



**ANNUAL**

FISCAL  
YEAR  
20  
18

**REPORT**



City of  
**Tucker**





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# MESSAGE FROM THE Mayor



**THIS PAST YEAR WAS A BIG ONE** FOR THE CITY OF TUCKER – IN WAYS YOU KNOW AND WAYS YOU PROBABLY DON'T.

Last November, we held our first full-term elections, with voters going to the polls to cast ballots for three of Tucker's City Council seats, as well as the Mayor's office. Once we swore in the new council in January, we were able to quickly work on issues ranging from land use, to zoning and refining our City Code. The spirit of cooperation among your city council members and their dedication to doing what's in the best interest of Tucker continues to be one of the true strengths of our City.

With an eye to the future, we also approved the City's first Comprehensive Plan. This document will guide our land use and planning decisions for many years to come. It was the result of hard work from our staff, as well as the community. So many Tucker residents spent time after work or on weekends attending public information sessions and other engagement opportunities to let us know what they want to see happen in the city. I am excited to see those suggestions implemented as we look at ways to continue smart growth in Tucker.



This spring, we approved a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2019 that funds some new priorities for the City. Chief among those is road resurfacing. When voters approved the special-purpose local-option sales tax (SPLOST) referendum last year, our team was already hard at work coming up with a plan to ensure Tucker's pennies would be used responsibly and in a way that maximized impact to the community. In addition to public safety and multi-modal transportation improvements, the repaving of some of Tucker's worst-conditioned streets will make a significant difference to the quality of life of our residents.

Of course, this year we also assumed responsibility for Tucker Recreation Center and our Tucker parks. Our staff, under the leadership of Parks and Recreation Director Rip Robertson, stepped up to address countless issues that had long needed attention. The result was unmistakable: our Tucker parks are in better shape than they have been in years. We have a new maintenance regime, caring for grass, trees, trails and all the things that make our parks beautiful and useful. Renovations at Cofer Pool and the Recreation Center have given new life to both facilities, and you'll soon see new play equipment in parks all around Tucker. There's still a lot to be done, but we've got the right team to build upon this progress.

I could go on about what we've done, but I'm particularly interested in what's coming. Over the course of the next year, you're going to see us refine and strengthen our partnership with DeKalb County Police and our Tucker Precinct. You're going to hear a lot about – and hopefully participate in – several study committees that will chart the future course for parks, trails, traffic, downtown, historic sites and more. You're going to see the progress on Phase Two of the Tucker Streetscape, which will ultimately extend the beautiful sidewalks and walkability of downtown. This project was started by local volunteers before cityhood that DeKalb County is making good on, and in which Tucker will be a significant partner.

We're coming upon an important time for our City, where we mature from being a reactive government to fully functioning as a proactive government. Having successfully completed our two-year transition period, during which we established delivery strategies for every City service, we now get to set our own priorities. Now we'll turn our focus toward accomplishing some of the goals that you laid out during the cityhood movement. We will work with our partners in the business community, including the Community Improvement Districts and our brand new Downtown Development Authority, and all our great local volunteer groups to continue to make Tucker the ideal place to live, work, play and pray.

**LET'S MAKE IT A GREAT YEAR –  
AND A GREAT FUTURE – FOR TUCKER.**

Frank Auman, Mayor, City of Tucker



# GREETINGS FROM YOUR City Council



Pat Soltys



Bill Rosenfeld



Matt Robbins



Noelle Monferdini



Michelle Penkava



Anne Lerner

## **PAT SOLTYS, DISTRICT 1 POST 1**

As the newest member of council, I knew coming in that Tucker was a great community. The passion behind projects, events and dreams for the future are even greater than I expected.

Rarely a day goes by that I am not asked about Tucker, what is happening and what is coming. There is an excitement when a new project is launched, a new part of the infrastructure in place. The staff is amazing, committed to Tucker's success and diligent in pursuit of excellence in what they do. I get compliments on our staff and processes frequently, which is the greatest measure of citizen and vendor satisfaction.

It is a privilege to serve my district and Tucker as a whole. I look forward to an awesome third year as a city.

## **BILL ROSENFELD, DISTRICT 1 POST 2**

This past year we completed the three major provisions our charter had laid out: planning and zoning, code enforcement and parks and recreation. We as a council worked very hard learning and educating ourselves to be the best we can be. Our staff has worked endless hours to make sure we are informed and up to date.

I look forward to our next year as we are engaged in more studies to help make our city a place our families can enjoy. I look forward to working in our communities with all our volunteers that also work endless hours.

We are ready to make this coming year even better.

## **MATT ROBBINS, DISTRICT 2 POST 1**

The exciting thing about this past Fiscal Year has been "being there" with so many residents at the activities of Tucker, highlighted by the events leading up to Tucker Day, Cruise-Ins, Movie on Main and the Celebration of Independence and Fireworks Spectacular. To see so many people enjoying the events and each other was fantastic!

We look forward to the new studies we will be doing in the early part of this Fiscal Year: Downtown Master Plan, Parks Master Plan, Sign Ordinance and Overlay Study, Trails Master Plan, Transportation Master Plan and more. These will involve workgroups consisting of many city residents, experts on the respective issues, staff and council involvement, as well as feedback from all of you!

So much is happening as the city continues to take shape, and these activities will need us all to "be there" working together! Thank you for letting me be a part of serving you – I look forward to another full and dynamic year!

## **NOELLE MONFERDINI, DISTRICT 2 POST 2**

Our staff and the council have built a foundation for our city and you can now begin to enjoy the benefits of past labors. If you recall, we started with just the mayor and city council, plus an attorney, clerk, and undoubtedly many ideas of how it should all work together.

Since that point, we've created fully functional departments that manage our development, building and permitting, business license, communications and code enforcement. Last year, we fired up our Parks and Recreation Department in preparation for the handoff from DeKalb County of our parkland so that programs could be in place the moment the agreement was finalized. I will add here that it has been a great success, along with the partnership of many volunteer groups that have continually partnered in beautification and recreation opportunities.



We certainly understand there is much more to do, but those parks are ours to do with. Speaking of doing, the Tucker Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan is complete, and we are now launching our first set of studies for a Trails Master Plan, Parks Master Plan, Transportation Plan and others. Be ready to give your input when the time arises.

**MICHELLE PENKAVA,  
DISTRICT 3 POST 1**

What a wonderful time this is for Tucker! Just over two years old, our City is making great strides in setting foundational policies and developing smart practices for the future.

We have commissioned studies for parks, transportation and trails and have completed our first Comprehensive Plan, all of which help inform the vision for Tucker’s future. Thank you to the numerous residents and business owners willing to serve on behalf of the City and to our City staff for their dedication and expertise.

**ANNE LERNER,  
DISTRICT 3 POST 2**

I continue to be proud of the City of Tucker! We remained focused this year on ensuring a bright future for our residents and business owners by always looking for the better way –

the Tucker Way. Whether it was enhancing Team Tucker with additional staff members to provide superior customer service, collaborating with DeKalb County for a seamless transition of parks and our strengthened public safety partnerships, we continued to build our young city on a solid foundation. I look forward to completing our first Parks, Trails and Transportation Master Plans this coming Fiscal Year so that we can further implement your vision.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you as we work together for all of Tucker!

**A MESSAGE FROM THE  
City Manager**



As we reflect on another year of accomplishments, I personally reflect on who helped make it happen.

My job as city manager is to be a bridge between our city council and our City staff. I ensure the priorities of the former are executed by the latter. In many places, that can be a big challenge. Here in Tucker, however,

we have amazing leaders on our city council, each with a vision for Tucker and a keen ear for the needs of their constituents. They work so well with one another and with our staff to keep the city headed in the right direction.

If not for our staff, many of those accomplishments wouldn’t be possible. Rip Robertson took the dream of Parks and Recreation and made it a full-blown department, transforming everything from Summer Camp to park amenities in just a matter of months. Finance Manager Cynthia Strozier helped author the City’s very first – and sure to be

award-winning – budget book. Our Communications team mapped out a series of summer events, engaging sponsors and community partners to bring movies and fireworks to Main Street. I could go on, but the point is that, between City Hall, the City Hall Annex and Tucker Recreation Center, we have a team of dedicated professionals who work long hours to make this city the great place that it is.

I look forward to continued success and growth for Tucker over the next year. With Team Tucker at the helm, rest assured the city is in good hands.

**TAMI HANLIN, CITY MANAGER**

# Parks and Recreation

One of the biggest tasks for Tucker City staff this past year was in the realm of Parks and Recreation. A year ago, there was not a Parks and Recreation Department. But over the course of just three months, the City assumed responsibility for Tucker Recreation Center, as well as nine parks and a public swimming pool. Today, a friendly and professional staff, under the guidance of Parks and Recreation veteran Rip Robertson, is working to improve hundreds of acres of parkland across all parts of the Tucker community.

Henderson Park is the biggest of Tucker's parks and one of the biggest parks in all of DeKalb County. Offering newly refurbished tennis courts, miles of hiking trails and a thriving soccer scene, all set around the beautiful Lake Erin, hundreds of people come to spend time in Henderson Park each day.

Tucker Recreation Center, which serves as the headquarters for the City's Parks and Recreation operations, is frequently cited as the most utilized recreation center in DeKalb County. It offers activities for everyone from toddlers all the way to senior citizens, giving all age groups a chance to connect, stay active and make some new friends. Rooms are available for rent at Tucker Recreation Center, making it a popular place for birthday parties and other private events.

The Recreation Center is also home to the new and improved After School and Summer Camp programs. Tucker Parks and Recreation partnered with the Wade Walker YMCA on both of these programs, revamping the activities offered to students. Children from Tucker and surrounding areas will enjoy a safe and engaging environment, giving parents peace of mind that their students are being well taken care of in a nurturing setting.

Kelley Cofer Park is home to Tucker's popular Kelley Cofer Swimming Pool. Upon taking over the pool from DeKalb County, Tucker's Parks and Recreation Department oversaw a transformation that included repainting and renovating the pool house, installing new safety fencing and implementing unprecedented standards for swimmer safety at the pool. Kelley Cofer is one of three park properties (Tucker Recreation Center and Peters Park are the others) with newly-installed security cameras to ensure the safety of guests to Tucker parks.



**290**  
ACRES OF  
PARKLAND  
IN TUCKER'S  
CARE

**100**  
ACRES OF  
PARKLAND  
MOWED  
PER WEEK

**49K**  
SQUARE  
FEET OF  
REC CENTER

**70-80**  
WEEKLY  
ACTIVITIES  
IN THE  
REC CENTER

**175**  
KELLEY COFER  
PARK POOL  
VISITORS  
PER WEEK





**8** SENIOR PROGRAMS

**9** ADULT PROGRAMS

**9** YOUTH PROGRAMS

**105**

SUMMER CAMP PARTICIPANTS PER WEEK

**12** RENTALS PER WEEK

**38**

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS PER WEEK

# Community Development

Tucker's Community Development team was busier than ever this past year, handling thousands of Code Enforcement and Building and Permitting cases, as well as numerous land use development petitions. They spearheaded changes to the City's code to place restrictions on feather signs and linear lighting. They also marshalled public involvement in the Comprehensive Plan process, leading to the City receiving the Qualified Local Government status from Georgia's Department of Community Affairs.

To accommodate increased workload and demands, Tucker's City Council approved funding for four additional positions within the department: a City planner, civil site plan review professional, business outreach coordinator and an additional Code Enforcement officer. The Building and Permitting team adopted "umbrella permits" to streamline permit requests from builders and developers.

The department also did extensive training with the City's volunteer boards and commissions. In addition to the appointment of an alcohol review officer, Downtown Development Authority and Construction Board of Appeals, all boards and commissions received training from the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. The Community Council, the first and most direct voice for residents and business owners in matters of land use and city code cases, was expanded to offer greater outreach to the community. Staff also integrated Accela agenda management software to offer easier access to meeting minutes, packets and agendas.

Looking ahead, Community Development has laid the groundwork for important studies including a sign overlay rewrite, Downtown Master Plan and historic resource report.

# Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement was one of the main drivers behind Tucker becoming its own city. After getting off to a great start in Year One, the department saw its caseload steadily increase over the course of the past year. Code Enforcement Manager Maricela Perdomo and Code Enforcement Officer James Duncan traveled the city, responding to complaints on a number of issues ranging from tall grass to rubbish accumulation. Their staff will grow to three officers this year, as the department looks to offer faster response time and accomplish their mission of protecting property values and increasing public safety through enforcing Tucker's City Code.



**LOOKING AHEAD,**  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
HAS LAID THE GROUNDWORK  
FOR IMPORTANT STUDIES.





**TUCKER LEADERSHIP AND STAFF** ARE SHAPING THE CITY THROUGH STREAMLINED PERMITTING, PLANNING AND ZONING PROCEDURES.



## Public Safety

The City of Tucker took an innovative approach to public safety this year, executing an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with DeKalb County to redraw the service boundaries of the Tucker Precinct, meaning that any police calls in the city will be handled by one precinct. While Tucker does not have its own dedicated police force, this IGA ensures the City has a highly-trained group of officers who are proactively involved in the community, fostering mutual trust between Tucker citizens and the men and women sworn to protect them.

Tucker continues to have its own dedicated police liaison in Lt. D.G. Schoeppner. Lt. Schoeppner is responsible for briefing the mayor, city council and staff on crime trends within the city. In the past year, he has taken the additional step of attending community meetings and lending expertise to community groups on matters of safety. He provides an invaluable connection between the City of Tucker, its people and the DeKalb County Police Department.





TUCKER'S COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT PUT A RENEWED FOCUS ON **CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY** THIS PAST YEAR.

## Communications

Tucker's Communications Department put a renewed focus on connecting with the community this past year. They created the position of city-community connector, a full-time employee who coordinates with volunteer groups, school organizations and the faith community. This led to increased outreach to many of the groups that helped build Tucker before and during the cityhood movement.

Communications also organized several community events to bring neighbors closer together and encourage civic pride. These included a free community health screening, volunteer appreciation dinner and the first-ever TKR Summer of Fun, featuring the Celebration of Independence and Fireworks Spectacular that packed Main Street.

Between these community engagement events, the monthly InTucker newsletter, weekly email blasts and social media activity, the City of Tucker is reaching more residents and stakeholders than ever before, keeping them informed of what's happening in the city they call home.



# Citizen Responder

In April, the City took the unique step of hiring its very first Citizen Responder. Funding for the position was approved by the Mayor and City Council as a demonstration of their commitment to improving customer service at City Hall.

Previously a Code Enforcement Officer and 911 Dispatcher, Camille Taylor brought her expertise to the newly-created position. Taylor, who lives in Tucker, is available to Tucker residents and businessowners by phone, email or in-person at City Hall. Whether it's questions about City services, finding the right contacts with DeKalb County or issues with utilities, Taylor's job is to help folks in Tucker navigate any number of challenges.

With the passage of SPLOST funding Tucker's improvement program, the Citizen Responder is also helping to track resurfacing projects and work orders with DeKalb County. Working in concert with the City's Superintendent, she ensures work is being done in a timely fashion and with minimal impact to drivers within the City.



**HAVE QUESTIONS FOR CAMILLE? EMAIL HER AT [INFO@TUCKERGA.GOV](mailto:INFO@TUCKERGA.GOV)**



**14,639**  
PHONE CALLS  
RECEIVED

**42.7**  
CALLS RECEIVED  
PER DAY

**0:27**  
AVERAGE SPEED  
OF ANSWER

**1:29**  
AVERAGE  
TALK TIME

# City Clerk

Bonnie Warne took over as the City Clerk in September 2017. Her primary focus is organizing and authoring agendas and supporting documents for meetings of the Mayor and City Council, as well as keeping official minutes from those meetings. Another critical aspect of the job has been to handle Open Records requests from anyone seeking information from the City.

In the past year, she launched a special project to verify City documents and overhaul the City's filing and recording system. She also oversaw the implementation of a new software program for tracking and submitting elected officials' ethics reports and financial disclosures. Another important project overseen by the City Clerk and carrying over into the next Fiscal Year is the Laserfiche document management system. This software is designed to make it easier for all City departments to file and add a retention schedule to documents.



# Special-Purpose Local-Option Sales Tax

Public Works road maintenance needs in the City of Tucker are handled through an IGA with DeKalb County. In the past year, however, the City took on some of its own road repaving projects thanks to the passage of a SPLOST by DeKalb County voters. This penny tax is projected to generate \$32 million in Tucker over six years. The money is to be split between road and drainage improvements, multi-modal transportation projects, improvements to fire facilities and other safety equipment, as well as upgrades to the City's Parks and Recreation facilities.

In January, contractors from Stantec drove every mile of public roadway in Tucker with a high-tech van that compiled three-dimensional insights. The data collected provided an unbiased assessment of Tucker's worst-conditioned roads. Over the last four months of 2018, nearly two dozen of those streets are projected to be resurfaced with SPLOST dollars, including heavily traveled collector roads like Brockett Road, Idlewood Road and Mountain Industrial Boulevard, as well as some of the worst-rated subdivision streets in the City.

Additionally, the City and its transportation consultant have begun work on a Transportation Master Plan. The plan will be developed with the help of expert transportation engineers, a citizen stakeholder committee and community involvement through public open houses. Once completed, this plan will identify transportation needs throughout the City, prioritize projects, funding and scheduling and enable the City to pursue state and federal funding for some of these projects.



**23**  
PROJECTED  
REPAVINGS  
IN 2018

**\$7.5M**  
PROJECTED  
REVENUE FROM  
SPLOST FOR  
CALENDAR  
YEAR 2018





## Finance

Tucker's Finance Department saw new leadership this year, as Cynthia Strozier took the role of City Finance Manager. Strozier went to work staffing her department with experienced professionals who were able to process business license applications and issue licenses to around 2,000 new and existing businesses in the City of Tucker. They also assisted the City Manager in creating a \$13.1 million balanced budget as contained in the City's very first full-length Budget Book.

The Finance Department started the process of purchasing new software that will improve customer service, reporting and transparency in the year ahead. They streamlined processes and increased efficiency through adopting a new filing and scanning system. They also moved to their own dedicated office space at the City Hall Annex, making it easier for business owners to walk in off the street and meet directly with members of the Finance team.

PROCESSED BUSINESS  
LICENSE APPLICATIONS  
AND ISSUED LICENSES  
TO AROUND **2,000**  
**NEW AND EXISTING**  
**BUSINESSES** IN  
THE CITY OF TUCKER.









## Economic Development



In its first year of cityhood, Tucker celebrated countless new business openings, as well as the opening of the highly anticipated Tucker Meridian shopping center. Year Two proved just as busy, as developers and brokers continued to look at Tucker for its location, business-friendly climate and demographics.



Tucker experienced growth this past year through a series of annexations. Owners of the Briarcliff Village shopping center filed a petition to become part of the city. Their request was granted unanimously by the mayor and city council, bringing more than a dozen new shops and restaurants into Tucker. The same happened in the southeast part of the city, as Eagle Rock Studio and Graphic Packaging asked for and were granted annexation into Tucker.



Several development projects around the city experienced significant progress in the past year. An independent senior living apartment building at Northlake Parkway is slated for completion at the end of 2018 – a \$15 million investment. There are also a number of partially developed and new subdivisions being built out, including Ashbrooke Phase I and II, Stone Mill Townhomes, Thorncrest and Woods of Midvale. This increase in new homes is due to the dynamic quality of Tucker as a place to live, work and play. Our commercial sector is also growing with Tucker Exchange recently renovating its office tower, a large new industrial building along Greer Circle, large expansion of an existing business along Steel Drive and, of course, the opening of the wildly popular Tucker Brewing Company. We're also seeing increased vibrancy on Main Street with new restaurants and businesses. All of this activity speaks to Tucker's reputation as a great place to do business.

# TUCKER Data

## PARKS AND RECREATION



**290** Acres of Park Land  
**100** Acres of Park Land Mowed\*  
**49,000** Sq. Ft. of Rec Center  
**70-80** Activities in The Rec Center\*  
**8** Senior Programs  
**9** Adult Programs  
**9** Youth Programs

**12** Rentals\*  
**38** After School Program Participants\*  
**175** Kelley Cofer Park Pool Visitors\*

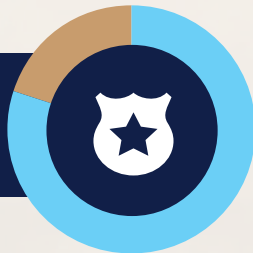
\*per week

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



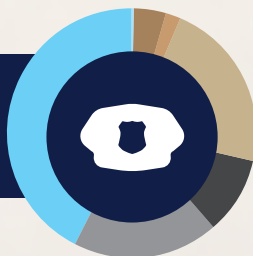
● **579** Trade Permits Issued  
● **385** Building Permits Issued  
● **83** Sign Permits Issued  
**1,047** Total Permits Issued

## CODE ENFORCEMENT



● **502** Notice of Violations Issued  
● **121** Citations Issued

## PUBLIC SAFETY CRIME FY'18 (COMPARED TO FY'17)



● **433** Entering Auto (↓8%)  
● **5** Homicide (No change)  
● **42** Pedestrian Robbery (↓14%)  
● **19** Business Robbery (↓27%)  
○ **2** Residential Robbery (↓75%)  
● **226** Residential Burglary (↓14%)  
● **103** Business Burglary (↑10%)  
● **193** Auto Theft (↓9%)

## COMMUNICATIONS FY'18 (COMPARED TO FY'17)



### WHO IS FOLLOWING THE CITY?

● **2,882** Facebook (1,955)  
● **398** Twitter (171)  
● **471** Instagram (94)  
**110** Videos Produced  
**107** Video Views  
**174** Newsletters Mailed  
**1,792** Email Subscribers  
**247,824** Website Pageviews (160,847)

Phone Calls Received **14,639**  
 Calls Received per Day **42.7**  
 Average Speed of Answer **0:27**  
 Average Talk Time **1:29**



**CITIZEN  
RESPONDER**

Open Records Requests Received **127**  
 Mayor And City Council Meetings **38**  
 Ordinances Approved **36**  
 Resolutions Approved **20**  
 IGAs and Contracts Executed **31**



**CITY  
CLERK**

New Business License Applications – Home Based **63**  
 New Business License Applications – Commercial **180**  
**Total New Business License Applications Received = 243**



**ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT**

	<b>FY2018</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>\$5,108,243.00</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>\$7,551,150.00</b>
Business License Fees	\$3,318,090.00
Franchise Fees	\$2,205,092.00
Hotel/Motel	\$1,134,110.00
Other	\$893,858.00
<b>Ending Cash Balance</b>	<b>\$2,442,907.00</b>



**FINANCE**

*Unaudited numbers for Fiscal Year 2018 budget*

