

Suwanee connects

suwanee.com | February 2024

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SUWANEE CELEBRATES *75 Years* — of Incorporation —



Suwanee has been a place where people have lived for hundreds of years. In fact, Suwanee Old Town was mentioned in a treaty between the United States government as far back as 1817. However, it wasn't until 1949 that Suwanee was officially incorporated as a city.

On February 25, 1949, the City of Suwanee - then very much an agricultural town - was incorporated. At the time, Suwanee was about 3.1 square miles and consisted of a few hundred residents. Today, Suwanee incorporates about 10.8 square miles and the city's population has blossomed to more than 21,900.

This year the city of Suwanee marks its 75th year of incorporation. But we can't celebrate where we are today without taking a moment to appreciate the journey.

The community can enjoy a commemoration of our 75th Anniversary milestone during the Suwanee Summer Porch Jam, and we can't wait to celebrate with you.

- 1950**
- 1953**
The post-World War II city of about 350 makes several improvements as part of the Better Hometown/Hometown Champion contest.
- 1954**
A City water tank is constructed and Suwanee's water system is installed.
- 1958**
North Gwinnett High School opens.
- 1960**
I-85 is extended to Suwanee.
- MID-1960s**
Everett Brothers begins Saturday night bluegrass concerts.
- 1969**
Annandale Village opens.
- 1970**
The Suwanee Police Department is alleged to have operated a speed trap, according to local newspaper articles.
- 1984**
First Suwanee Day festival.
- 1985**
First traffic signal within the City limits is installed at Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road and Peachtree Industrial Boulevard.
- 1988**
City website, suwanee.com, goes live.
- 2004**
Suwanee opens four parks including Town Center Park.
- 2009**
Grand opening of Suwanee's new City Hall at Town Center.
- 2020**
A little global pandemic, nothing to see here.
- 2015**
Suwanee adopts its first Public Art Master Plan.



2023 MUNICIPAL ELECTION RESULTS

On November 7, 2023, the citizens of Suwanee re-elected Mayor Jimmy Burnette and council member Larry Pettiford to serve another four-year term. Additionally, Julianna McConnell won the race for City Council Post 1. Heather Hall, who did not seek re-election, previously held the Post 1 seat.

MAYOR

James "Jimmy" M. Burnette, Jr (incumbent) 1,009
Unopposed

CITY COUNCIL POST 1

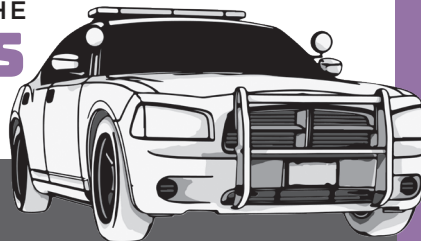
Karim Ladha 70
Julianna McConnell 603
Glenn Weyant 479

CITY COUNCIL POST 2

Bradey Golz 446
Larry Pettiford (incumbent) 689



EMPOWERING RESIDENTS THROUGH THE SUWANEE CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY



Suwanee Police Now Accepting Applications for Spring Program

The Suwanee Citizens Police Academy invites residents to gain insights into the daily operations of police officers at the spring Suwanee Citizens Police Academy. The seven-week program provides an opportunity for participants to delve into the world of law enforcement, encompassing both classroom instruction and practical experiences covering crime scene processing, traffic stops, building searches, crime prevention, and narcotics identification. The Spring 2024 classes will be held on Monday evenings from 6:30 - 9 pm, March 11 - April 29 (there will be no class on April 1 due to Gwinnett County Spring Break).

“The goal of the Citizens Police Academy is to foster an understanding of the challenges and responsibilities faced by our police officers, while also enabling open communication between citizens and the police department,” said Suwanee Police Chief Cass Mooney.

The program is free and open to the public, but space is limited, with preference given to Suwanee residents or individuals working within the City of Suwanee. All applicants are required to undergo a criminal and driver history background check. For those interested, further details and applications can be found at Suwanee.com or by contacting Cierra Hurt at 770-904-7669 or churt@suwanee.com. Notarized applications must be submitted by 5:00 pm on March 6, 2024.

SUWANEE CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY

Mondays
6:30-9:00 pm

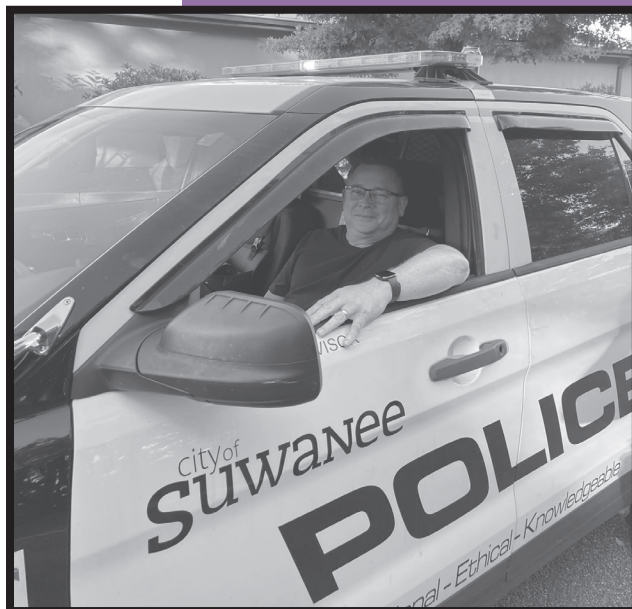
March 11-April 29, 2024



*No class on April 1 due to Gwinnett County Spring Break

Suwanee Police Training Center
2966 Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road

Notarized applications due
March 6, 2024





SUWANEEHALF.COM

BEEN THERE! RUN THAT! SUWANEE HALF MARATHON CELEBRATES A DECADE OF RUNNING.

The heartbeat of Suwanee is about to quicken as the Suwanee Half Marathon marks its 10th anniversary on February 18, 2024. This milestone edition promises to be extra special, introducing a unique twist - the 10k race distance option, further setting it apart from other races in Town Center.

START TIMES:

Suwanee Half Marathon - 7:30 am
Suwanee 10k - 7:45 am
Old Town 5k - 8:00 am



All races begin in front of Suwanee City Hall. For more information, including route, registration, and volunteering, visit SuwaneeHalf.com.

LACE-UP & JOIN IN THE FUN

In 2024, the City of Suwanee will host 16 different runs in Town Center and on the Suwanee Greenway allowing runners to run nearly 80 kilometers without ever leaving the city limits! Commit to the Suwanee Running Series by completing FIVE of these races in 2024 and earn your very own limited edition Suwanee Running Series finisher t-shirt, plus bragging rights!



Congratulations TO THE FINISHERS OF THE 2024 SUWANEE RUNNING SERIES



- | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Adam Perillo | Eric Adams | Lynn King |
| Andrew Manders | Izela Bamaca | Melanie Graham |
| Andrew Trotter | James Burg | Meredith Demcak |
| Aurielle Day | James Yeo | Nadia Ruiz |
| Barbara Ingram | Jason Day | Patricia Toms |
| Bob Czerniak | Jennifer Brady | Rachael Glisson |
| Brenda Stultz | Jim Merritt | Shaheen Karaba |
| Christina Rosia | Jueun Roh | Susan Tanner |
| Cindy Finck | Jungsun Yoon | Tannis Kufner |
| Danielle Miller | Karla Hernandez | Tejas Sathe |
| David Levine | Kelly Bass | Tom Owens |
| Diana Rosia | Kevin Leftwich | Shelby Crews |
| Eddie Delacruz | Lori Brown | |



2024 SUWANEE RUNNING SERIES RACES:

- | | |
|---|---|
| February 10
Suwanee Sweetheart
Sprint | May 3
Max's Moon Run 5K |
| February 18
Suwanee Half Marathon,
10k & Old Town 5K | May 4
Tacos & Tequila 5K |
| March 2
Suwanee
Beer Chaser 5K | May 18
Great Strides Atlanta |
| March 16
Suwanee Kiwanis
Shamrock 5K | August 3
Button Down Dash 5K |
| March 30
Care for Cops 5K | August 24
Extra Mile 5K |
| April 6
Race to Cure
Sarcoma Atlanta | September 14
Care for Cops 5K |
| April 27
Relay for Life Gwinnett | October 12
Spooky Spirits 5K |
| | November 16
Walk to End Alzheimer's |
| | December 7
HappyFeat: Run Run
Rudolph 5K |



2023 People Awards

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE AWARDS
Excellence in Safety
Winner
SUWANEE, GA
Presented at the 2023 ICMA Annual Conference
ICMA Polco

SUWANEE WINS A
Voice
OF THE
People
Award
FOR EXCELLENCE IN SAFETY

The City of Suwanee has won a 2023 Voice of The People (VOP) Award for Excellence in Safety, highlighting the city’s commitment to engaging residents and including public opinion in community decisions. This award is the only nationally recognized award given to local governments based on resident input. The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and Polco, a community engagement and civic analytics technology company, present the VOP Awards.

“ There are acute challenges disrupting local government today. Collaboration, resident participation, and data-informed decision-making are the only ways to solve these complex issues. These amazing communities are national models for taking on pernicious problems in government.
Nick Mastronardi,
CEO of Polco ”

Many award recipients were nominated after receiving the highest or most improved ratings from residents on The National Community Survey (NCS). The NCS is a nationwide community livability assessment with the largest database of its kind and nearly a thousand participating municipalities throughout the last 30 years. The database represents perspectives of more than 50 million Americans, and well over 100 jurisdictions conduct the survey in each year.

STATION PARK AND STILLFIRE BREWING NAMED

SMALL REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT OF THE YEAR

Partnership Gwinnett and the Council for Quality Growth named StillFire Brewing and Station Park in Suwanee the Small Redevelopment Project of the Year at the annual Metro Atlanta Redevelopment Summit (MARS). The MARS Awards recognizes and honors pinnacle achievements in redevelopment across the 11-county metropolitan area.

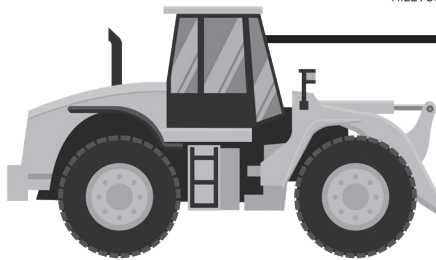
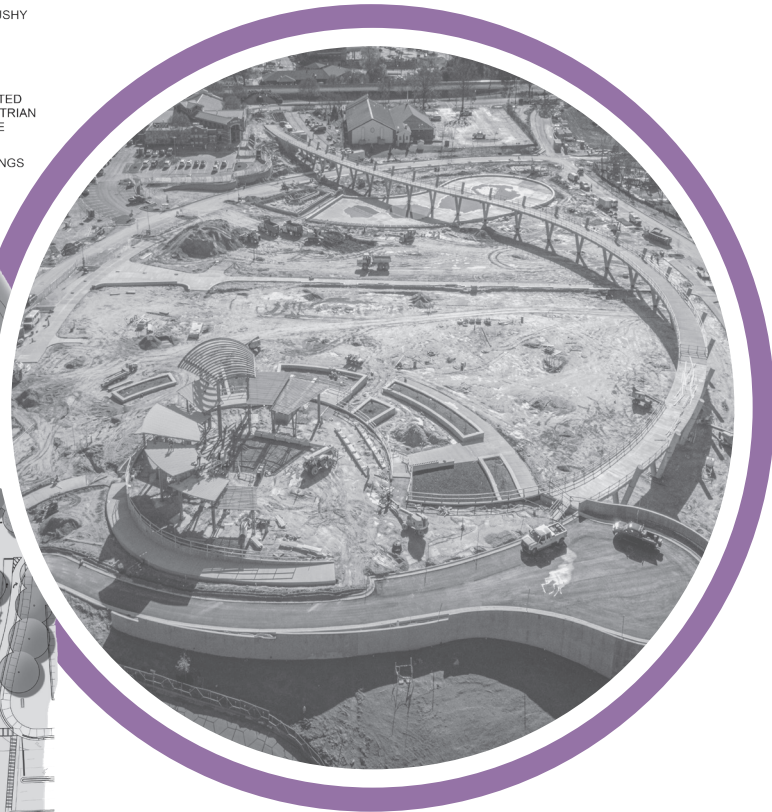
Station Park is a City of Suwanee pocket park situated between the police station and StillFire Brewing at 373 Buford Highway. The city began renovations in the fall of 2020 that included artificial turf, new seating, additional lighting, and a refurbished playground. The restructuring also improved the alignment of the trail linking between Highway and Main Street, visually connecting the existing Town Center and the Town Center Park on Main expansion.

StillFire Brewing partnered with the Suwanee Downtown Development Authority to convert the old fire station building into an industrial-style brewery and taproom with an outdoor

patio that adjoins Station Park – creating the perfect place to grab a drink, let the kids play, and watch the trains go by.

“The MARS program highlights innovative projects throughout the region that are transforming communities and driving economic prosperity,” said Deven Cason, Vice President of Economic Development for Partnership Gwinnett. “Redevelopment often requires public-private partnerships which are proven to be catalyzing agents to long term growth and sustainability for every community; we are honored to bring focus to where this work is being done in metro Atlanta.”





TOWN CENTER ON MAIN + DELAY NATURE PARK IS VISIBLY TAKING SHAPE

Town Center Park has put an indelible mark on the City of Suwanee. When the park opened in 2003, the city's population was a mere 11,000. Over the last 20 years, the number of residents who have picnicked in the park, played catch on the lawn, or attended a festival have grown too, and now exceeds 21,000. A testament to the growth of the city, Town Center Park is expanding too.

On September 26, 2022, the city broke ground on the expansion of Town Center on Main + DeLay Nature Park. The 25-acre site at the corner of Suwanee Dam Road and Main Street was acquired in 2002 as an early initiative within the community-driven comprehensive park and open space plan.

After more than a year of planning, designing, grading, cement-laying, bridge-building, and now the beginnings of landscape installation, Town Center on Main + DeLay Nature Park is beginning to take shape. Residents can observe the development of several noteworthy features including an impressive 1,200-foot-long park-spanning bridge connecting the library to the hilltop, two large water features, two expansive lawn areas, and the veteran's memorial,

Greater Good. In addition, the park is set to showcase sandpit volleyball courts and a community reading grotto adjacent to the library. The topography of the new park will allow it to overlook Town Center, further enhancing the relationship of the two spaces.

The development is anticipated to be fully completed by the summer of 2024. Upon completion, Town Center Park and Town Center on Main will seamlessly integrate into a unified space, linked by Station Park (located next to the police station) and the pedestrian tunnel under the railroad. The sister parks will transform the area, creating a cohesive "neighborhood" to encompass the Suwanee Library, PlayTown Suwanee, and Fire Station 13.

Just as Town Center Park has been instrumental to the life, growth and memories of this generation, this park addition is an investment in the future generations of Suwanee.

In upcoming issues, we will continue to provide park updates and feature interviews with individuals who have played integral roles in bringing this ambitious vision to life.

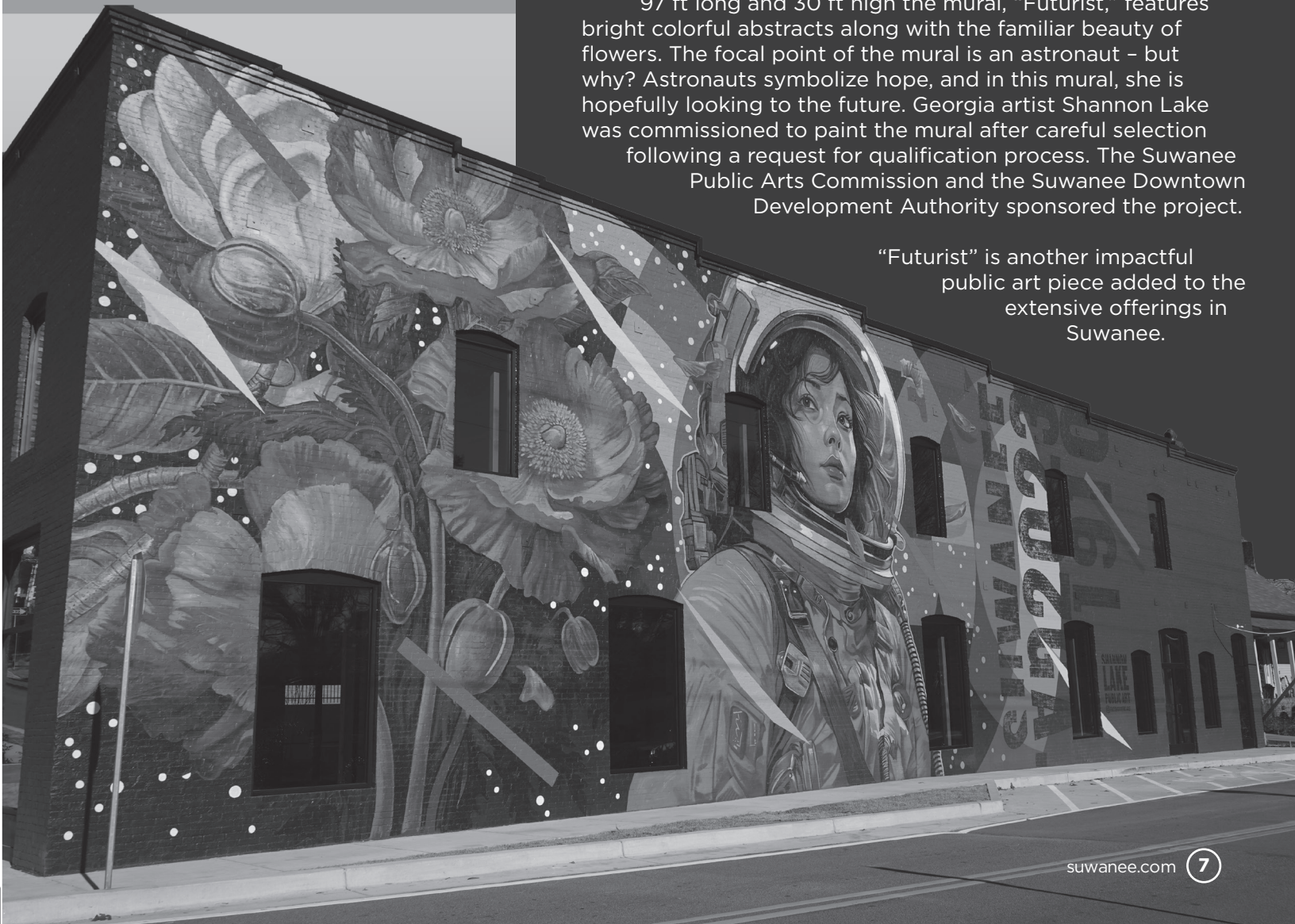
PIERCE'S CORNER'S COLORFUL CREATION

The City of Suwanee is thrilled to share the story behind Suwanee's latest mural. "Futurist" was recently completed on Pierce's Corner, one of the oldest commercial buildings in Suwanee and located in our historic Old Town area.

Built in 1910, the building was most notably known as "the shop of many things." Pierce's Corner began as a 6,000-square-foot general store but later functioned as a silent movie theater, dentist office, antique store, and gas station and the second floor was once a Masonic Lodge. The city purchased the building in 2005 to renovate and preserve this piece of our history. The Suwanee Downtown Development Authority (DDA) shouldered the expense of the current renovation as its approach centers on strengthening the economic viability of downtown through economic development, aesthetic improvements, historic preservation, promotion and image-building efforts. The DDA has taken a forward-thinking approach to downtown development by strategically purchasing real estate in the downtown area to effectively catalyze development through targeted recruitment of unique shops and restaurants that fit the character of Suwanee.

Looking to bring large-scale, unique public art to the City's historic area and to enhance the beauty of the building, the City received a matching funds grant from the Gwinnett Creativity Fund. Painted on a wall that is 97 ft long and 30 ft high the mural, "Futurist," features bright colorful abstracts along with the familiar beauty of flowers. The focal point of the mural is an astronaut – but why? Astronauts symbolize hope, and in this mural, she is hopefully looking to the future. Georgia artist Shannon Lake was commissioned to paint the mural after careful selection following a request for qualification process. The Suwanee Public Arts Commission and the Suwanee Downtown Development Authority sponsored the project.

"Futurist" is another impactful public art piece added to the extensive offerings in Suwanee.





NEW INTERCHANGE COMING TO I-85 AND MCGINNIS FERRY ROAD

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) is expanding to Suwanee residents daily commute options. GDOT began construction for a new interchange at I-85 at McGinnis Ferry Road in November 2023.

The project's primary purpose is to provide access to I-85. The project is a half-diamond interchange, meaning ramps will be installed on the south-facing side of the bridge only, resulting in access onto I-85 south and access from I-85 north onto McGinnis Ferry Road. The interchange will help alleviate traffic at the Lawrenceville-Suwanee exit for drivers commuting to and from Atlanta on I-85. Suwanee drivers wanting to travel north toward Buford would still need to use the Lawrenceville-Suwanee exit.

GDOT awarded the \$24.8 million contract to Norcross-based CMES, Inc. The anticipated completion of the interchange is early 2026.

“We look forward to continued growth in the future and helping to connect Gwinnettians to the places and people they care about most.”
- **Michael Rabalais,**
Ride Gwinnett Resources & Marketing Coordinator

RIDE GWINNETT ROUTE 50

Gwinnett County's transit system, Ride Gwinnett, launched a new local bus route serving the Suwanee area. Operating from 6 am to 10 pm Monday through Saturday, Route 50 runs on a 50-minute cycle beginning at Sugarloaf Mills, runs to Town Center, passes the Mall of Georgia, and ends at the Exchange at Coolray Field.

“Ride Gwinnett's focus right now is on enhancing mobility for all of Gwinnett by providing the right services in the right places,” said Michael Rabalais, Ride Gwinnett Resources & Marketing Coordinator. “We've heard from residents how helpful bus service in the Mall of Georgia, Buford, and Suwanee areas would be and are excited at the reception Route 50 has received since its launch.

The route includes 32 stops in both directions, including stops on Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road, Satellite Boulevard, and Buford Highway in Suwanee. Stops are marked with a sign that has the Ride Gwinnett logo and route name. Additional routes are available from the Sugarloaf Mills Park & Ride.

The Route 50 fare is \$2.50; transfer to a different route is free. Fare payment may be made with cash, a Breeze Card, or through the Breeze Mobile 2 app. Riders can also download the myStop app for real-time bus tracking.



Once upon a time,

IN THE LAND OF SUWANEE, THERE LIVED A BEAUTIFUL,
POPULAR LIBRARY... BY MANY MEASURES,

The Most Popular Library

in the entire Gwinnett County
Public Library system, in fact!



"We believe our Suwanee branch is popular because of its location. It is close to Town Center and PlayTown Suwanee. Families can spend a whole day in downtown Suwanee without driving," said Duffie Dixon, Gwinnett County Public Library Director of Marketing and Communications.

In the summer of 2024, Suwanee will upgrade the library's front yard with the addition of Town Center on Main and DeLay Nature Park! The park will transform the area, creating a cohesive public "neighborhood" encompassing the library, PlayTown Suwanee, and Fire Station 13.

As a longtime Suwanee resident, Dixon believes the new green space will make the branch a more prominent destination.

"That view from the library's front steps is going to be amazing, and having the start of the elevated walkway right there will surely bring in more visitors."

Main Street will shift around the park and exit onto Suwanee Dam Road at the traffic signal by the new fire station. This shift will allow for the closure of the median break on Suwanee Dam Road and Brogdon Road at the current intersection with Main Street, greatly improving the safety and traffic flow at that intersection.

Once completed, Town Center Park and Town Center on Main will function as a unified space, linked by Station Park (located next to the police station) and the pedestrian tunnel under the railroad. The topography of the new park will allow it to overlook Town Center, further enhancing the relationship of the two spaces.

...and they all lived happily ever after.

The End.



Suwanee Library By the Numbers

TITLE		
NAME	#	INFO
Circulation	466,176	40% higher than the next highest branch (Hamilton Mill)
Hold Requests	104,334	31% higher than the next highest branch (Peachtree Corners)
Door Count	217,345	0.4% higher than the next highest branch (Duluth)
Computer Sessions	195,506	In the top four of the library system
Wifi Access	172,695	15% higher than the next highest branch (Duluth)

*BASED ON 2022 STATISTICS

THE CITY OF SUWANEЕ IS NOW ACCEPTING

Applications FOR...

ART ON A LIMB

The City of Suwanee is seeking proposals and samples from artists willing to go out on a limb for the city's finders-keepers art-in-nature program.

A beloved Suwanee tradition, Art on a Limb is an award-winning, month-long program designed to celebrate the arts, as well as the natural beauty of the Suwanee parks and greenways. Since 2005, the city has hidden two pieces of specially created artwork daily throughout the month of May within city parks and along the greenway; those who find the trail treasures get to keep them.

Past Art on a Limb pieces have included fairy doors, clay birds and orbs, gnomes, small canvas paintings, magnets, pottery, bird houses, and clay stones. This year, we're looking for something new, unique, and fun! Proposals are due February 16, 2024.



SNAP SUWANEE



The City of Suwanee is accepting submissions through February 29 for the 2024 Snap Suwanee photo competition. Ideal entries celebrate and convey something meaningful about the City of Suwanee. Photos should be composed of subjects and locations within Suwanee city limits, ideally within the past two years. We encourage images that depict the vibrancy, vitality, and livability of our City from portraits to lifestyle and landscapes.

SUWANEE GEMS

From photo-worthy landmarks to one-of-a-kind murals and secret hikes to splash pads. Show us the local spots that make Suwanee yours.

SUWANEE WILDLIFE

Calling all furry, feathered, and four-legged friends! Capture the cutest creatures in your home and around your neighborhood and share their charm.

SUWANEE FANS

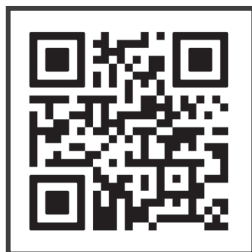
Capture the passion of the community coming together. Love the Suwanee Fest parade or have a favorite local sports team? Show us your pride-worthy local events.

SUWANEE FAVS

Local businesses are the cornerstone of every neighborhood. From your favorite taco establishment to your daily coffee shop, shoutout to support your favorite local go-tos.

Judges will select images that best depict Suwanee; winning photographs will be exhibited for approximately one year at City Hall. Snap Suwanee is open to professional and amateur photographers.

For more information



*Suwanee
Youth Leaders*

The award-winning Suwanee Youth Leaders (SYL) is an enriching nine-month leadership program administered by the city and tailored to high school students. Selected students will have the opportunity to participate in monthly learning sessions, attend field trips, and participate in several hands-on projects including event planning and a community service initiative.

The SYL Class of 2024-25 will meet from August 2024 through April 2025. Eligible students are current high school freshmen and sophomores who live in the North Gwinnett, Peachtree Ridge, and Collins Hill High School clusters, as well as GSMST, home school, and private school students who reside within those same clusters.

For more information, students (not parents) can contact Billqeece Naqawe at **BNaqawe@suwanee.com** or **(770) 904-3376**. Applications open on February 15, 2024, and the deadline is March 31, 2024.



UPCOMINGEVENTS

official newsletter of the city of suwanee, georgia

FEBRUARY24

6	Planning Commission	6:30 pm
10	Rotary Sweetheart Sprint 5K	9:00 am
10	Winter Farmers Market	9:00 am
12	Harvest Farm Managing Board	7:00 pm
14	Public Arts Commission	6:00 pm
15	City Council Workshop	5:30 pm
18	Suwanee Half Marathon, 10K, & Old Town 5K	7:30 am
20	Zoning Board of Appeals	6:30 pm
20	Downtown Development Authority	7:30 am
22	Red Cross Blood Drive	10:00 am
24	Winter Farmers Market	9:00 am
27	City Council Meeting	6:30 pm

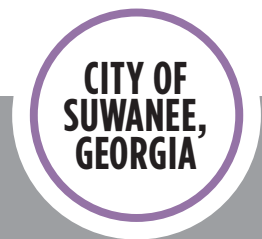
MARCH24

2	Suwanee Beer Chaser 5K	11:00 am
5	Planning Commission	6:30 pm
9	Winter Farmers Market	9:00 am
11	Suwanee Fest Planning Committee	6:00 pm
12	Harvest Farm Managing Board	7:00 pm
13	Public Arts Commission	6:00 pm
14	City Council Workshop	5:30 pm
16	Kiwanis Shamrock 5K	8:00 am
16	Suwanee Beer Fest	Noon
19	Zoning Board of Appeals	6:30 pm
19	Downtown Development Authority	7:30 am
23	Winter Farmers Market	9:00 am
23	Taste of Suwanee	Noon
26	City Council Meeting	6:30 pm
30	Care for Cops 5K	8:00 am

MAYOR Jimmy Burnette 770/868-7115
COUNCIL Pete Charpentier 770/757-3323
 Beth Hilscher 678/546-3388
 Julianna McConnell 770/713-1249
 Linnea Miller 678/592-4150
 Larry Pettiford 678/464-3651

Unless otherwise noted, City of Suwanee public meetings are at City Hall, 330 Town Center Avenue. Dates subject to change; check suwanee.com for updates.

CITY MANAGER Marty Allen 770/945-8996
ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER Denise Brinson 770/904-3385
CITY CLERK Robyn O'Donnell 770/904-2790
FINANCIAL SERVICES Amie Sakmar 770/904-2797
PLANNING & INSPECTIONS Josh Campbell 770/904-3372
POLICE CHIEF Cass Mooney 770/904-7610
PUBLIC WORKS EDITOR Bonnie Simmons 770/945-3386



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