

Open Line

A Monthly Newsletter for City of Auburn Citizens

April 2019

City Council

Ron Anders, Jr., Mayor
(334) 703-9000
randers@auburnalabama.org

Connie Fitch Taylor, Ward 1
(334) 704-3970
ctaylor@auburnalabama.org

Kelley Griswold, Ward 2
(256) 975-8183
kgriswold@auburnalabama.org

Beth Witten, Ward 3
(334) 740-8575
bwitten@auburnalabama.org

Brett Smith, Ward 4
(334) 740-8847
basmith@auburnalabama.org

Steven Dixon, Ward 5
(334) 707-3091
sdixon@auburnalabama.org

Bob Parsons, Ward 6
(334) 704-3657
bparsons@auburnalabama.org

Jay Hovey, Ward 7
(334) 319-6654
jhovey@auburnalabama.org

Tommy Dawson, Ward 8
(334) 559-3021
tdawson@auburnalabama.org

Open Line is produced by the Office of the City Manager
144 Tichenor Ave., Ste. 1
Auburn, AL 36830
(334) 501-7260



@CityofAuburnAL

web:
www.auburnalabama.org
email:
openline@auburnalabama.org



City of Auburn

Two roundabouts coming to Auburn intersections

Two of Auburn's intersections are about to get a lot safer.

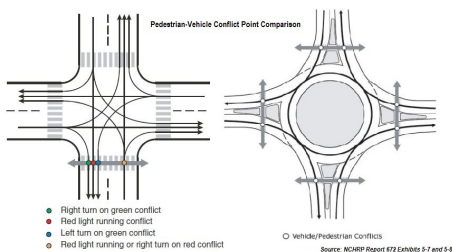
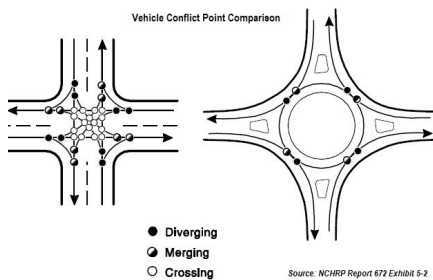
Roundabouts are in the works for the intersection of Cox Road and Wire Road and the intersection of Farmville Road and North College Street. For years, these two intersections have been complicated and dangerous for travelers to navigate. Both of these intersections are controlled by the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), so we've lobbied for improvements for years. The results have paid off, and construction on roundabouts at these intersections is expected to begin in spring/summer 2020.



Rendering of North College Street/Farmville Road roundabout

Why a roundabout?

Roundabouts are designed for the desired speed, traffic movement and traffic volumes specific to a particular roadway. Therefore, these roundabouts will be different from the traditional traffic circle found in some of Auburn's neighborhoods, allowing larger vehicles like school busses, fire trucks and 18-wheelers to easily pass through. Traffic engineers across the industry agree that roundabouts are safer than traditional signaled or four-way-stop intersections.



Roundabouts are proven to reduce by 78 to 82 percent the types of crashes where people are seriously injured or killed. This is accomplished by reducing the number and severity of conflict points, according to the Federal Highway Association. Conventional intersections have 32 conflict points—eight merging (or joining), eight diverging (or separating) and 16 crossing. Roundabouts only have eight total conflict points—four merging and four diverging. Since vehicles traveling through roundabouts are going in the same direction, crashes at these conflict points are substantially less severe and, as a result, are less likely to result in injuries. Roundabouts also reduce speeds to about 15-25 MPH, drastically reducing injuries in car crashes.

Construction ahead

ALDOT will fund the majority of the cost to construct both roundabouts, covering the entire cost of the North College/Farmville roundabout. The Cox/Wire roundabout is expected to cost \$1.65 million, and ALDOT's Highway Safety Improvements program will fund \$1.49 million with a 10 percent (\$165,000) match from the City. The Farmville/College roundabout will include a one-lane roundabout with dedicated north and southbound right turn lanes (separate from the roundabout) from Farmville Road onto North College. Design of the Cox/Wire roundabout is underway.

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Never used a roundabout?

To travel through a roundabout, motorists should slow down as they approach the roundabout and keep an eye out for any pedestrians. As you continue toward the roundabout, look to the left and yield to traffic already in the roundabout. Once there's a gap in traffic, enter the circle and continue to your exit. If there's no traffic in the roundabout, you can enter without yielding. Remember to look for pedestrians and use your turn signal before you exit.

We're looking forward to making these intersections safer for everyone! Keep an eye out for more updates on construction and educational pieces for you to share with fellow motorists.

Affordable housing coming to northwest Auburn



Tucker Heights, a new subdivision with seven affordable homes, is coming soon to the corner of Tucker Avenue and Byrd Street, and the Auburn-Opelika Habitat for Humanity is working on nine new homes on Foster Street and Bedell Avenue.

Tucker Heights

The City of Auburn is partnering with the nonprofit North Auburn Housing Development Corporation (NAHDC) to build Auburn's second affordable housing subdivision for low- to moderate-income families. Each home will have three bedrooms, two baths and comparable lot sizes to other homes in the area. Construction is expected to begin in the spring or summer of 2019.

To apply for one of these homes, applicants must:

- Meet the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) income limits
- Complete an application
- Attend housing counseling
- Secure financing for at least 80 percent of the home's sales price
- Have a \$500 minimum down payment
- Have reasonably good credit with no outstanding federal debt

Those interested in applying for a home can fill out an application at the Community Development Department's office located at 400 Boykin St. Contact Community Services at (334) 501-7277 or communityservices@auburnalabama.org for more information.

Habitat for Humanity homes

Auburn Opelika Habitat for Humanity is working on nine new, affordable homes in Auburn, three on Foster Street,

one on the corner of Foster and Bedell Avenue and five on Bedell. The homes will be about 1,200 square feet and will typically include three bedrooms and two baths. The City is partnering with Habitat by investing in the infrastructure needed to support these new homes.

For more information about becoming a Habitat for Humanity homeowner, visit auburnopelikahabitat.org/become-a-homeowner or contact the Auburn Opelika Habitat for Humanity at (334) 745-2123 or auburnopelikahabitat@gmail.com.

Efforts over the years

Tucker Heights is just a piece of the City's efforts to support low- to moderate-income families in Auburn. The City has built 143 new homes for first-time homeowners over the years, including the 29 homes in the Northwest Village subdivision that were constructed beginning in 2006.

Alongside new construction, the City dedicates resources from the Community Development Block Grant to housing rehabilitation; emergency shelter for the homeless; utility, rental and mortgage assistance; and down-payment and closing-cost assistance for homebuyers. Each year, the Community Services Department gauges what the highest needs are in the community by gathering public input and evaluating housing then allocates the CDBG funds it receives to help make a difference.

Over the last three years, the City completed 11 housing habilitation projects and provided homeless assistance for 132 people using CDBG funds. Funds were also invested in programs like the Boys and Girls Club and the Food Bank of East Alabama, directly impacting 1,918 youth, 1,145 seniors and 815 families in the Auburn community. A total of \$1.47 million was invested in programs and services to benefit low- to moderate-income families over the last three years.

Have input you'd like to share on what areas of the community should be supported through the 2019 CDBG funds? The Community Development Department invites your input at the 2019 action plan meetings, which will be announced through the City's website at auburnalabama.org, social media accounts and through eNotifier, the City's email and text notification system. Sign up to receive announcements at auburnalabama.org/eNotifier.

Floral Trail showcases Auburn blooms



The 2019 Auburn Floral Trail begins March 11 and will run through April 19! The trail highlights some of the finest blooms and foliage Auburn has to offer, and you're invited to travel the 14-mile, self-guided trail along Auburn's neighborhood streets. The trail features common springtime flowers such as azaleas and

blooming trees such as pear, cherry and plum trees. It's broken into a 10.5-mile south trail and a 3.5-mile north trail with two optional sections.

The Auburn Floral Trail is brought to you by the Auburn Beautification Council, Auburn-Opelika Tourism Bureau and the City of Auburn. Visit auburnalabama.org/environmental-services/auburn-floral-trail for a trail map and more info.

19th Annual Auburn CityFest: 'Taking Flight'



The sky's the limit at Auburn CityFest 2019: "Taking Flight!" Join us Saturday, April 27, at Kiesel Park from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. for Auburn's largest FREE outdoor event of the year! Guests will be able to shop from more than 100 arts and crafts, food and nonprofit vendors and enjoy special entertainment and activities.

Headlining entertainment will be provided by The Skyriders, a group of Olympic and world-champion trampoline acrobats that have performed at some of the largest venues in the U.S., including NBA halftime shows!

The Auburn Community Orchestra will perform flight-themed songs, and we will also have special guests from the Southeastern Raptor Center and Auburn University's Department of Aviation. Auburn CityFest is a RAIN or SHINE event. Visit auburncityfest.com for more information.

Regional startup competition



This year marks the second annual Auburn Regional Alabama Launchpad, which is a collaborative effort between the City of Auburn, Auburn University's

Raymond J. Harbert College of Business, the Auburn Research and Technology Foundation and the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama. The startup competition encourages economic development and innovation across the five-county region by inviting entrepreneurs to create new ideas and ventures that have a positive impact on Alabama.

You're invited to join us at The Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center on March 27 at 4 p.m. to watch nine local startups compete for a share of \$50,000 and pitch their ideas to a panel of judges and the community! The judges will select winners who will be awarded a share of the \$50,000 prize.

To learn more about the competition, follow Auburn Regional Alabama Launchpad on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram (@auburn_launchpad) and Twitter (@auburnlaunchpad). Find more info about the statewide Alabama Launchpad program at alabamalaunchpad.com.

Board Vacancies

Two vacancies on the Historic Preservation Commission and two vacancies on the Library Board will be announced at the March 5 Auburn City Council Meeting and filled at the April 2 meeting. Applications for both bodies will be due on March 25. Visit auburnalabama.org/boards to apply or to find more information about volunteering for one of our boards and commissions.



Celebrate National Library Week at the APL

Celebrate National Library Week April 7-13 at the Auburn Public Library! Join us for an **Open House** and an opportunity to chat with Library Director Chris Warren on Monday, April 8, from 10 a.m.-noon. Light refreshments and coffee will be provided, and guests will have a chance to take a tour of the library and sign up for a library card.

You can also stop by for the **BIG Book Sale!** Choose from thousands of gently used books, including bestsellers, classics, fiction, nonfiction and children's books. The sale will take place on April 6 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m., April 7 from 2-6 p.m. and April 8 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Donations for the book sale can be dropped off at the library during regular business hours.

Free tax prep at Boykin Community Center

SaveFirst Community Outreach, Impact America - Alabama has partnered with Auburn University to offer tax preparation services now through April at Boykin Community Center in Rooms 505-507. Tax preparation by IRS certified volunteers is FREE for households earning up to \$55,000 with children or up to \$20,000 without children.

To take advantage of the services, taxpayers can make an appointment by calling 1 (888) 998-2925. Appointments are available on Fridays from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. and Saturdays from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Boykin Community Center is located at 400 Boykin St.

2019 Citizens' Public Safety Academy



The 2019 Citizens' Public Safety Academy will take place March 21-April 25! From hands-on training exercises to hearing from Public Safety officials, residents will get an inside look into what it means to serve and protect the Auburn community. Those interested in participating can find an application and more info at news.auburnalabama.org. Applications are due **MARCH 14!**

