

# Open Line

## A Monthly Newsletter for City of Auburn Citizens

June 2015

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City of Auburn



### Citizen Survey 2015

The results of the 2015 Citizen Survey were presented to the Auburn City Council at the Tuesday, April 7, 2015 Committee of the Whole meeting. Since 2006, the City's rankings have significantly improved in 50 areas measured with no statistically significant decreases in that time frame. Of those, 21 areas improved by double digits. Auburn also performed well against the national average of cities surveyed. In 2015, Auburn rated above the national average in 59 of 62 areas, with 53 of those areas significantly above average, and 40 areas beating the national average by double digits. Ratings for quality of city services and value received for tax dollars were both 30 points above the national average.

Results were presented by Chris Tatham, President of the ETC Institute, a Kansas based research firm. Tatham began his presentation by summarizing the results of this year's survey with five major findings:

- Residents have a very positive perception of the city
- The city is equitably serving residents in all geographic areas
- The city is moving in the right direction
- The City of Auburn is setting the standard for delivery of city services
- Traffic flow and infrastructure maintenance continue to be the greatest opportunities for improvement

**Auburn rated above the national average in 59 of 62 areas**

#### Top Measures

The survey showed that residents feel good about Auburn as a place to live, work and play. Especially notable was the general feeling of safety in the community, with 97% of residents feeling safe in their neighborhood, and 93% feeling the city was safe overall. Ninety-six percent (96%) of respondents ranked Auburn as a "good" or "excellent" place to live.

Eighty-six percent (86%) of residents gave positive ratings to city services, matching last year's all-time high for that measure. Tatham pointed out that there were 43 positive ratings for each negative rating for city services. The ranking for value received for tax dollars and fees (76% "satisfied" or "very satisfied") tells a similar story, with nearly a 13 to 1 ratio of positive to negative responses.

#### Leadership

Elected officials are also ranked positively by 63% of residents, 16 points above the national average. Residents rank the effectiveness of the City Manager at 67% positive, compared to the national average of 49%. Residents ranked the effectiveness of our various Boards and Commissions 6 points higher than the national average.

#### Survey

The City of Auburn is committed to strong citizen participation in local government. The Auburn Citizen Survey has been administered every year since 1988. Survey results since 2006 are available on the city's website at <http://www.auburnalabama.org/survey>.

**Ratings for quality of city services and value received for tax dollars were both 30 points above the national average**

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## Citizen Survey 2015 (From page 1)

### Why do we do it?

Throughout the year, elected officials and city staff hear from citizens on issues of importance to them. These communications are a vital part of the city's mission to provide excellent customer service. They inform us of immediate issues to which we need to respond and of the concerns, complaints, ideas and priorities of those citizens.

In contrast, the Citizen Survey gives us the big picture. It allows us to hear from the community as a whole on the city's performance and priorities. It gives us a statistically valid measure of how people rank city services across categories and departments. It also allows us to see how we compare to other cities around the nation so that we can learn from cities that do things particularly well.

### Why didn't I receive a citizen survey?

To be scientifically valid, participants in the Citizen Survey must be selected at random. The random sample must be sufficiently large in order to accurately represent the community. Each year, the ETC Institute mails the survey to a random sample of 1,500 households within the City of Auburn. That sample size provides a large enough response for statistical validity at the 95% level of confidence.

### Why should we believe the survey results?

Since the survey is conducted using scientific survey principles, it provides a statistically valid measure of public opinion. The 2015 Citizen Survey provided a 95% level of confidence with a precision of plus or minus 3.5%. This means that if the survey were conducted 100 times using 100 different random samples, we would expect to see the same results (plus or minus 3.5%) 95 out of 100 times. By following these scientific principles, we can be confident that the survey accurately measures the general feelings and opinions of the Auburn citizenry. The Citizen Survey is conducted by an independent third party, the ETC Institute, to protect the survey from bias and to provide an independent analysis of the results.

### How do we use the survey?

The Citizen Survey allows city leaders to learn how residents rate the city's performance in providing essential city services. The survey results guide the City Council and staff in setting budget, project and policy priorities for each biennial budget. It is crucial to city officials that the voice and opinions of citizens are actively sought out.

## John Lankford Appointed Auburn Fire Chief

Auburn City Manager Charles Duggan has accepted the recommendation of Public Safety Director Bill James to appoint John C. Lankford IV as the new Chief of the Auburn Fire Division. Chief Lankford has served in the Auburn Fire Division since 1994, and has been Deputy Chief since 2014. Lankford has led the Fire Division since the death of former Chief Lee Lamar earlier this year.



"Chief Lankford's 21 years of service, pursuit of educational opportunities, and excellent history of hard work and leadership have given him the experience needed to lead the Auburn Fire Division. I share Public Safety Director Bill James' confidence in John's ability to ensure that the Auburn Fire Division continues to deliver the excellence in fire and emergency response that the Auburn community expects and deserves," said Auburn City Manager Charles Duggan.

Chief Lankford has an Associate of Science degree in Fire Science from Chattahoochee Valley Community College, a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Business and Economics from Auburn University and is a graduate of the Alabama State Fire College and the National Fire Academy. Chief Lankford has also been an Adjunct Instructor at the Alabama State Fire College and at Southern Union Community College. In addition to his duties at the Auburn Fire Division, Chief Lankford worked with Columbus Fire and EMS and the Southwest Fire Protection Authority. Chief Lankford has pursued extensive professional training from various organizations including the Georgia Fire Academy, the Department of Justice, Emergency Safety and Environmental Training Associates, the National Fire Academy, the National Safety Council, New Mexico Tech and Texas A&M University.

Public Safety Director Bill James said of Lankford, "John has been a leader in the Fire Division during his career and provided excellent leadership during Chief Lamar's illness. I look forward to working with John as he leads the Fire Division into the future."



## Board Vacancies

One vacancy on the **Indian Pines Recreation Authority** was announced at the May 5, 2015 meeting and will be filled at the June 2, 2015 City Council Meeting.



Three vacancies on the **Auburn Downtown Redevelopment Authority** will be announced at the June 2, 2015 meeting and will be filled at the July 7, 2015 City Council Meeting.

Two vacancies on the **Greenspace Advisory Board** will be announced at the June 23, 2015 meeting and will be filled at the July 21, 2015 City Council Meeting.

One vacancy on the **Water Works Board** will be announced at the June 23, 2015 meeting and will be filled at the July 21, 2015 City Council Meeting.

*Citizens interested in serving are encouraged to contact their City Council member or notify the City Manager's Office.*

## MEETING SCHEDULE JUNE

- 1 Cemeteries Advisory Board**, 4 p.m., Harris Center, 425 Perry Street
- 2 Parks & Recreation Advisory Board**, 5:15 p.m., Harris Center, 425 Perry Street
- Committee of the Whole**, 6:55 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- City Council**, 7 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 3 Board of Zoning Adjustment**, 4:30 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 5 Tree Commission**, 11:00 a.m., Harris Center, 425 Perry Street
- 9 Greenspace Advisory Board**, Noon, Harris Center, 425 Perry Street
- Historic Preservation Commission**, 4 p.m., DSB Conference Room, 171 North Ross Street
- Board of Education**, 6 p.m., AHS Multi-Media Room, 405 South Dean Road
- 11 Planning Commission**, 5 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- 18 Water Works Board**, 4 p.m., Water Board Conference Room, 1501 West Samford Avenue
- 21 Library Board**, 2:00 p.m., Library Conference Room, 749 East Thach Avenue
- Committee of the Whole**, 6:55 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street
- City Council**, 7 p.m., Council Chamber, 141 North Ross Street

**Meeting times and places are subject to change.**

**For more information, including a map of City meeting locations, please visit [www.auburnalabama.org/boards](http://www.auburnalabama.org/boards).**

## Veterans Brick Orders Due June 30

Each year, the City of Auburn provides citizens with the opportunity to honor a member of the military by purchasing a memorial brick to be placed at the Veterans Memorial Monument, located on the corner of Ross Street and Glenn Avenue. Personalized bricks engraved with the veteran's name, rank, branch of service, and years of service may be purchased for \$100. For bricks to be placed at the Veteran's Memorial Monument in time for the 2015 Veterans Day Ceremony, brick orders must be received no later than Tuesday, June 30. Please visit [www.auburnalabama.org/veterans](http://www.auburnalabama.org/veterans) for brick order forms or to use the brick archive map to locate individual bricks from the more than 800 bricks that have been installed at the Memorial.



## Pop-Up SummerNight

It's a block party with artistic flair! Join the City of Auburn's Jan Dempsey Community Arts Center, Auburn Arts Association, and the Downtown Auburn Merchants for a Pop-Up SummerNight Artist Market on Friday, June 12 from 5 – 9 p.m. in the Gay Street parking lot. Take advantage of late night shopping hours and enjoy an evening of dining, art, and live music. This event is perfect for local artists to display their talents, while offering the community a chance to enjoy an evening in beautiful, downtown Auburn. Artist Applications are available online at [auburnsummernight.com](http://auburnsummernight.com) and are due June 8. Sponsorships are also available! For more information, contact the Pop-Up SummerNight Headquarters at 501-2963. Pop-Up SummerNight is a downtown entertainment district event and is FREE to the public.

## Summer Camps:

**June 1-19:** Camp Kaleidoscope

**June 1-26:** Small Fry Camp

**June 1-26:** Summer Therapeutic Camp

**June 22-26:** Dare Camp

# City Management

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## Open Line Feedback

Do you have any suggestions, feedback, or story ideas that you would like to share?

If so, please contact us at [openline@auburnalabama.org](mailto:openline@auburnalabama.org) or call 501-7266.

# up COMING EVENTS

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

## Auburn Public Library

**For information on library programs for children, please call 501-3196.**

**Summer Reading Program** – It's time to sign up for Summer Reading! This year's theme is "Every Hero Has a Story." Babies, children, and teens may register anytime during June and July. Read and win this summer!

**"Every Hero Has a Story!"** – Join us every Wednesday in June for these special Summer Reading activities:

**June 3** – "Big Hero 6" (PG) movie and a snack, 2:00 p.m. for all ages.

**June 10** – Arthur Atsma, Street Magician, 2:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. for all ages.

**June 17** – "Superhero Academy" with Bill Packard, Magician, 2:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m. for all ages.

**June 24** – "Animal Avengers" with Jared Baker, 2:00 p.m. for all ages.

### STORYTIME AND EARLY LITERACY ACTIVITIES

**Baby Time** - Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m. for ages birth – 18 months and their caregivers.

**Toddler Time** - Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m. for ages 18 months – 3 years and their caregivers.

**Preschool Time** - Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m. for preschoolers ages 3 – 5 years and their caregivers.

**Family Storytime** – Sunday, June 28 at 4:00 p.m. Bring the whole family and join us for stories, songs, games and family fun!

**Spectrum Storytime** – Saturday, June 20 at 10:00 a.m. Spectrum Storytime is an educational and interactive program designed for children with sensory integration challenges and their caregivers. For cognitive ages 4 – 7. Registration is required. For more information or to register, please call Youth Services at 501-3196.

### OTHER PROGRAMS

**Legomania** – Fridays and Saturdays, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. for "free play" with Legos®.

### TEEN SUMMER PROGRAMS

**LitWits** – Tuesdays, June 9 (Heroes vs. Villains) & June 23 (Comics Crazy) at 4:30 p.m. for ages 13 to 18. Read any book that fits the theme and bring it with you for our group discussion!

**Gamers Society** – Thursdays, June 4 & June 18 at 4:00 p.m. for ages 10 – 18.

**Teen Movie Night** – "Thor" (PG-13), Thursday, June 11 at 6:30 p.m. for ages 13 – 18.

**Jeopardy Game Night** – Thursday, June 25 @ 6:30 p.m. for ages 13 – 18.

**The Chronicles of Yarnia** (Crochet class for beginners) – Fridays, June 5 – June 26, 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. for ages 10 – 18. Registration is required. For more information or to register, please call Youth Services at 501-3196.

### Genealogy 101 – Finding Your Roots

**June 4 – Hands On: Start Learning about your Family's History** - Small group class using the library's computers to learn about organizational styles, recordkeeping, software, and the easiest online resources to begin your research. 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Please call Electronic Services to register at 501-6194.

**June 4 – Hands On: Learning about your Family's History using Your Laptop.** During this small group class, we'll show you how to use your own laptop to learn about organizational styles, recordkeeping, software, and the easiest online resources to begin your research. 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**June 11 – Hands On: More Steps in the Right Direction.** 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

**June 11 – Hands On: More Steps in the Right Direction Using Your Laptop.** 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

## Parks and Recreation

**For more information on any of the events listed, or to pre-register for a program, contact Auburn Parks and Recreation at 501-2930 or visit [www.auburnalabama.org/parks](http://www.auburnalabama.org/parks).**

**June 1-5:** Summer Ecology Camp- "Young Naturalist I" Kreher Preserve and Nature Center

**June 1:** Registration begins for Summer Forest Friends with Kreher Preserve and Nature Center

**June 2:** 50+ Bingo & Lunch  
Registration for Adult Kickball and Softball League Ends  
League Coaches Meeting at 7 p.m. at Auburn Softball Complex

**June 6:** Science on Saturdays "Turtles" at 10 a.m. - Kreher Preserve and Nature Center

**June 8-12:** Summer Ecology Camp- "Hunger Games" - Kreher Preserve and Nature Center

**June 8:** Swim lessons begin  
Adult Kickball and Softball Summer League games begin

**June 11:** Float-N-Movie 8:15- 10 p.m. at Samford Pool

**June 15-19:** Summer Ecology Camp- "Young Naturalist II" – Kreher Preserve and Nature Center

**June 15:** Swim lessons begin

**June 16:** 50+ Bingo & Lunch

**June 19-21:** Dummer Jr. Tennis Tournament

**June 21:** Father's Day

**June 22-26:** Summer Ecology Camp- "Explorers" – Kreher Preserve and Nature Center

**June 26:** Friday Night Splash 6-8 p.m. at Samford Pool

**June 27:** Day in Clay at Dean Road Ceramics Studio

**June 29:** Swim lessons begin