto:kim.jackson@senate.ga.gov)



**Senator Randal Mangham** was sworn in to the Senate on January 13, 2025, and was appointed to serve on the Senate Banking and Financial Institutions, Health and Human Services, Interstate Cooperation, Retirement, State and Local Governmental Operations, and Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Overview Committee (MARTOC) committees. Senator Mangham is no stranger to the legislative process, having first served in the Georgia House of Representatives from 2000 until 2010, representing the 94th House District which included South DeKalb and Rockdale counties. He is the principal in the law firm of Randal Alonzo Mangham, LLC.

Senator Mangham offered these perspectives going into the 2026 legislative session:

"My priorities this coming session are to strengthen economic opportunities for working families, protect access to quality education, and invest in infrastructure that makes our communities safer and more connected. I'm also focused on supporting small businesses, addressing housing affordability, and ensuring that every Georgian no matter their zip code has a fair shot at success.

"The greatest opportunity for the greater Tucker community in the coming years is smart, inclusive growth. Tucker has the chance to attract new businesses, expand transit access, and revitalize its local economy while preserving the small town character that makes it special. By working together residents, entrepreneurs, and public officials can create a model for balanced growth that lifts everyone.

"If citizens want to make their voices heard at the state Capitol, the best way to do that is to stay engaged and show up. Call, email, and visit your representatives, attend committee hearings, and speak up about the issues that matter most to you. My office is always open to constituents, and I encourage everyone to reach out directly. Democracy works best when the people are informed, organized, and vocal."

Contact info: 320-A CLOB, Atlanta, GA 30334, Office: (404) 657-4640, email: [randall.mangham@senate.ga.gov](mailto:randall.mangham@senate.ga.gov)

## CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

# CHEF SIMONE BYRON



We are honored to nominate Chef Simone Byron, a hospitality entrepreneur, educator, and community leader whose influence reaches far beyond the kitchen. Her story is rooted in a remarkable legacy, her great grandfather was the Bronx's first African American caterer and Head Chef for Marcus Garvey's Black Star Line, and her parents instilled in her a lifelong commitment to education, equity, and service. Today, we see Chef Byron carrying that legacy forward with purpose, innovation, and an unwavering belief in the potential of young people.

A graduate of the Art Institute of Atlanta with a degree in Culinary Arts Management, she expanded her expertise through international culinary programs in Italy and Switzerland. Her early career included transformative years with the Disney Corporation and rapid advancement within Compass Group, where she became the youngest Chef Manager of the Year with Eurest Dining. Yet her greatest calling emerged when she stepped into the classroom as a high school culinary arts educator. There, she

recognized a critical need: real pathways to real careers for students who often lacked access to opportunity.

In response, she founded the Navigate Foundation, a groundbreaking workforce development model that provides hands on culinary training, industry certifications, financial literacy, and professional development. Backed by Compass Group North America, Navigate now serves students across Atlanta, Charlotte, Union City (NJ), and Chicago, graduating more than 500 young people into meaningful careers. We continue to be inspired by her ability to envision what is possible for students—especially those who have never been shown how far their talents can take them.

Chef Byron expanded her impact with the creation of C.H.E.F. Academy in Tucker, Georgia, a vibrant community culinary space offering youth camps, student training, pop up events, and operational support for local businesses. Through Byron Hospitality Consulting, she designs curriculum and continuing education

programs for school districts across Georgia and North Carolina, while also supporting restaurants with menu development, costing, and operational strategy. Her recent partnership with Discover DeKalb brought more than 200 students together for a hospitality youth conference, further cementing her role as a regional leader in workforce development. She also leads Dishful Thinking, a boutique catering company known for its creativity and personalized approach.

To meet Chef Byron is to love her. Her passion is infectious, her leadership transformative, and her commitment to community unmatched. She has elevated countless spaces—schools, kitchens, businesses, and neighborhoods—by building pipelines of talent and creating opportunities where none existed before. Her influence extends into her home as well; the accomplishments of her son reflect the same strength, vision, and excellence she pours into her community.

*Nominated by Adeola Sokunbi and Aisha Stith*

## BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

# JOURNEY'S UNLIMITED



Journey's Unlimited is a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving communities through a wide range of outreach programs. Under its umbrella is Atlanta for Haiti, an initiative that supports Haitians and Haitian refugees. Journey's Unlimited also houses a program that has become a cornerstone for youth in Tucker: STORM Cheerleading, which stands for Sisterhood, Trust, Optimism, Respect, and Mentorship. STORM provides cheerleading opportunities for young people who otherwise could not afford to participate. By removing the financial barriers often associated with competitive cheer, an activity traditionally dominated by families with significant resources, STORM opens the door for every child to experience the sport.

"I noticed our girls could not do all-star cheerleading not because they were not good enough," cofounder Megan Celeste said. "It was simply because they could not afford it. So, I wanted to provide access to kids in the community to do this because it had such an impact on my life."

Celeste was born in Mississippi and raised in Georgia. Growing up in Lilburn, she learned cheerleading at North DeKalb Parks & Recreation, where the sport became a defining part of her childhood. As she grew older, she transitioned into coaching and quickly became a sought-after instructor, teaching private lessons and later coaching at Greater Atlanta Christian School. Throughout her coaching career, a passion steadily grew inside her, a desire to

create a cheer program where no child would be turned away because of cost.

Pastor Vincent Campbell of The Faith Center and his wife, Felicia Campbell, had daughters who were coached by Celeste. When she shared her vision, the Campbells believed in her immediately and helped bring it to life. They offered the church's facilities for practices and purchased mats to get the program started. Celeste then partnered with co-founder Dee Dee Cunningham, and together they began building what would soon become a thriving organization.

The program grew quickly. They started in the church's activity room, then moved practices into the lobby when they ran out of space. Eventually, they outgrew the church entirely and opened their own facility at 5238 Royal Woods Parkway in Tucker, later expanding to an additional location in Lithonia.

Since then, Celeste and Cunningham have been transforming children's lives. Each year, they host fundraisers to ensure that every child who wants to cheer can do so at a reduced cost, or even for free. Celeste shared that 30 percent of their athletes receive scholarships or financial assistance. STORM also serves as a welcoming space for children who speak little or no English. One Spanish-speaking athlete, who arrived unable to communicate in English, not only learned the routines but excelled, qualifying for the Youth Summit, a national competition featuring the best young cheerleaders in the country.

Beyond youth development, STORM has produced collegiate athletes, with several earning cheerleading scholarships. Their gym is lined with trophies, banners, medals, championship rings, and jackets, a testament to their success. The program is also a back-to-back national champion, adding titles in both 2024 and 2025. Yet Celeste and Cunningham are most proud of the safe, inclusive environment they've created. STORM's diversity is one of its greatest strengths, exposing children to peers from many cultures and backgrounds.

"We've got kids in the program that don't speak a lick of English," Celeste said. "We have Latin kids, Asians, white, and of course Black because we started off Black. You know Tucker is such a diverse community, so we have everybody here. We have Jewish folks here, Africans, we have all kinds of folks here, Haitians, Venezuelans, and Mexicans. For a kid to be in that type of environment and being held to a standard and teaching them life skills is something marvelous."

Celeste and Cunningham hope to continue expanding the program. They envision a larger facility to accommodate more athletes and plan to add tumbling to their offerings. While they are proud of how far STORM has come, they know there is still more to build. For Celeste, one of the greatest joys of all is watching her own two daughters cheer in the program and fall in love with the sport that shaped her life.

# WHAT HAPPENED AT THE LAST CITY COUNCIL MEETING?

# DECEMBER 2025 CITY COUNCIL RECAP

The City of Tucker held its final City Council meeting of the year on December 8, 2025, marking a historic moment as it was also Mayor Frank Auman's final meeting as Tucker's first mayor. A reception honoring his tenure was held prior to the meeting, where friends, family and the community gathered to share memories and messages of congratulations and gratitude to the Mayor.

The regular meeting started with the Teachers of the Year from Livsey and Smoke Rise Elementary Schools and Tucker Middle School. After the public comment period the Council took a moment during the scheduled Mayor's Comments to thank him for his service and present him with a proclamation and a giant key to the City.

The consent agenda was approved unanimously and included the previous month's meeting minutes, two stormwater contracts, two resolutions stating approval for the application of grant monies for the Tucker-Northlake Trail and the Greenway Connector, as well as a renewal of worker's compensation funding for 2026 through the Georgia Municipal Association.

Staff reported on the November financials and presented on the on-call engineering approved vendor list process and the Tucker Summit CID made a presentation requesting an ordinance for a commercial streetlight district.

The Mayor and Council unanimously approved an ordinance to amend the Tucker code concerning solid waste to provide for the creation of special districts. They then voted 4-2 to defer their vote and a public hearing on a SLUP for an automobile repair and maintenance at 3893 Lavista Road. The second item for a SLUP at Northlake was withdrawn by the applicant.

This was followed by a first read and public hearing for a SLUP to allow for a massage establishment at Northlake Festival. The Mayor and Council then unanimously approved the Mayor's appointment of the Chief Judge of the Municipal Court of the City of Tucker.

The meeting was adjourned after a short recess for executive session.

Tucker's Mayor and Council meet the second and fourth Monday of each month at City Hall, 1975 Lakeside Parkway, Suite 350B, Tucker, Georgia 30084. You may also watch online at [tuckerga.gov/agendas](https://tuckerga.gov/agendas). Reminder that the Council will meet for a special called meeting to swear-in Mayor-elect Anne Lerner and the re-elected seat one councilmembers and celebrate starting at 6 p.m. in City Hall.

## Proclamation

*In honor of Mayor Frank Auman*

*WHEREAS, Frank Auman was duly elected as the inaugural Mayor of the City of Tucker in March of 2016; and*

*WHEREAS, prior to his election, Frank Auman was a vital leader and strategist in the pursuit of securing a referendum for the community of Tucker and subsequently the landslide approval to incorporate; and*

*WHEREAS, for over nine years, Mayor Auman has led the City, the Council and the community with an unwavering servant heart and leadership; and*

*WHEREAS, during his leadership, the young City of Tucker created foundational strength with strategic and comprehensive planning, enhanced community outreach and practiced fiscal responsibility; and*

*WHEREAS, over the course of his tenure, Mayor Auman welcomed, heard and mentored those newly elected to understand and lead in the Tucker Way, with an open heart and an open mind; and*

*WHEREAS, through Mayor Auman's gift of time and care, his wife Gaye, their daughters and their families understood and supported his dedication to the community as their own sacrifice and service; and*

*Now, therefore let us proclaim on behalf of the City of Tucker, gratitude to Mayor Frank Auman for his integrity, humility, support and vision for Tucker and wish him joy and peace in the coming years.*

*In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Tucker to be affixed this 8th day of December 2025.*

Attest:

Cara Schroeder, Mayor Pro Tem

Bonnie Warne, City Clerk



# WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR PARKS ?

# PARKS & RECREATION UPDATE

As we bid farewell to 2025 and welcome 2026, our department is once again growing, with new staff, new programs, and exciting opportunities ahead!

With the addition of our new Out of School Time Coordinator, we're expanding our summer camp offerings beyond the traditional favorites like Eco Camp and Teen Camp. This summer, look for a variety of specialty camps including Arts Camp, Cooking with Fran, Sitcom Camp, and Superhero Academy, plus weekly sports camps featuring soccer, basketball, lacrosse, and baseball. We're also partnering with 50 Sports Company to bring a comprehensive and energetic sports program to Tucker's youth. Summer Camp Registration opens Monday, February 2 at 9 a.m.

We are thrilled to welcome a new Aquatics Coordinator, who is diving right in with expanded aquatic programs, including pool rentals, aerobics, swim lessons, and more, making Tucker summers even more refreshing and fun.

We have broadened our year-round offerings with new educational, fitness, and wellness classes. Our senior programs continue to thrive as well, with more activities and increased participation than ever before.

Our Events Manager will continue building on Tucker's tradition of vibrant community events while adding new experiences to our annual lineup. We're especially excited to host our upcoming Summer of Fun series on the beautiful new Tucker Town Green on Railroad Avenue in the heart of our downtown district.

As always, we want to hear from you! Visit us online at [tuckerga.gov/municipal-parks](http://tuckerga.gov/municipal-parks),

follow us on social media, or give us a call at 470-481-0205.

Look online for more details or stop by the Rec Center for our Acitvitiy Guide to learn more about these new and exciting programs:

- American Red Cross trainings in partnership with Safety Penn Training
- Perk Up with Parks
- Parents Night out

### PARK PROJECT UPDATES

- The Johns Homestead Dam and Park Renovations project is making incredible progress and remains right on schedule (opening June 2026)! The transformation is well underway with the lower and upper spillways complete and the bridges are in place. The new dock is nearly finished, with sleek handrails installed and the final concrete walk soon to be poured. Stream crossing bridges now connect key areas of the park, and the Zemory Drive bridge is being completed as the sewer line work wraps up. Visitors can also look forward to new scenic bird blinds, fresh landscaping, new parking and interpretive signage throughout the park, creating new ways to experience the park's natural beauty.

In addition, the historic home on the property is one step closer to national recognition. The City has officially submitted the nomination for listing on the National Historic Registry, and approval is anticipated within the year opening doors to grant funding that will help preserve and celebrate this treasured landmark for generations to come.

- Exciting progress continues at Fitzgerald Park! The new bleachers and press box are complete. Work on the ADA Fully Accessible Playground is advancing, with the DeKalb County agreement moving toward Council approval in late October, followed by equipment purchase and installation. The field house demolition is finished, and drainage issues have been resolved. Additional Park improvements, including field grading and seeding and facility upgrades are planned for the next phase of renovation.

- Peters Park restrooms have been completed and are open for public use during park hours. This adds the amenity most asked for in our parks and provides convenience to our parkgoers, especially those with kids.
- Henderson Park - Lake Erin Dam renovation includes the repair and improvements to the aging dam. There will be a plan developed this year for the replacement of the playground and pavilion and plans to add restrooms to the activity hub. The City will solicit input from the community as we make these improvements and are excited about what will be added to this vital part of the parks system

There are also plans to add bridge access to the waterfall on the yellow trail. This project will commence this spring and is funded through a Department of Natural Resources grant.

- Tucker Town Green: This exciting addition has been several years in the making and was officially opened last fall in the heart of our downtown district is open and ready for events, activities and family fun.



# UPCOMING EVENTS IN TUCKER

JANUARY  
9

EMERALD  
EMPIRE  
BAND



Winter Concert Series

TUCKER RECREATION CENTER

JANUARY 19

MLK DAY

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



TRAIL  
MAINTENANCE  
@KELLEY COFER PARK

MAKE IT A DAY ON, NOT A DAY OFF

JANUARY  
23

THE  
WAY BACK  
BAND



Winter Concert Series

TUCKER RECREATION CENTER

TUCKER PARKS AND REC

9th ANNUAL  
SENIORS  
VALENTINE'S  
Day  
CELEBRATION  
LUNCH FROM BAMBINELLI'S  
FRIDAY FEBRUARY 13, 2023  
11:30 A.M.-1 P.M.  
\$15 PER TICKET  
PURCHASE ONLINE or @ TUCKER REC

TUCKERGA.GOV/PARKS/EVENTS



# TUCKER *Community Corner*



Mayor Frank Auman was honored by his fellow councilmembers with a proclamation and a giant key to the City during his last meeting of his term.