

# Open Line

## A Monthly Newsletter for City of Auburn Citizens

October 2017

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City of Auburn

### Former assistant city manager James Buston appointed as Auburn's new city manager

Former assistant city manager and CIO James C. Buston III was appointed as the City of Auburn's new city manager at the Auburn City Council's Committee of the Whole meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 15.

The appointment came after the Council decided to halt its search for a new city manager. The search began in April 2017 following former city manager Charles Duggan's retirement in February. Buston has served as interim city manager since Duggan's retirement.

The council felt the four candidates they received from the search firm were high quality but not the right fit for Auburn at this time. Therefore, the Council commended Buston for his dedicated service to the City of Auburn and its residents over the years and expressed confidence in his ability to shepherd City staff moving forward.

"I've had the good fortune to see him in action in some tough times and make sound decisions," Mayor Bill Ham said.

"When I read that he was acting city manager, I was just thrilled about that because of how responsive he was back when I was on the council initially and now, even more so," Councilperson Verlinda White said. "I have experienced the quickness, the detailed responses and the willingness to talk and bring me up to speed—all of those things speak volumes."

Buston led the charge to respond to citizen input by making positive changes for downtown parking as Auburn's interim city manager. The result has been a myriad of city initiatives from the approval of "low speed vehicle" taxi services to changes in the City's parking ordinance and a potential new municipal parking deck on the site of the current Baptist Student Center building.

### Valet, additional parking to come as laid out in Downtown Parking Plan 2017

The City of Auburn is pleased to announce the beginning of valet parking services in downtown Auburn!

For months, the City has worked to analyze downtown parking and find more spaces for downtown visitors. Offering valet services is one aspect of improving downtown parking as proposed in the Downtown Auburn Parking Plan 2017.

Two valet parking pilot projects were conducted this summer during high-traffic downtown events. The Auburn City Council subsequently approved a yearlong contract at its Aug. 1 meeting to begin offering services in August. With the success of the recent pilot projects, the contract will act as an extended test to determine if valet parking is a viable option to increase parking in downtown Auburn.

Valet services are offered seven days a week for \$1 per hour with varying hours to accommodate brunch, lunch and dinner. Drivers can leave their vehicles with an attendant at a valet parking stand set up near the southeast corner of the parking deck between Sofy Copy and the entrance to the smaller parking lot on Gay Street.

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Hours of operation, besides Auburn University breaks, football games and scheduled downtown events, are as follows:

Monday: 5-10 p.m.

Tuesday: 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and 5-10 p.m.

Wednesday: 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and 5-10 p.m.

Thursday: 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and 5-10 p.m.

Friday: 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and 5-11 p.m.

Saturday: 11 a.m.-2 p.m. and 5-11 p.m.

Sunday: 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m.

Up to 75 additional spots otherwise unavailable to the public have been provided through the addition of valet parking with negotiations underway to increase that number.

Efforts are also underway to secure agreements with owners of existing private parking lots in the downtown area to jointly use for public parking and parking for downtown employees. Public parking would be offered for a fee, and the City hopes to offer downtown employee parking for free without a time limit.

### New parking

A new parking deck that will bring between 200 and 300 additional spaces to downtown Auburn is planned for the site of the Baptist Student Center at 135 N. College St.

Vehicles will have access from Wright Street and pedestrians will have entrances on North College and Wright streets. The project will include reconstructing the Baptist Student Center on the ground floor fronting Wright Street. A flexible open space will front the property on North College Street with benches and landscaping.

Work is planned to begin early 2018 and last approximately 12 months.

### New parking regulations coming in January

Traditionally, parking meters and restricted parking time limits have been used downtown to help make parking more available for everyone who wants to enjoy downtown Auburn.

To help make parking more available by increasing parking turnover, the Auburn City Council amended parking meter regulations at its Aug. 15 council meeting. The following changes will go into effect on Jan. 10, 2018:

- Change all metered parking to two hours
- Change the surface parking lot meter rate to \$1 per hour
- Change the on-street parking rate to \$1 for the first hour and \$2 for the second
- Extend meter hours of operation to Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. with the exception of specified City holidays and Auburn University home football game days
- Eliminate free parking during Auburn University breaks since parking demand remains high between semesters
- Change fines to \$20 for the first violation, \$30 for the second and \$50 for the third

Rates will remain 25 cents for spaces still utilizing mechanical meters until they are replaced by multi-space kiosks.

### Decreasing vehicles downtown

The City is also working to reduce the number of vehicles downtown by encouraging biking with the War Eagle Bike Share program expanding to downtown Auburn. Find out



more about this program at [au.getchabike.com](http://au.getchabike.com). This summer, the City and the university also renewed their partnership to provide the Tiger 10 late-night shuttle service.

All of these efforts are designed to help more people find parking spaces downtown by adding to the number of spaces available and encouraging parking turnover during the day. Research shows that more available parking in a downtown can also reduce traffic congestion with fewer cars circulating to search for a parking spot.

Other recent developments towards more parking include an online map to help find empty parking spaces in the Gay Street parking lot (<http://webgis.auburnalabama.org/cityofauburnparking/>) and a new parking lot in progress on Glenn Avenue across from Felton Little Park.

The City's full Downtown Parking Plan can be found at [auburnalabama.org/future](http://auburnalabama.org/future).

## AWWB lifts drought watch, voluntary water restrictions

The Auburn Water Works Board lifted all drought-related water restrictions on Aug. 4.

The City of Auburn received more than 18 inches of rainfall during June and July of 2017. Because of this, as well as the current construction schedule for the Lake Ogletree Spillway Improvements Project, Lake Ogletree (the City's primary drinking water supply) is at 481 feet as Open Line is written, which is within the Optimal Pool Cycle for this time of year as identified in the Auburn Water Works Board's (AWWB's) Drought Management Plan. Therefore, all drought-related water restrictions have been lifted.

## Board Vacancies

Three vacancies for the **Tree Commission** and one vacancy for the **Education Building Authority** will be announced at the Sept. 19 Auburn City Council meeting and will be filled at the Oct. 17 meeting.

To apply for a vacancy on any board or commission visit [auburnalabama.org/boards](http://auburnalabama.org/boards) for an application form. E-mail your completed form to [boards@auburnalabama.org](mailto:boards@auburnalabama.org) or you can send it via mail or in person to City Hall: 144 Tichenor Avenue, Auburn, AL, 36830. Additional materials, such as a résumé or letter of interest, may be attached to the application form. Please note: Incumbents may be eligible for reappointment. Appointment dates may be subject to change at the Council's discretion.

## City of Auburn reviews FY 2017-FY 2018 biennial budget

The City of Auburn is approaching the middle of its two-year budget cycle, and City management is proposing adding some long-planned capital projects.

Auburn's economy remains strong, and City staff have kept departmental expenditures below budget, allowing the City to move forward with planned conditional equipment purchases and needed capital projects.

The following projects are included in the mid-biennium budget adjustment, which the Auburn City Council is set to vote on at its Sept. 5 meeting as this issue of Open Line is being written:

### Downtown parking improvements recommended in Downtown Parking Plan 2017

- Addition of public valet parking services in downtown (FY 2017)
- Construction of a new public parking lot at the former site of the Carolyn Apartments on Glenn Avenue (FY 2017)
- Construction of a new downtown parking deck planned for the site of the Baptist Student Center on North College Street with vehicle access from Wright Street (FY 2018)

### Transportation improvements

- \$1.7 million of improvements to Richland Road (FY 218) to realign the intersection at Shug Jordan Parkway and add turn lanes
- \$1.6 million of improvements at the intersection of Cox and Wire roads (FY 2018) to construct a roundabout and widen and resurface roads
- \$2.95 million of improvements to the West Magnolia Avenue, East Glenn Avenue and South College Street streetscapes in association with the **Downtown Master Plan**
- Conduct comprehensive traffic study to determine future infrastructure needs, such as changes to signal timing, intersection improvements and other roadway projects to improve traffic flow and reduce accidents

### Capital improvements related to ongoing plans

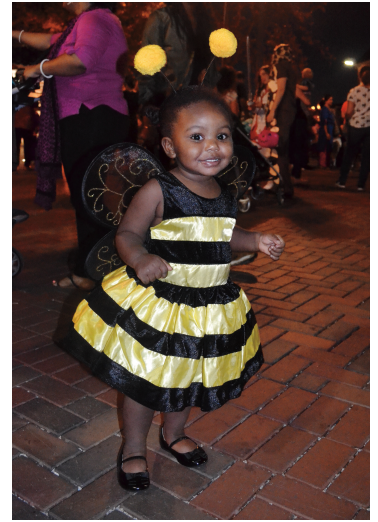
- \$30 million dedicated over the next five years for improvements and projects to come out of the **Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan**
- \$1.5 million toward the Auburn University's Performing Arts Center
- \$200,000 toward a skateboard park in partnership with Opelika
- \$4.2 million of improvements planned for Northwest Auburn based on community input and plans outlined in the **Northwest Auburn Neighborhood Plan**

Funds will also be dedicated to recycling initiatives, like single-stream recycling that will begin this fall.

Visit [auburnalabama.org/budget](http://auburnalabama.org/budget) to view the full Proposed FY 2017 and 2018 Mid-Biennium Budget.

## 2017 Downtown Trick-or-Treat set for Halloween night

Get ready for monsters on parade! Join Auburn Parks and Recreation for the best Halloween party in town on Tuesday, Oct. 31 from 6 to 8 p.m. in downtown Auburn. This is a fantastic alternative to door-to-door trick-or-treating, with downtown merchants handing out candy and plenty of treats for everyone! There will be music provided by our special spooky entertainment and the annual Costume Contest. This event is FREE and open to the public. Don't miss all the fun!



## 2017 Travel With Care

The 2017 Travel with Care transportation safety campaign, "Know When To Go: Intersection Interactions," kicks off in September! This year is all about intersection safety and right-of-way. Learn more at [TravelWithCareAuburn.com](http://TravelWithCareAuburn.com).

## Cemetery improvements underway across Auburn

Work is in motion to bring new life to Pine Hill, Westview and Memorial Park cemeteries.

Pine Hill, Auburn's oldest cemetery, is being renovated to create a more friendly experience for visitors. New landscaped islands will be constructed on the street in front of the entrances to Pine Hill to prevent vehicles from parking and blocking the sightline for those leaving the cemetery.

Concrete borders next to the driveway will be repaired, and existing walking paths and driveways will be repaved. New entrance signs, benches and electric lanterns will be installed. A historic Camellia Trail will be restored, and the existing flagpole will be moved to a more visible area with additional landscaping surrounding it.

Improvements are made possible by a donation from Ann Pearson with a match from the City.


Work is underway at Westview Cemetery, which was built in the late 1940s, to repair all drainage infrastructure. The driveway will be repaved with grading in some areas designed to redirect water runoff toward drains. A new entrance gate was also installed.

Irrigation work was completed at Memorial Park in August. Additional work will be done to seed lot where erosion has occurred and to install landscaping and ground cover.

Work at Westview and Memorial Park cemeteries has been funded by donations that will be matched by the City.

# OCTOBER <sup>up</sup>COMING EVENTS

Due to space considerations, we are unable to publicize events that are not directly affiliated with a City department.

<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Samford Pool closes for the season</p> <p>Arts on the Hill – Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities (Pebble Hill), Time TBD</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Cemeteries Advisory Board 4 p.m.</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>Baby Time 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.</p> <p>Parks &amp; Recreation Advisory Board 11:45 a.m.</p> <p>Committee of the Whole 6:55 p.m.</p> <p>City Council 7 p.m.</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>Auburn Public Library Studio 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Toddler Time 9:30 a.m., 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.</p> <p>Board of Zoning Adjustment 4:30 p.m.</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>Preschool Storytime 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.</p> <p>Gamer's Society 4 p.m.</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>Tree Commission 11:30 a.m.</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>STEM Storytime 10 a.m.</p>
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p>Baby Time 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.</p> <p>Greenspace Advisory Board Noon</p> <p>Historic Preservation Commission 4 p.m.</p> <p>Board of Education 6 p.m.</p>	<p><b>11</b></p> <p>Auburn Public Library Studio 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Toddler Time 9:30 a.m., 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>Preschool Storytime 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.</p> <p>Gamer's Society 4 p.m.</p> <p>Planning Commission 5 p.m.</p> <p>Fall Sundown Concert 6-7:30 p.m.</p>	<p><b>13</b></p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p>STEM Storytime 10 a.m.</p>
<p><b>15</b></p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p>Show and Tell Book Club 4 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>Baby Time 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.</p> <p>Library Board 4 p.m.</p> <p>Committee of the Whole 6:55 p.m.</p> <p>City Council 7 p.m.</p>	<p><b>18</b></p> <p>Auburn Public Library Studio 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Toddler Time 9:30 a.m., 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.</p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p>Preschool Storytime 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.</p> <p>Gamer's Society 4 p.m.</p> <p>Water Works Board 4 p.m.</p> <p>Fall Sundown Concert 6-7:30 p.m.</p>	<p><b>20</b></p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>STEM Storytime 10 a.m.</p>
<p><b>22</b></p>	<p><b>23</b></p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p>Baby Time 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.</p>	<p><b>25</b></p> <p>Auburn Public Library Studio 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Toddler Time 9:30 a.m., 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.</p>	<p><b>26</b></p> <p>Preschool Storytime 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.</p> <p>Gamer's Society 4 p.m.</p> <p>Ghoulish Gala 5:30 p.m.</p>	<p><b>27</b></p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p>STEM Storytime 10 a.m.</p>
<p><b>29</b></p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p>Zentangle 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p><b>31</b></p> <p>Baby Time 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.</p> <p>Read and Reflect 10 a.m.</p> <p>Downtown Trick or Treat – Downtown Auburn 6-8 p.m.</p>	<p>View our online edition of Open Line at <a href="http://auburnalabama.org/openline">auburnalabama.org/openline</a></p>	<p>City Meeting Schedule <a href="http://auburnalabama.org">auburnalabama.org</a> (334) 501-7260</p> <p>Auburn Public Library <a href="http://auburnalabama.org/library">auburnalabama.org/library</a> (334) 501-3198</p> <p>Parks and Recreation <a href="http://auburnalabama.org/parks">auburnalabama.org/parks</a> (334) 501-2930</p>	 <p>City of Auburn</p>	

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