

open line

a monthly newsletter for you, our residents.

DECEMBER 2023



Auburn residents invited to weigh in on city branding

The City of Auburn is embarking on a research-driven, community-wide branding initiative, and we need your input!

You're invited to participate in a survey at theauthenticauburn.com to help us uncover Auburn's authentic story to inform the City's branding. Your brand is what people say about you when you're not around, and the City's branding needs to reflect Auburn's reputation.

While this is a branding project for the City of Auburn as a municipal government, the City's brand must reflect Auburn's identity both as a government and as a community. We're currently in the research phase of the project and want your input as we aim to discover Auburn's authentic and ownable brand identity.

Learn more at theauthenticauburn.com.

Want to do the survey on paper instead of online? Please visit Auburn City Hall, the Auburn Public Library or the Boykin Community Center for a copy or call (334) 501-7266 to request a copy by mail.



Adjusting to shorter days

With more of us out after dark as the days end earlier, please help keep yourself and others safe this season by reporting street light outages and wearing reflective gear when walking or biking.

STREET LIGHTS

Most of Auburn's street lights are maintained by Alabama Power. You can report an outage by contacting them at 1-800-245-2244 or visiting customerservice2.southerncompany.com/Outages/Report.

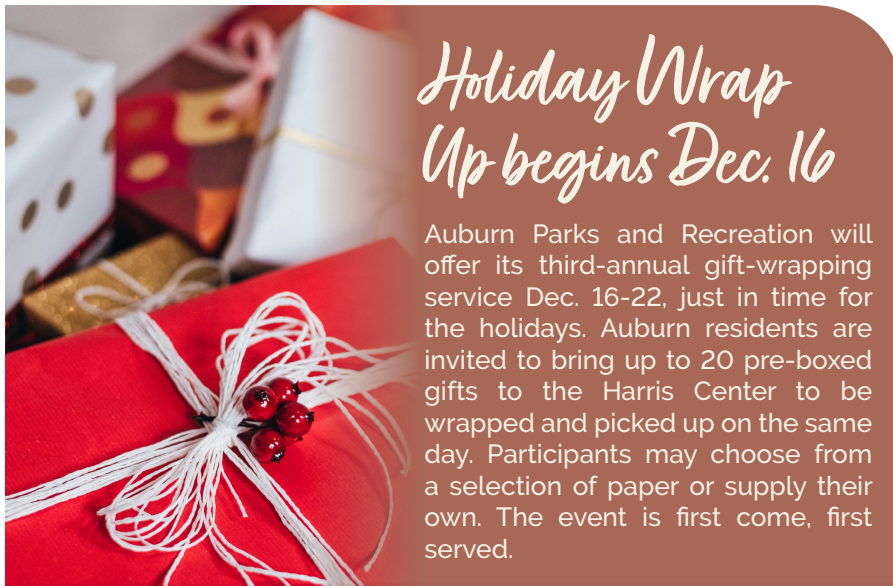
You can also report outages through the Auburn FixIt app (auburnalabama.org/fixit) or by calling our Engineering Services Department at 334-501-7390.

REFLECTIVE GEAR

According to City Code, everyone walking or running after dark must wear reflective material between the waist and shoulders on both front and back.

Bicyclists are required to have a headlight on the front of their bicycles and reflectors on the front and rear spokes of the wheels and pedals of their bikes.

Be safe out there, Auburn!



Holiday Wrap Up begins Dec. 16

Auburn Parks and Recreation will offer its third-annual gift-wrapping service Dec. 16-22, just in time for the holidays. Auburn residents are invited to bring up to 20 pre-boxed gifts to the Harris Center to be wrapped and picked up on the same day. Participants may choose from a selection of paper or supply their own. The event is first come, first served.

EAGLE WATCH

helping APD solve crimes

You can team up with the Auburn Police Department (APD) in solving crimes by signing up for Eagle Watch. This security camera registration program is open to all Auburn residents and business owners. The program is modeled after other video surveillance partnership programs across the country that have seen success in the number of crimes solved through the partnership between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

Joining the program is easy — simply fill out the form at auburnalabama.org/police/eaglewatch. We ask for details about your camera system and your contact information so that officers can quickly reach you if your footage could be helpful in solving a crime. Once you've signed up, a representative from APD will reach out to confirm your registration.

Registration does NOT give APD the ability to access your cameras without your knowledge or permission. Owners of residential security cameras and/or video doorbells will always be contacted by APD if video evidence is being sought from their area. If video evidence is available, camera owners will be given a secure link via a registered email address to upload any relevant footage.

Have questions about the program? Contact APD at 334-501-3110 or webpubsfty@auburnalabama.org.

Auburn's planning director brings solutions-focused approach to new role

For Auburn's new planning director, city planning is about finding creative solutions to complex problems.

Whether balancing the needs of stakeholders in Clemson, South Carolina, or paving the way for farmers in rural Minnesota to get locally raised products into community grocery stores, Justice Wahid Cotton's goal as a planner is to make a positive impact in the community he serves.



Wahid Cotton grew up in the Carolinas and Tennessee before pursuing a bachelor's in environmental studies and sustainability from Northern Arizona University. He returned home to the South to obtain a master's in city and regional planning at Clemson University.

He started work as a planning intern with the City of Clemson where he had the opportunity to work on Clemson's comprehensive plan and other projects. His time in Clemson taught him that, while planning can be highly technical, its purpose is to help build a better community for residents.

"I really pride myself on tangible gains," Wahid Cotton said. "Looking at how we address problems and eliminate issues is the allure of planning for me, especially on the local level."

In June 2020, Wahid Cotton moved to rural Minnesota to serve as a community planner for the Mid-Minnesota

Auburn Toy Drive: A one-day donation drop-off event

Auburn Public Safety is making a few changes to its annual Auburn Toy Drive.

This year, Auburn residents are invited to donate toys during a drive-thru drop-off event on Saturday, Dec. 2. Swing by the Dean Road Recreation Center from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. to deliver newly purchased, unwrapped toys for disadvantaged children in Auburn. Please remember that no monetary donations may be accepted.

Those interested in registering a child to receive a gift may do so beginning Nov. 1-15 at auburnalabama.org/toy-drive or at the Auburn Police Department, 141 N. Ross St. To receive assistance, a parent or legal guardian must provide their picture ID, the child's birth certificate and a copy of a current Auburn utility bill or lease/rental agreement.



Letters to Santa: Get your wishlist to the North Pole!

Youth (and the young at heart) of all ages have two opportunities to get their letters to the North Pole this year!

LETTER WRITING EVENT AT THE LIBRARY. Youth of all ages are invited to enjoy hot cocoa and festive music while crafting a wish letter to Santa at the Auburn Public Library on Wednesday, Dec. 13, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Caregivers, please join in the fun so that even the youngest writers can clearly express themselves and the librarians can get clear wishes and return addresses for Santa and his elves! This event is free and open to the public. All supplies will be provided.

DROP OFF MAILBOXES. Auburn Parks and Recreation's Letters to Santa special mailboxes will be available again this year at the Harris Center (425 Perry St.) and the Boykin Community Center (400 Boykin St.). Letters can be dropped off beginning Nov. 20 through Dec. 14. Santa will reply with a letter mailed to your home, so please remember to include the child's name and a return address! No postage necessary.



December holiday closures & schedule changes

City Hall and most City facilities will be closed Monday, Dec. 25, in observance of Christmas Day and Monday, Jan. 1, in observance of New Year's Day. Public Safety services including police, fire and communications will remain on their regular schedules. Garbage, trash and recycling pickup schedules will be delayed by one day both weeks.

The Auburn Public Library will be closed Dec. 23-25 and Jan. 1. No library programs will be held Dec. 18-Jan. 1. Book drops will remain open, and the online collection of e-books, audiobooks and digital magazines are always available. Parks and Recreation facility hours will be adjusted during the holidays, so keep an eye on auburnalabama.org for more details.

Development Commission. There he led engagement and research efforts during comprehensive planning initiatives for the cities of Willmar and Spicer.

In November 2021, he became the City of Willmar's director of development and planning, where he followed projects from planning and design to execution. Being involved from concept to construction in projects ranging from backyard decks to 200,000-square-foot facilities allowed Wahid Cotton to see — and balance — all sides of the development process.

In addition to developments, Wahid Cotton was often on point for infrastructure issues. He led an initiative to upgrade the community's broadband internet upload speeds, strengthening both economic development competitiveness and resident connectivity.

Wahid Cotton's experience has helped him to appreciate the input of community stakeholders, the interests of property owners and the investments of developers in

making decisions in keeping with the standards set by local zoning regulations.

When it came to looking for the next opportunity, "Auburn checked a lot of our boxes," Wahid Cotton said.

"The warmth of the culture, the proximity to family and a major university, the diverse thoughts and ideas and all of the amenities made Auburn a great fit for us."

Wahid Cotton began his new position on Oct. 16. As planning director, he will oversee the administration of the City of Auburn's comprehensive plan, zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations and will manage the day-to-day operations of the Planning Department.

"I'm excited about the leadership in place at the City of Auburn and the organization's culture of providing excellent services," Wahid Cotton said. "I'm excited to join the team and be a part of finding solutions and solving problems here in Auburn."

DECEMBER 2023 **upcoming events**

Open Line is produced by the Office of the City Manager
334.501.7268 | openline@auburnlabama.org

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<p>Background photo: Jingle Jog</p>	<p>Auburn Public Library auburnlabama.org/library</p> <p>City Meetings auburnlabama.org/boards</p> <p>Parks & Recreation auburnlabama.org/parks</p> <p>Citywide Events auburnlabama.org</p>	<p>Programs & events are subject to change.</p> <p>Find up-to-date information at auburnlabama.org.</p>			<p>1</p> <p>Puppet Shows (in person/virtual) Fridays @ 9:30 a.m. & 3:30 p.m.</p> <p>Tree Commission 11:30 a.m.</p>	<p>Santa Stroll & Jingle Jog 6:30 a.m. @ Toomer's Corner</p> <p>Family Story Time Saturdays @ 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Untidy Tales Saturdays @ 10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Ho Ho Ho Hike 10 a.m. @ Kreher Preserve & Nature Center</p>
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<p>Cemetery Advisory Board 4 p.m.</p>	<p>Preschool Story Time Tuesdays @ 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Parks & Recreation Advisory Board 11:45 a.m.</p> <p>PreK in PJs Tuesdays @ 1 p.m.</p> <p>S.T.E.A.M Lab (Grades K-3) Tuesdays @ 3:30 p.m.</p> <p>Committee of the Whole TBD</p> <p>City Council 6 p.m.</p>	<p>Baby's 1st Story Time Wednesdays @ 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Untidy Tales Wednesdays @ 1 p.m.</p> <p>Culture Explorers Club (Grades 4-6) Wednesdays @ 4 p.m.</p> <p>Board of Zoning Adjustment 4:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Toddler Tales Thursdays @ 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Lullabies for Little Ones Thursdays @ 1 p.m.</p> <p>#TeenTrends (Grades 7-12) Thursdays @ 4 p.m.</p>		<p>Movers & Shakers Saturdays @ 1 p.m.</p>
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	<p>Planning Commission Packet Meeting Noon</p> <p>Movie Matinee 3:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Historic Preservation Commission 4 p.m.</p>	<p>Letters to Santa 3:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Water Works Board 4 p.m.</p> <p>City Council Agenda Review Meeting 4 p.m.</p> <p>Planning Commission 5 p.m.</p>		<p>Holiday Wrap Up Begins</p>
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
<p>2280</p> <p>No Library programs Dec. 18-Jan. 1</p>		<p>2314</p> <p>Library Board 10 a.m.</p> <p>Greenspace Advisory Board Noon</p> <p>Committee of the Whole TBD</p> <p>City Council 6 p.m.</p>		<p>2306</p>	<p>Holiday Wrap Up Ends</p>	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
				<p>City Council Agenda Review Meeting 4 p.m.</p>	<p>2294</p>	
31						