

Open Line

A Monthly Newsletter for City of Auburn Citizens

December 2006

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LED Traffic Signals Create More Efficiency



In 2003, the City Council approved a contract with Southern Company Energy Solutions to upgrade all traffic signals in the City of Auburn with brighter, more energy efficient bulbs. The new lights, called Light Emitting Diode (LED) lamps, are brighter than traditional traffic lights and are easier for both motorists and pedestrians to see, increasing traffic and pedestrian safety.

LED lamps are environmentally-friendly because they use less energy than incandescent traffic lights. Previously, approximately 50,000 kilowatts of energy per year were required to power the City's traffic lights. In the last year, the LED lamps have reduced kilowatt hour usage by an average of 45% each month. The energy savings have also allowed the City to continue with its efforts to convert all intersections to Uninterruptible Power Systems (UPS). These systems allow traffic signals to continue to operate in the event of a power failure. Prior to the LED lamp conversion, City traffic signals required too much energy to be able to install UPS. Currently, 47 of Auburn's 50 intersections have UPS.

In addition to energy savings, LED lamps are replaced less frequently, reducing the maintenance costs. Previously, incandescent traffic lights were replaced on an average of three times per year. Comparatively, LED lamps require replacement once every ten years. This significant reduction in maintenance has enabled the City to continue to maintain only one full-time traffic technician. Most municipalities with the number of traffic signals Auburn currently has (50) must operate with two traffic technicians. The need to replace bulbs less frequently also reduces the number of traffic disruptions associated with bulb replacement. Staff time previously spent replacing traffic lights has now been allocated to other worthwhile public works projects.

The City of Auburn and the City Council are committed to providing Auburn residents with top quality services in a cost efficient and effective manner. The success of the LED traffic light conversion is another example of the City's on-going efforts to provide first-rate services to its citizens while making efficient use of public resources. For more information on LED traffic signals, please contact Brandy Ezelle, City Traffic Engineer, at 501-3029.

The High Cost of Speeding

Most drivers tend to associate the cost of speeding with the cost of the actual citation received for driving in excess of the speed limit. The high costs of speeding, however, reach far beyond ticket prices. Currently, the cost of a speeding citation in the City of Auburn ranges between \$112 and \$132, depending on how fast the driver is traveling above the set speed limit. In addition, insurance companies adjust policy premiums based on a driver's history, costing you money in the long run when your policy is reevaluated.



According to statistics from the Federal Highway Administration and the Alabama Department of Transportation, in 2005, Alabama had 1,134 automobile fatalities and 44,158 injuries out of a total 143,994 traffic accidents. The economic loss suffered by the State as a result of these accidents totaled \$6 billion, averaging out to \$630/Alabama resident.

The next time you decide to speed, stop and think for a moment. The costs of speeding reach far beyond the citation you may receive. For more information on traffic speeding, please contact the City of Auburn's Public Safety Department-Police Division at 501-3150.

Reminder on City's Sign Regulations

Pursuant to Article VI of the City's Zoning Ordinance, political signs posted within the City limits must be removed no later than 7 days following the election. Help keep Auburn clean by removing these signs from your yard. For more information on sign regulations, please contact the Planning Department at 501-3040.

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City of Auburn



Stormwater Runoff

Sediment is a major cause of water quality impairment in streams not only in the City of Auburn, but across the nation. Excess sediment can lead to a number of water quality concerns such as causing detrimental impact to fish/aquatic habitats, reduced algal production, reductions in filter feeding organisms, reduced capacity of surface water reservoirs, and increased water treatment costs. The City of Auburn, however, has taken several steps to prevent sediment build-up in streams.

Have you ever noticed the black fence installed around construction sites throughout the City of Auburn? That is no ordinary fence. In the construction industry, this black fence is known as a silt fence and is just one of a number of methods known as Best Management Practices (BMPs) used for managing sediment-laden stormwater runoff on construction sites. There are numerous BMPs documented in the Alabama Handbook for Erosion Control, Sediment Control, and Stormwater Management on Construction Sites and Urban Areas (www.swcc.state.al.us) that may be used during and after construction to manage erosion and sediment transport from developments.

The City of Auburn has a number of measures in place to control stormwater runoff from construction sites. In 2002, the City Council approved an Erosion Control Ordinance that requires any construction site over one acre to have a BMP Plan in place. All construction sites must have appropriate BMPs in place for controlling sediment in stormwater runoff as well. In addition, the City Council approved a new Stream Buffer Ordinance in May of this year that provides for protection of streams by establishing stream buffers on development sites within the City. Stream Buffers can improve water quality by moving construction activities away from streams, reducing the velocity of stormwater runoff allowing sediment to settle out in the buffer, and by providing streambank stabilization to reduce in-stream sediment loading from streambank erosion.

For additional information on the City's Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance or water quality related activities within the City, please contact Matt Dunn, Watershed Division Manager, at 501-3077.



Pictured above is an example of silt fence installation used to prevent sediment and debris from flowing off a construction site into streams and waterways during storms.

Time to Renew Dog Licenses

The City of Auburn requires owners to have a dog license for all dogs ages three months and older. Dog licenses are renewed each calendar year. Currently, licenses for 2007 are on sale. To avoid a late penalty, renewals should be completed before January 31, 2007. To download a dog license form, visit www.auburnalabama.org/finance/forms.html and click on Dog License.

For more information on dog licenses, please contact the Revenue Office at 501-7239.

ShopAuburn! for the Holidays

The holidays are here and citizens are reminded to *ShopAuburn!* for the holidays and help keep tax dollars local. Revenue from Auburn's sales tax dollars goes to provide funding for Auburn City Schools, paving and maintaining roads, police and fire protection and other public services.

Did you know that you can keep your sales tax dollars local when you're shopping online as well? The City of Auburn also collects sales tax dollars from items purchased online from retailers who collect sales tax and ship to an Auburn address.

This holiday season, don't forget to *ShopAuburn!* and help keep your sales tax dollars local. For more information on the *ShopAuburn!* campaign, please contact the Auburn Chamber of Commerce at 887-7011. For more information on sales tax and revenue, please contact the City's Revenue Office at 501-7239.



Meeting Schedule

Tree Commission

December 1, 11:30 a.m., Chamber of Commerce Conference Room, 714 East Glenn Avenue

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

December 5, 5:30 p.m., Dean Road Recreation Center

City Council

December 5, 7:30 p.m., Council Chamber

Board of Zoning Adjustment

December 6, 4:30 p.m., Council Chamber.

Water Works Board

December 11, 4:00 p.m., Water Resource Management Conference Room, 1501 West Samford Avenue

Greenspace Advisory Board Holiday Tour

December 12, 11:00 a.m., meet at Dean Road Recreation Center

Historic Preservation Commission

December 12, 4:00 p.m., Development Services Building

Board of Education

December 12, 6:00 p.m., AHS Multi-Media Room

Planning Commission

December 14, 5:00 p.m., Council Chamber

City Council

December 19, 7:30 p.m., Council Chamber

Bicycle Committee

December 19, 7:00 p.m., Development Services Building, 171 N. Ross Street

Board of Zoning Adjustment

January 3, 4:30 p.m., Council Chamber

Tree Commission

January 5, 11:30 a.m., Chamber of Commerce Conference Room, 714 East Glenn Avenue

-Meeting times and places are subject to change-

Going Out of Town?

The holiday season is here and many families will be traveling out of town during the next few weeks. If your holiday plans include travel, here are a few suggested precautions you can take to ensure the safety of your home and possessions while you are out of town:

- Temporarily stop your newspaper and mail delivery while you are gone.
- Do not leave your garbage can out by the road. Have a friend or neighbor place it by the curb the night before your scheduled collection day and have them move it back to the side or back of the house after your collection route runs.
- Use timers with staggered on/off times for indoor lighting so would-be burglars think the home is occupied and consider installing outdoor lighting with motion sensors. Another good idea is to leave a radio or TV on inside your home.
- Remove valuables such as silver and jewelry from your home and leave them in your safe deposit box at the bank. Also consider taking small, expensive electronic items with you.
- Turn down your heat instead of completely turning it off to ensure your pipes will not freeze.
- Do not leave descriptive answering machine or voicemail messages that alert the caller you are out of town.
- If possible, leave a car out in the driveway.
- Keep your landscaping up-to-date, including grass, shrubbery, leaves, and tree limbs. An unkempt yard is a sure sign that homeowners are out of town.
- Ask a trusted friend or neighbor to check the house periodically to make sure everything is safe and consider leaving a key with them in case of an emergency.
- Contact the Auburn Police Division and ask that your home be placed on a "House Check" list for extra patrol. To make this request during regular business hours, please call 501-3150. For after hours or weekend requests, please call the non-emergency number at 501-3100.



The most important and easiest safety precaution you can take is to **lock your doors and windows**. According to the Auburn Police Division, unsecured door and window locks are the #1 cause of home burglaries in Auburn. For more information, please contact the Auburn Police Division at 501-3150.

Holiday Schedules

City Hall will be closed on Monday, December 25 for the **Christmas** holiday. Public Safety services, including Police, Fire, and Communications, will remain on their normal schedules. The collection of garbage, trash, and recycling for the week of December 25-29 will change as follows:

<u>Normal Collection Day</u>	<u>Holiday Pick-Up Schedule</u>
Monday	Tuesday, December 26
Tuesday	Wednesday, December 27
Wednesday	Thursday, December 28
Thursday	Friday, December 29

City Hall will be closed on Monday, January 1 for the **New Year's** holiday. Public Safety services, including Police, Fire, and Communications, will remain on their normal schedules. The collection of garbage, trash, and recycling for the week of January 1-5 will change as follows:

<u>Normal Collection Day</u>	<u>Holiday Pick-Up Schedule</u>
Monday	Tuesday, January 2
Tuesday	Wednesday, January 3
Wednesday	Thursday, January 4
Thursday	Friday, January 5

Board Vacancies

One vacancy on the **Public Park & Recreation Advisory Board** was announced at the November 7 City Council meeting and will be filled at the December 5 meeting. The incumbent has served one term.



Two vacancies on the **Board of Zoning Adjustment** will be announced at the December 19 City Council meeting and will be filled at the January 16, 2007 meeting. One incumbent has served two full terms and one partial term and is not eligible for reappointment and one incumbent has served one full term and is eligible for reappointment.

Citizens interested in serving are encouraged to contact one of their City Council members or notify the City Manager's Office.

Reporting Street Light Outages

To report a street light outage in the City, please contact Alabama Power's 24-hour Customer Service number at 1-800-245-2244. All outages reported to this number will be properly logged and a work order will be generated from the request. For more information, please contact Alabama Power at 1-800-245-2244.

Business License Renewals Begin January 2, 2007

Any business providing services or selling goods within the city limits of Auburn is required to have a City of Auburn business license. City business licenses for 2006 expire on December 31 and are required by City ordinance to be renewed no later than February 28, 2007 to avoid a late fee. All current business license holders will be receiving renewal packets in the mail in the coming weeks. Any business that does not receive its renewal packet by December 31 should contact the Revenue Office at 501-7239 to verify its mailing address and request another packet. All questions regarding business licenses may be directed to this number as well.

Any business that would like to have a wallet-sized, laminated duplicate of their business license for employees who make deliveries or sales calls in Auburn, or who provide services at their customer's site, may request one from the Revenue Office. Wallet-sized licenses are available for \$1 each.

The City Revenue Office is located in City Hall at 144 Tichenor Avenue. Business hours are Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., except City holidays. For more information, please contact the Revenue Office at 501-7239.

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up COMING EVENTS

The **2007 Parks and Recreation Calendar** is available now at City facilities and on the web at www.auburnalabama.org/parks. This free calendar lists special events, program quarters, brochure release dates, Auburn City School holidays, City facility closings, athletic registration dates, City holidays and events, and much more. For more information, contact Parks and Recreation at 501-2930.



The **Parks and Recreation Winter Quarter Brochure** is available now at various City facilities and online at www.auburnalabama.org/parks. Below is a list of program quarter dates and registration deadlines. All registration will be held Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. at the Dean Road Recreation Center. For more information, contact the Dean Road Recreation Center at 501-2930 or visit www.auburnalabama.org/parks.

- Winter Program Quarter – January 2-March 9
- High School Basketball Registration – through December 4
- Adult Basketball Registration – through December 14
- Program Registration – through December 22



Preschool Story Time will meet each Wednesday this month at 10:00 a.m. at the Auburn Public Library. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.



Join the Auburn Public Library for **Toddler Time** each Thursday this month at 10:00 a.m. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.

Salmagundi ©, offered to youth in grades K-5, will meet December 6 at 3:30 p.m. at the Auburn Public Library. This month's theme is Christmas in Other Lands. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.



Young Adult Coffeehouse, for students in grades 6-12, will meet December 7 at 6:30 p.m. at the Auburn Public Library for a chocolate tasting. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.

The **American Girls Club** will meet on December 8 at 3:30 p.m. at the Auburn Public Library. This month's character is Molly. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.



Students in grades 1-3 are invited to the **Magic Tree House Club** at the Auburn Public Library on December 13 at 3:30 p.m. This month's theme is Christmas in Camelot. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.

The Auburn Public Library's **Annual Christmas Party** will be held on December 14 at 6:30 p.m. Youth ages 2-11 are invited to attend. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.



Mark your calendar for the following **Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center Exhibitions**. The exhibits are free and open to the public Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. For more information, contact the Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center at 501-2963.

- **Variations: Magic Squares**, through December 20, invitational exhibition featuring works by regional artists and craftspersons.
- **Winter Invitational 2007**, January 6-February 10, works by area craftspersons and folk artists.

Join the Auburn Public Library for a **puppet show** entitled *The Hat* on December 20 at 3:30 p.m. at the Auburn Public Library. All ages are invited to attend. For more information, contact Youth Services at 501-3196.



Sign up for the Parks and Recreation **Youth Field Trips** for students in grades 3-6. Please note the registration deadline for each trip. Participants will meet at the Dean Road Recreation Center each day. For more information, contact Melissa Weldon in Parks and Recreation at 501-2946.



• **Trip I:** Don't miss a day of bowling and a trip to the movies on December 21 from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. The day begins with bowling at Auburn Lanes, followed by a brown bag lunch, and finally a movie at Wynnsong Cinemas. Tennis shoes and socks are required. The cost is \$10, payable to the City of Auburn, and participants must provide their own brown bag lunch. **Registration Deadline: Friday, December 15.**



• **Trip II:** Visit the Montgomery Zoo on December 28 from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. See over 700 animals from 5 different continents housed in natural, "barrier free" habitats. Bring a brown bag lunch and enjoy a group picnic with the giraffes. The cost is \$10, payable to the City of Auburn. **Registration Deadline: Friday, December 22.**



• **Trip III:** Experience a day of fun and discovery at Desoto Caverns Park in Childersburg, AL on December 29 from 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Participants will tour the 12-story cave and learn the mysteries behind its development and formations as well as panning for gemstones and navigating Desoto's Lost Trail Maze. A brown bag lunch is required. The cost is \$20, payable to the City of Auburn. **Registration Deadline: Friday, December 22.**

Snow skiing in Alabama? You bet! Come enjoy a day of winter fun on January 20 with the **X-Cell Program** at Alabama's only alpine ski resort, Cloudmont Ski Resort, located in Mentone, AL. The resort features two different 1,000 ft. ski slope challenges. This event is open to youth ages 12-15 years old. Participants will depart from the Dean Road Recreation Center at 6:00 a.m. and return at 6:00 p.m. The cost of the trip is \$40.00, payable in cash on the day of the trip, and includes admission, lift tickets, a beginner lesson, and all equipment. Please bring a brown bag lunch. All participants must be registered by January 12. For more information, contact Melissa Weldon at 501-2946.



Mark your calendar for the **Annual Daddy-Daughter Date Night**. This year, DDDN will be held on two separate nights: Friday, February 9 and Saturday, February 10 at the Best Western Convention Center. Doors open both nights at 6:30 p.m. for pictures and the dance will be held from 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m. Tickets for both nights are on sale now at the Dean Road Recreation Center. The cost is \$30 per couple and \$5 for each additional child. A limited number of tickets are available each night, so be sure to reserve your spot soon! For more information, contact the Dean Road Recreation Center at 501-2930.

Don't miss **Auburn CityFest 2007**, presented by the *Opelika-Auburn News*. Applications for Fine Arts, Arts & Crafts, Food, and Non-Profit Exhibitors are currently available on the CityFest web site at www.auburncityfest.com. Auburn CityFest 2006, Auburn's largest FREE festival, attracted more than 35,000 people to Kiesel Park. CityFest 2007 will be held on Saturday, April 28, 2007. For more information or to download an application, visit www.auburncityfest.com or contact the CityFest Headquarters at 501-2930.



Happy Holidays

