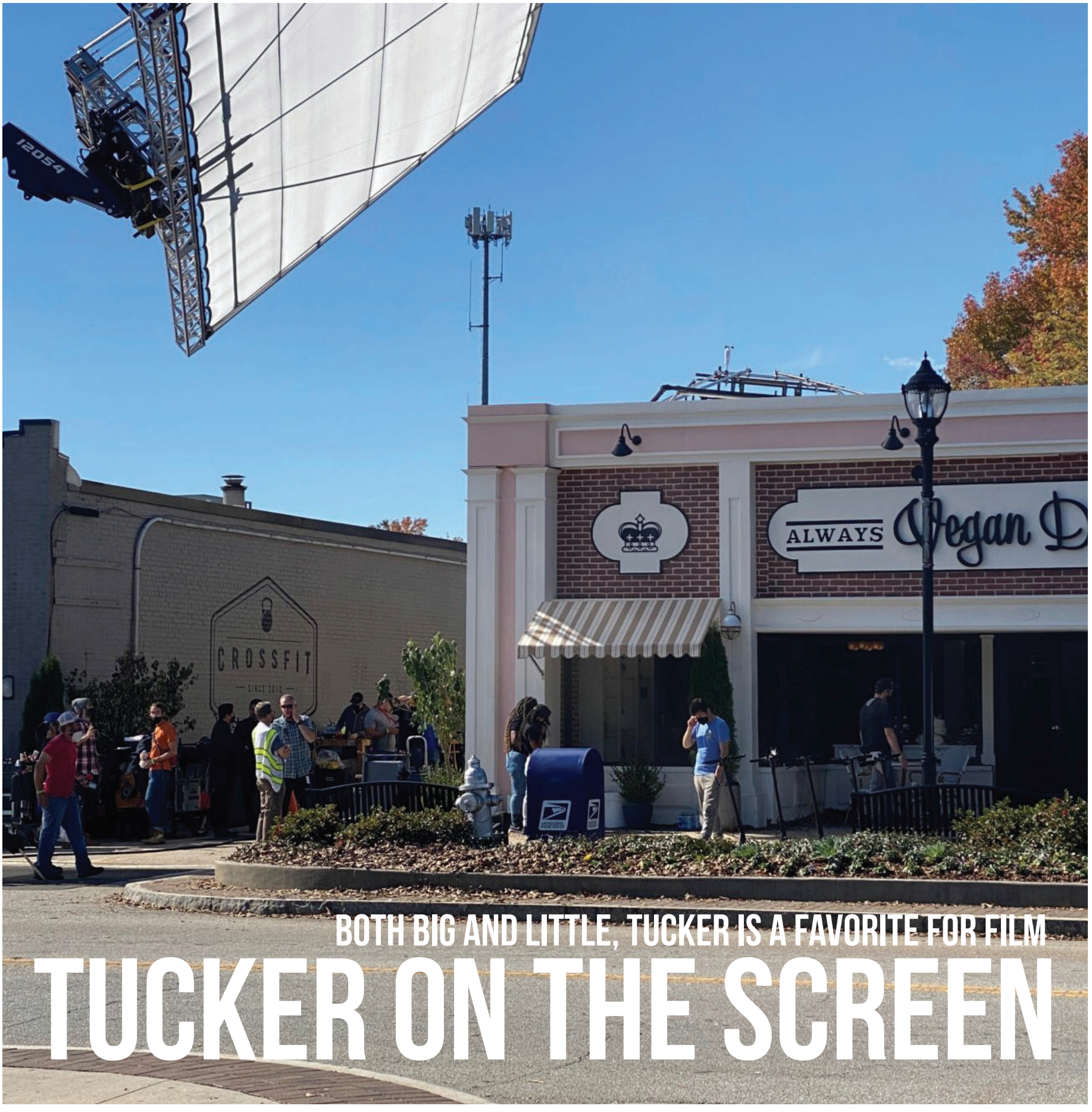
IN TUCKER

MARCH 2026 | VOLUME 10 | ISSUE 3



BOTH BIG AND LITTLE, TUCKER IS A FAVORITE FOR FILM

TUCKER ON THE SCREEN

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

INTUCKER STAFF

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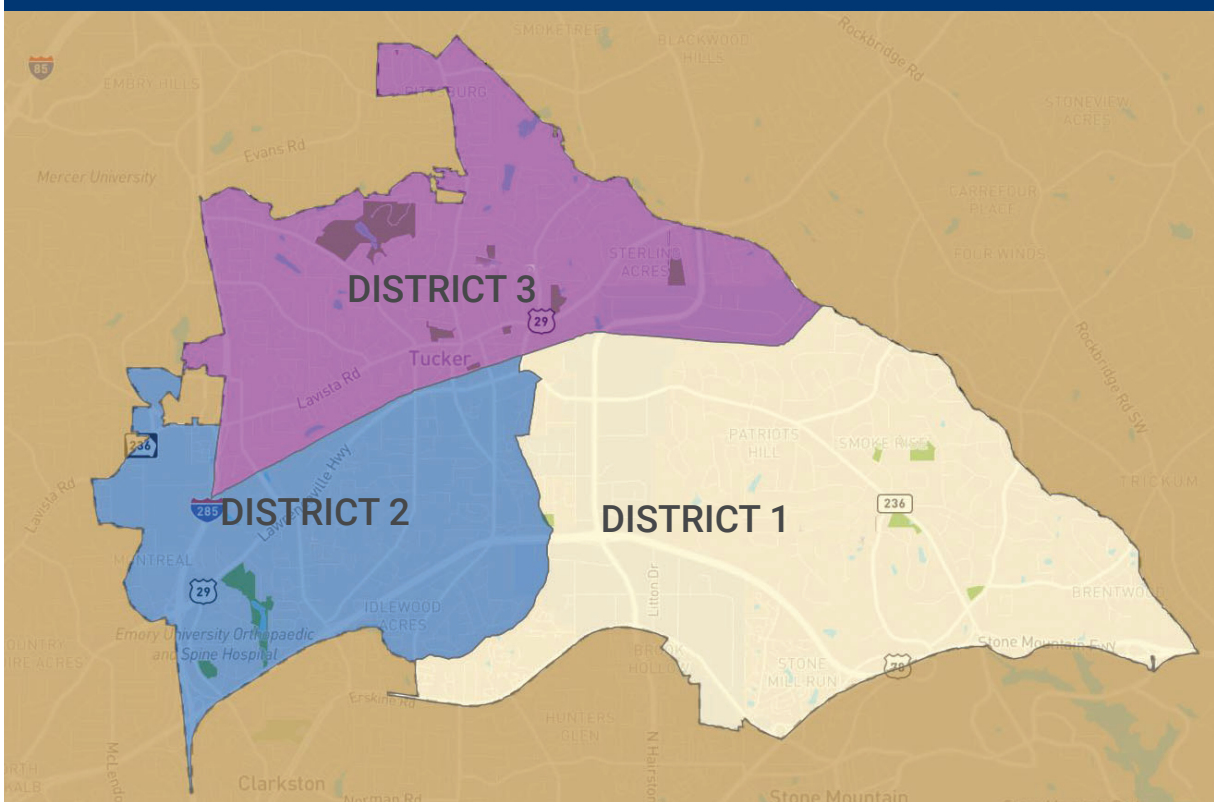
Marcus Etienne &
Robin Stevens

DISTRICT MAP



EDITOR'S NOTE

SONJA SZUBSKI - COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Welcome to spring, Tucker!

So much is happening in and around our city and it won't slow down as we head into summer. The Tucker Chili Cook-Off was resurrected last year and is scheduled for March 28! The City is hosting the Rubber Ducky Hunt, Pi Day Pie-K, the Spring Fling and has added some great new programming over in Parks and Recreation.

The City continues to implement traffic safety improvements along Hugh Howell Road as recommended by the recent safety study. Two intersection improvements are being proposed for the intersections of Hugh Howell Road at Rosser Road and Hugh Howell Road at Rosser Place. Please join us at Tucker City Hall on March 24, 2026, anytime between 7:00 and 8:30 p.m. for an open house. This is a drop in event to view the design and ask questions. There will not be a formal presentation.

I would like to express my gratitude to all of Tucker, residents and our businesses, for investing in our city. Tucker Restaurant Week is a great example of how supportive we all are of each other and highlights what makes Tucker such a special community. We started TRW in 2021 to get people back in public after the pandemic and it has grown so much since then. It is one of my favorite City events!

Stay well, Tucker.

SUNDAY SHOWCASE

AN AFTERNOON OF GREAT TUNES, FRESH AIR, AND COMMUNITY VIBES.

SUNDAY MARCH 15, 12 P.M.
TUCKER TOWN GREEN

The City is excited to announce the launch of the Sunday Showcase series! Hyper local bands take to the stage every month this spring.

TEN YEARS IN ONE

As the celebration of Tucker incorporation continues, we are sending out a request for help.

Tucker would like to create a time capsule! A time capsule can be as simple as a box that is kept safe and is filled with printed memories, small objects, and is kept safe by city staff or leadership. Time capsules can also be as large as a car as in the case for Seward, Nebraska that open their 50- year capsule in 2025.

We do not have the ability to go after the record of world's largest time capsule to beat out Seward, but we can do something better than a shoebox!

The goal is to gather ideas and items over the next few months and then ceremoniously bury it in one of our parks

- Here is what we are seeking your feedback on to include in the time capsule:
- How long should it be buried?
- Should the memories include items from before incorporation?
- What year should the memorial items start?

We invite you to share some ideas on what items you think we should include in the time capsule.

This is going to be a fun and collaborative project for the whole community! Take the survey here: surveymonkey.com/r/TKRtimecapsule

The celebration this month includes a nice little giveaway for the community, as well. Stop by City Hall to snag a fun insulated sling bag for your next hike this spring! This bag is the perfect size for a day outing and the strap is adjustable in both length and which shoulder can wear it.

DATES TO KNOW

MARCH 2, 4:30 P.M.
Downtown Development Authority Meeting

MARCH 3, 7 P.M.
Zoning Board of Appeals

MARCH 7, 2-4 P.M.
Free Rubber Ducky Scavenger Hunt
Kelley Cofer Park

MARCH 9, 7 P.M.
City Council Meeting

MARCH 14, 3:14 P.M.
PI-Day Pie-K Fun Run
Tucker Recreation Center

MARCH 15, 12 P.M.
Sunday Showcase Concert
Tucker Town Green

MARCH 19, 7 P.M.
Planning Commission

MARCH 21, 8-10 A.M.
Community Fishing Day
Kelley Cofer Lake

MARCH 21, 9 A.M.
Perk Up with Parks
Tucker Recreation Center

MARCH 23, 7 P.M.
City Council Work Session

MARCH 24, 7 P.M.
Hugh Howell Intersections Improvement Public Meeting

MARCH 28, 9:30 A.M.
Spring Fling
Fitzgerald Park

MARCH 28, 1 P.M.
Tucker Chili Cookoff
Main Street

FEATURE STORY

THE IMPACT OF GEORGIA'S FILM TAX CREDIT ON TUCKER AND DEKALB COUNTY

Photo Credit to Thomas Duke of @steppingthroughfilm on Instagram

Georgia's film tax credit has become one of the most influential economic development tools in the state. Established through the Georgia Entertainment Industry Investment Act, the incentive has helped transform Georgia into a major hub for film and television production. The program offers transferable tax credits of up to 30% for qualified productions that meet spending thresholds and other requirements. These productions include feature films, television series, pilots, commercials, music videos, and interactive entertainment projects. To qualify, a production must spend at least $500,000 in Georgia on approved expenditures.

Statewide, the film tax credit has produced well documented economic benefits. A 2023 economic impact study with access to extensive production data found that Georgia's film tax incentive generated $8.55 billion in economic output in 2022. It also supported nearly 60,000 jobs across the state. According to the study, production spending in Georgia grew more than 17 % annually between 2012 and 2023. This growth contributed a total economic impact of $29.65 billion over that period and supported $12.2 billion in wages during the last five years. These findings confirm that the incentive has significantly strengthened Georgia's position as a premier location for screen production while also contributing important statewide economic gains.

Within this statewide framework, DeKalb County has emerged as a major beneficiary of the film tax credit. The Development Authority of DeKalb County highlights the county's expanding role in the film entertainment and digital media industries. DeKalb offers a variety of production advantages including a diverse range of filming locations, strong professional talent resources, and a supportive business environment. Under the Georgia Entertainment Industry Investment Act, qualifying productions can access a 20% base tax credit and an additional 10% credit by including the Georgia promotional logo in project marketing. Qualifying expenditures include materials, labor, and services used within the state. This financial structure has positioned DeKalb County as a competitive destination within the state for film and television production.

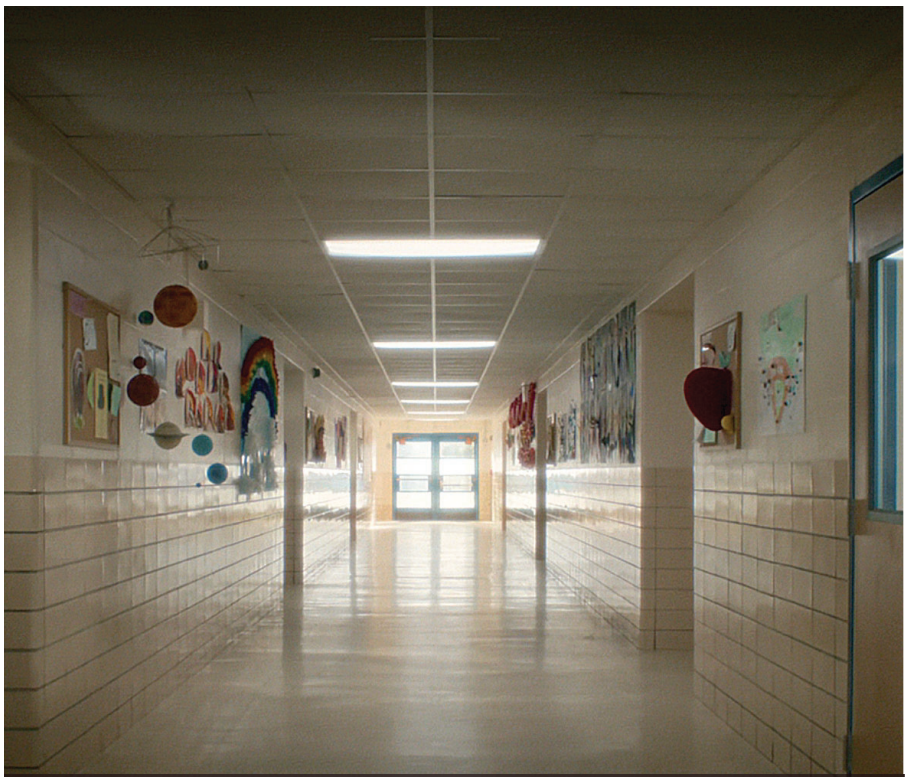
Tucker has directly benefited from Georgia's growing production industry. Tucker's involvement in film production has expanded significantly in recent years. Before Tucker became a city, local representatives were already working with industry partners. Once Tucker was incorporated as a city, it partnered with the DeKalb Entertainment Commission to manage, review, and issue film permit applications. The DEC maintains a film locations registry, and property owners in Tucker have the opportunity to list their sites for potential use in film projects.

Scene from Netflix's Dumplin' shot inside Tucker Recreation Center.

Tucker has become a recognizable filming location for major streaming platforms, including HBO, HULU and Netflix. Iconic productions that have incorporated Tucker into their filming include Ozark, The Outsider, and the Academy Award winning film I Tonya. Tucker's Main Street became the focal point of a Netflix production during the filming of The Out-Laws in the fall of 2021. More recently, the Tucker Recreation Center was host to the Stranger Things cast to close out the highly acclaimed and cult-classic series. It was a full circle moment from when El first showed her power by flipping the van in the first season on Sarah's Lane.

Productions that film in Tucker contribute to local spending on goods and services in areas such as catering, lodging, equipment rental, site preparation, and professional labor. In the ten years since incorporating, more than 100 productions have chosen to film in Tucker. Over 20 have filmed at Tucker Recreation Center.The incentives also help attract continued investment in production infrastructure throughout Georgia, which in turn benefits Tucker and DeKalb County. DeKalb has four productions stages in addition to Eagle Rock Studios here in Tucker.

The Georgia film tax credit has created measurable economic returns and fostered meaningful growth in the City of Tucker. Tucker's growing portfolio of film credits, combined with countywide support for production activity, illustrates the local benefits of a program that was designed to expand economic opportunity. The film tax credit remains an important contributor to economic and cultural development in both DeKalb County and the City of Tucker.



Netflix's Stranger Things transformed both the interior and exterior of the Tucker Recreation Center.

FEATURE STORY

TUCKER IN STEM

Tucker Middle School became Georgia's first STEM-certified middle school in 2014. In the time since the program's inception, Tucker Middle's STEM students and teachers have won awards from the Technology Association of Georgia and made it to the finals of national competitions for their projects. It is no surprise that many students are interested in learning from such a great program. Students can join the STEM program by completing the application process and being accepted into it.

What is the STEM program?
The mission of the Tucker Middle School STEM Academy is to EXPOSE students to STEM careers, EQUIP them with the skills needed to be successful, and ENGAGE students in solving the real-work problems of today.

What makes the STEM program stand out is not only the subject matter focus of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math but the philosophy around teaching and the classroom culture. The teachers strive for a student-centered classroom and operate as facilitators rather than instructors. By using project-based learning, consistency, research-backed norms, while setting clear and high expectations, the program redefines the meaning of classroom management into classroom culture.

How does the application process work?
First, the STEM Coordinator opens the application for the coming school year on the TMS STEM program's website; this year, it opened in February. Parents, guardians or students then fill out a six- to seven-page Google form. The application will close in April, and then applicants will learn whether they have moved on to round two. Round two is an interview portion that both parents or guardians as well as the applicant students will attend.

There are a few things one can keep on-hand when filling out the application. You will need your student identification number, the email addresses of two teachers you trust to serve as recommendations, and the knowledge of any academic accommodations you may need. If you are a parent, keep your student with you while filling it out; there are a few questions they will need to be present to answer. The application is not long but be prepared to answer questions thoroughly and with care as this initial stage is a deciding factor for moving on to round two. In addition to the application, in order to be considered for a seat in the program a student must meet qualifying scores in the MAP math test and have two teacher recommendations. Applications are graded on a rubric: 50% math scores, 25% teacher recommendations, and 25% application answers. Qualifying students are notified that they will move on to round two.

Round two consists of a small group interview where the middle school teachers use a rubric to score the students' performances, including how well the students work together, how insightful they are, their general comments, and their work ethic.

It is important for parents to remember that the STEM application is not a school choice program. In order for those out of district to attend TMS and participate in the STEM Program they must first apply through the School Choice program and then apply to the STEM program.

In addition to the STEM program, Tucker Middle offers many opportunities for students to shine in technology. There is the after school club called Technology Student Association that is one of the most successful chapters in the nation, a competitive robotics team, engineering focused classes, and even an innovation lab that allows students to innovate and create.

Tucker Middle's STEM program furthers the education of the cluster's elementary population as three of the five elementary schools are STEM certified, while solidifying the foundation for further education in high school in the STEM and engineering tracks at Tucker High School.

You can access the Tucker Middle STEM website and application at tuckermiddlestem.weebly.com.

Tucker Middle School STEM students led the Mayor and City Council in the Pledge of Allegiance last month.

BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

APPLIED HOME CARE SERVICES

As a teenager, Cheryl Rogers became her mother's caregiver as her mother battled lung cancer and cared for her faithfully until her mother passed away. That deeply personal experience ignited a lifelong commitment to serving people in need of caregiving support. Rogers often reflected on how fortunate she was to be able to care for her mother and how tragic it would be for someone who needed a caregiver to go without one. That realization changed her life and ultimately inspired the creation of Applied Home Care Services.

Applied Home Care Services is a home healthcare agency that provides personalized caregiving to patients across the state. Its mission is to empower individuals to maintain independence while regaining strength and improving quality of life. The agency offers a broad range of services tailored to meet unique needs, including 24-hour care, companionship, and emergency support.

Rogers founded the company in 1997, building on her extensive experience in the medical field. She began her career 37 years ago as a Certified Nursing Assistant in Detroit, Michigan, working with hospice patients in both hospital and home settings. Families quickly took notice of the exceptional care provided, and she soon became highly sought after. Through strong relationships within the medical community, she launched Applied Home Care Services, employing caregivers who served families throughout Detroit. During this period, she earned a bachelor's degree in health administration from Spring Arbor University, equipping herself with the skills needed to manage and grow a medical organization.

After years of enduring Detroit's brutal winters, Rogers decided to move south and eventually settled in Georgia. Rogers has been an active business owner in Tucker since 2005 and has operated from three different locations in the community. Her first office was inside a law firm at Northlake Commons, where the attorney, whose mother had been a client, offered her space. From there, she moved to an office on Lavista Road before relocating to her current location in Northlake Corners.

Rogers not only works in Tucker, she lives here as well. She believes it is both a wonderful community and an ideal location for running her business, particularly because of its convenient, central access for employees who need to come into the office.

For 28 years, Applied Home Care Services has continued to grow from its Tucker base. What began with roughly 10 employees has expanded to about 40, and the client roster has grown from five individuals to more than 100. The agency was recently credentialed to provide care for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and Rogers plans to further expand services to support this community.

Rogers finds joy in knowing her company makes a meaningful difference. She loves hearing from patients who express how much they appreciate their caregivers.

"That is the greatest reward to being able to take care of patients at that time and make them happy," Rogers said. "When they love our caregivers, it is a blessing to be able to take care of them."

Rogers feels fortunate to do work she loves, in a community she loves and without the harsh Detroit winters.

CITIZENS OF THE MONTH

MATTY GARRETT & STEVE COOK

For fifteen years, Matty Garrett and Steve Cook have helped lead the Henderson Park Community Garden and the Friends of Henderson Park by sharing their amazing talent and endless volunteer time. They have been deeply committed to the beautification and greener good spirit for the City of Tucker.

When Matty and Steve joined the Community Garden in 2010, it was still under construction. They became essential Board Members, running countless workdays, school group days, and other special projects.

Matty managed finances and grant writing for the garden, enabling the purchase of blueberry bushes that now surround the outside of the garden. Steve was in charge of facilities and managed water, fence, greenhouse, picnic tables, rain catchment, and maintenance of tools and plot rails. Whenever an issue with the garden arose, Matty and Steve were among the first ones on the scene to help.

In 2012 the Friends of Henderson Park received a Park Pride grant to build a major trail system that resulted in new bridges and wayfaring signage. Matty managed the reporting and budget for the grant, and Steve marked the trail system with the group year after year. He repaired many bridges so we could hike all the way around Lake Erin.

In 2020, Matty and Steve were an integral part of the Bee Board that guided the creation of the Honey Bee Habitat which opened in 2021 at Tucker Nature Preserve on Lawrenceville Hwy. As knowledgeable beekeepers, they provided key insights throughout the process and were one of two volunteer beekeeping couples to support the apiary. They have tended their hives over the last five years, helping to make the Bee Habitat a fun and educational park destination in Tucker.

Matty and Steve are devoted leaders. The Friends of Tucker Parks will miss Steve and Matty and the joy they brought to our group and to Tucker parks as they move on from Tucker to a new adventure.

Nominated by Pam McNall, Eve Spencer Shawn Stone and Vicki Warren

WHAT HAPPENED AT THE LAST CITY COUNCIL MEETING?

FEBRUARY 2026 CITY COUNCIL RECAP

By request, the City Council meetings are now livestreamed on YouTube in addition to the agenda webpage. Our YouTube channel, youtube.com/cityoftucker houses every video published by the City. Livestreaming on YouTube allows our audience to see the presentations on the screen the same as if in person and offers closed captioning. Both additions meet our continuous drive for transparency for our residents and to provide for an informed community.

The first meeting of February was on the 10th and students in the Tucker Middle School STEM program led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The meeting's business started with unanimous approvals of the agenda for the evening and the consent agenda. The consent agenda included the minutes of the January meeting, a contract for a MOU with DeKalb County for the intersection of Mountain Industrial and US Highway 78, and a contract with Georgia Power for utility relocation at Hugh Howell Road and Mountain Industrial.

New business included:

- First Read of Ordinance to amend the Tucker Code Chapter 30 Offenses on Loitering
- Approved 7-0 a resolution to amend the FY2026 Budget Resolution
- Approved 7-0 a resolution to appoint Beverly Echols to the DeKalb County Women's Commission
- Approved 7-0 a resolution to appoint Councilmember Alexis Weaver to the DeKalb County Housing Working Group
- Approved 7-0 a resolution to support Habitat for Humanity DeKalb's Application for Community Home Investment Program {CHIP) funding to provide critical home rehabilitation services for low-and-moderate income homeowners
- Approved 7-0 a contract for energy efficiency window replacements at the Tucker Recreation Center utilizing funds with free energy vouchers offered by a block grant by the federal government
- Approved 7-0 an agreement for reimbursement to the Tucker Summit Community Improvement District (TSCID) for the improvements made at the intersection of Lewis Road at Rock Mountain Boulevard
- Approved 7-0 a contract for the construction of two roundabouts on Idlewood Road (Fellowship Road and Sarr Parkway) to Vertical Earth, Inc
- Approved 7-0 a contract with LOWE for the Construction Engineering and Inspections (CEI) services and Construction Materials Testing (CMT) for the two roundabouts on Idlewood Road at Fellowship Road and Sarr Parkway
- Approved 7-0 a contract to provide Construction Engineering and Inspections {CEI) and Construction Material Testing {CMT) services for the intersection improvement project at Mountain Industrial Boulevard and Hugh Howell Road

The Mayor and Council then recessed for executive session. Upon return the body approved a contract amendment for the City Attorney contract to move the City's services to Baggett and Hartley.

The second meeting of February followed the newly implemented Work Session format with no formal voting or public hearings to take place.

James Tsismanakis of Discover DeKalb led the Pledge of Allegiance, accepted a proclamation for Tucker Restaurant Week, then started the evening of presentations with the annual report for the City of Tucker from the convention and visitor's bureau, Discover DeKalb.

STAFF REPORTS

- January 2026 Financial Update
- Transportation and Trails Master Plan
- Presentation on Downtown Parking Options
- Transfer of DeKalb County Surplus Property to the City of Tucker
- City Manager Report on Potential Upcoming Agenda Items

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 meetings online at tuckerga.gov/agendas.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR PARKS ?

PARKS & RECREATION PROJECT UPDATES

BIG PROGRESS AT JOHNS HOMESTEAD PARK!

We're in the home stretch of the Johns Homestead Park Dam Project and it's exciting to see everything coming together!

The spillways are now complete (with safety guardrails coming soon), and both the upper and lower dam slopes have been fully seeded. The lower lake is partially filled and will be completely filled once the final railings are installed. You'll also begin to see new signage popping up throughout the park.

The observation deck and dock are already constructed, and the roof and handrails will be finished in the coming weeks. Soon, this will be a beautiful spot to relax, enjoy the water, and take in the natural surroundings.

Connectivity is also getting a major upgrade. New trail bridges have been ordered and have been installed this fall, making it easier to access the lakes from the historic house, Lawrenceville Highway parking lot, and the Zemory Drive community. Residents from Edinburgh Drive will enjoy direct access to the new natural trail loop around the lakes.

The Stapp Drive neighborhood will benefit from a new small parking lot to reduce on-street parking, along with a new sidewalk connection leading directly to the lake, observation deck, and pavilion. Public Works is currently evaluating Stapp Drive to determine if any roadway improvements are needed as part of these final enhancements.

We anticipate the project to be completed by late May or early June. We can't wait to welcome everyone back to enjoy this revitalized, connected, and nature-focused space!

Stay tuned, the best is yet to come!

LAKE ERIN DAM PROJECT AT HENDERSON PARK

Progress continues at Henderson Park as improvements to the Lake Erin Dam move steadily forward. The project is now approximately 70% complete, with several major components already finished, including excavation, removal of unsuitable soil, installation of the new intake tower, placement and encasement of the 48-inch pipe, and construction of the impact basin.

Backfilling operations are now underway and are expected to take at least 30 days, depending largely on weather conditions. At this stage, rainfall is the primary factor influencing the construction schedule, as proper soil compaction is critical to the long-term stability of the dam. We are still targeting substantial completion by the end of spring, weather permitting.

All park trails remain open with the exception of the White Trail within the construction limits. We appreciate the community's patience as this essential infrastructure work moves forward. These improvements will help protect Lake Erin and preserve Henderson Park as a safe, sustainable, and beautiful space for fishing, walking, wildlife viewing, and everyday enjoyment for years to come.

HENDERSON PARK MASTER PLAN

Henderson Park Master Plan process is coming soon! An evaluation committee is currently reviewing and scoring 15 design proposals submitted by qualified planning firms. Once a firm is selected, we will officially launch the master planning process, which will include community engagement, site analysis, and long-term visioning to guide future improvements and investments at Henderson Park.

We look forward to working alongside residents and stakeholders to shape the next chapter of one of Tucker's most treasured parks.

PROGRAMS BY AGE OR INTEREST

PARKS & RECREATION PROGRAM UPDATES

WILDLIFE SCAVENGER HUNT

Date: Tuesday, March 3
Time: 3:00-5:00 p.m.
Fee: Free
How to Join the Hunt: Follow our social media pages and watch for posted clues!
Contact: Charlie Chavez
cchavez@tuckerga.gov

WILD WALKS

Walk Type: Plant Education Walk – Native Plant Highlights with Master Gardeners
Date: Wednesday, March 11
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Location: Henderson Park Community Garden
2801 Henderson Road
Fee: Free
Contact: Charlie Chavez
cchavez@tuckerga.gov

NATURE FOR ALL: ADAPTIVE YOUTH WALKS

Date: Saturday, March 21
Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Location: Peters Park,1832 Clark Drive (accessible walking loop paved)
Fee: Free
Ages: 4-12
Contact: Charlie Chavez
cchavez@tuckerga.gov

SPRING NATURE CANDLE MAKING WORKSHOP

Date: Friday, March 27
Time: 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
Location: Tucker Recreation Center, 4898 Lavista Road
Fee: $65 per person
Contact: Charlie Chavez
cchavez@tuckerga.gov

LINE DANCING

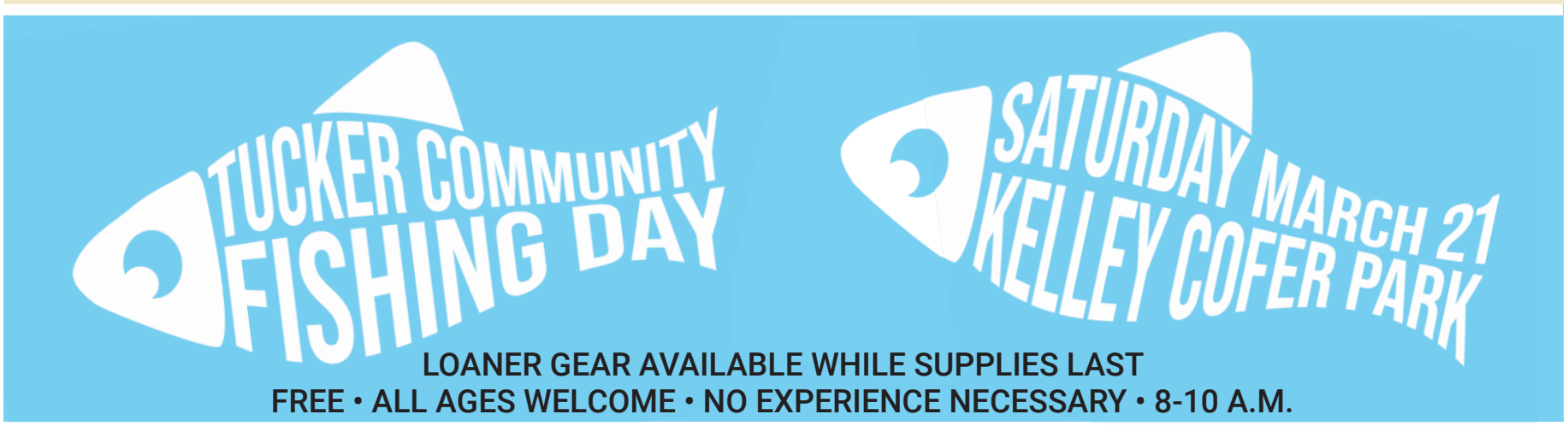
Date: April 15 & May 15
Time: 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Location: Tucker Recreation Center, 4898 Lavista Road
Cost: $10 per person
All ages welcome
Contact: Stacey Harris
sharris@tuckerga.gov

TUCKER PAGE TURNERS BOOK CLUB

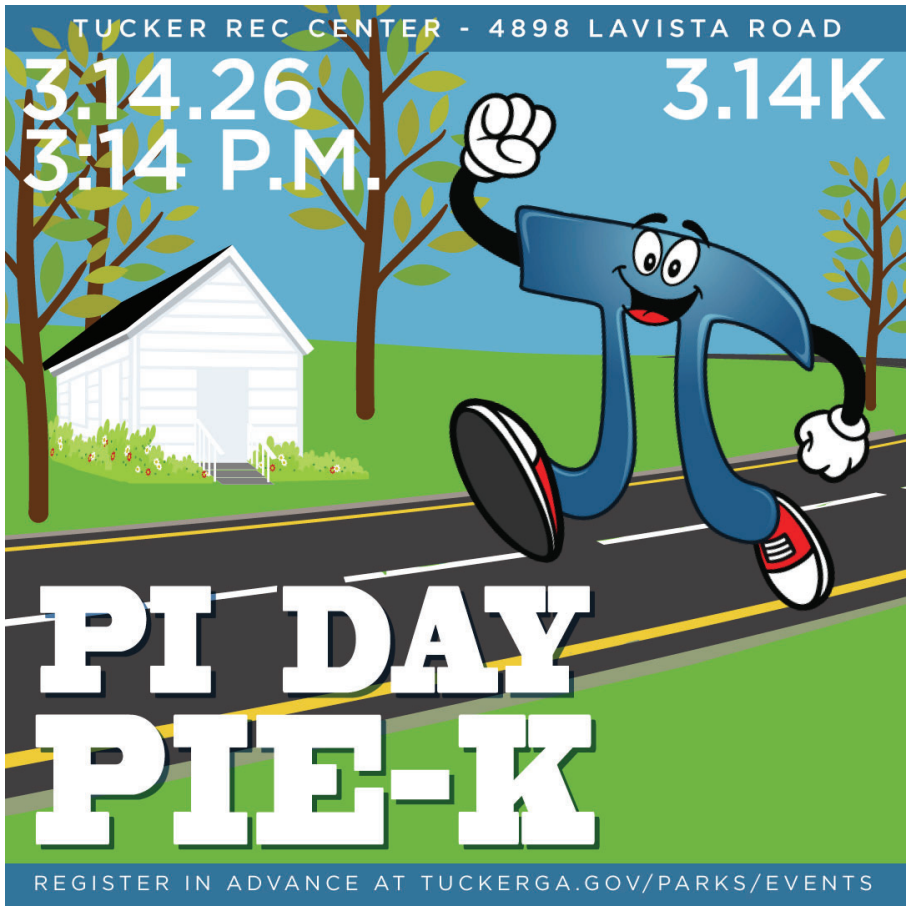
Date: Third Wednesday of every month starting April 15
Time: 7:00-8:30 p.m.
Location: Tucker Recreation Center, 4898 Lavista Road
Fee: Free
Contact: Stacey Harris
sharris@tuckerga.gov

PAINT LIKE BOB ROSS WORKSHOP (SPRING CLASS)

Date: Friday, April 17
Time: 6:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Location: Tucker Recreation Center, 4898 Lavista Road
Cost: $95 per person (includes all supplies)
Contact: Charlie Chavez
cchavez@tuckerga.gov



UPCOMING EVENTS IN TUCKER



PERK UP WITH PARKS!

Join the Parks and Recreation leadership team for open and engaging conversation about our parks, programs, and community spaces!

THIRD SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH - 9 A.M.

UPCOMING DATES
MARCH 21 | APRIL 19

Tucker Recreation Center

TUCKER

Tucker elected representatives, business stakeholders and staff celebrated Tucker Day under the Gold Dome last month.