

City paving project promises a smoother drive for residents

An especially harsh winter and reduced paving efforts over the past few years (due to low city funds) have impacted the structural integrity of a number of Doraville streets. But an aggressive paving project on tap for this summer will be the first step in getting the city's street pavement program back on track.



With the city's budget running at an all-time low over the past 4-5 years, only about half a mile of repairs was done each year. The new project will encompass a total of about 3.2 miles of sections on 11 city or neighborhood streets chosen by members of Doraville's City Council.

"The paving project will include paving, milling, patching, anything to extend the life of the streets," said City Manager Dr. Shawn Gillen. "The project budget, roughly \$567,000, will be paid with one third coming from a Georgia Department of Transportation Local Maintenance Improvement Grant (LMIG), one third from our capital improvement budget and one third from the city's stormwater account."

DeKalb County maintains many of these roads, as a rule, and they determine which of the 2,005 miles of county roadway have the highest priority. With chances slim that

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Mayor's State of the City: "the brightest days are just ahead!"

The announcement of a buyer for the GM property may have taken center stage at Mayor Donna Pittman's State of the City address on April 28, but other worthwhile achievements for the city were also highlighted.

"From the creation of the city's first Downtown Development Authority to the hiring of our first city manager, each and every day brought something to celebrate in Doraville," Pittman said. "We have also focused our efforts on small business development and those efforts have paid off. In the past two years alone, we have added more than 300 small businesses."

Pittman also noted that more attention has gone into improving the aesthetics for the city. "We are fine-tuning the Livable Communities Code (LCI)," she continued, "that will serve as a model for form-



Members of the DeKalb School of the Arts song ensemble, *Highleit* performed musical numbers for the State of the City audience. Presentation of colors was provided by the Dunwoody High School Color Guard.



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Library (770) 936-3852
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From the City Manager's Desk

By Dr. Shawn Gillen

Thank you again for taking to time to read this issue of *Insight*. We are thrilled to be bringing this newsletter to you and we hope you find it informative. In this issue we will be covering numerous issues from road paving to re-development of the former General Motors site.

The road paving project is a huge step in the right direction for the community. Streets in the Atlanta Metro area (including Doraville) have a typical lifespan of 10 years. With over 47 miles of streets in Doraville, we need to be repaving, patching and repairing nearly five miles a years to properly maintain our streets. In May, the City Council approved the paving of 3.2 miles and this is more miles of repaving than the city has done in the past five years combined. We will also be doing a citywide pothole repair program that will get us to the five miles of road maintenance for this year.

This paving project is part of Doraville's five-year capital improvement plan and other capital projects in our plan include upgrades of city parks, sidewalks, and improvements to the stormwater system. Like the street paving, we are proposing a much larger investment in the stormwater and other infrastructure in the city. There is a lot of work to be done and the investments this year will get us a long way toward completion of these projects so essential to the city.



Mayor Pittman makes a point during her State of the City presentation

State of the City from Page 1)

based zoning in and around the MARTA and GM properties. The benefits of the LCI include creating a variety of housing choices, fostering walkability and promoting economic development without compromising quality design. Council is also reviewing a design-oriented architectural standards ordinance that will codify the aesthetic values that have been communicated to us from the residents.”

Other accomplishments for the year include development of a 5-year capital improvement plan addressing everything from facility renovations to street resurfacing; passage of annexation efforts that will expand the city's borders; a 40% reduction in crime since 2008 that resulted in the city being named one of Georgia's safest communities; enhanced code compliance efforts; collection of over \$3.6 million in fines and fees by the city court; and further improvements to city parks and recreation areas.

“We are growing, we are developing and we are getting better every day,” Pittman concluded. “The brightest days for Doraville are just ahead. With the continued support from our citizens, we can make Doraville the best, most promising city in the region.”

Mayor Pittman's complete State of the City presentation is available for viewing on the city website at www.doravillega.us/

Onward and Upward!

By Doraville Mayor Donna Pittman



I hope everyone is enjoying their summer. We have a lot of wonderful developments coming to Doraville in the year ahead. The most exciting news is the re-development of the former General Motors site. After sitting idle for six years, it appears that a new owner has been found. At the annual State of the City address, I announced that the development firm Macauley+Schmit, along with its partner, The Integral Group, has made a commitment to redevelop the 165-acre tract running along I-285.

We are very excited to be working with a group of developers that support our Livable Communities Initiative (LCI) vision and we look forward to a summer closing on the property. In the meantime, there is still much work to be done fine-tuning the details of the agreement. From the creation of a tax allocation district to coordination with county and state entities, our long-range goal is to create a livable, mixed-use, transit-oriented development that will be beneficial to Doraville residents and businesses. According to the Macauley+Schmit website, their single objective is to create a sense of balance and harmony in community development in all of their projects – new or revitalized.

The GM assembly plant's closure in 2008 due to the recession ended a 61-year relationship with Doraville and overnight the city lost 10 percent of its revenue base and 36 percent of its overall employment base. This redevelopment will bring new jobs to the community and help move our city toward a bright future. I will be hosting several town hall meetings soon and hope all of you can attend. We value your input and we hope to hear from you.

Please don't hesitate to call me if you have any questions about this or with any other questions or concerns. I am available to you any time. My phone number is 678-677-6629 and my email address is donna.pittman@doravillega.us.

Insight is published quarterly for the citizens of Doraville. We welcome your input. Please contact Bob Kelley, Doraville Public Information Officer, email: robert.kelley@doravillega.us.

Doraville DDA tasked with revitalizing, developing city businesses

The Doraville Downtown Development Authority (DDA) was created in 2013 with a mission to “revitalize and redevelop” the city’s central business district. Its financial powers allow for the capture and use of local property taxes over a period of time to fund public infrastructure improvements.

To accomplish this, the DDA can apply for and receive grants and loans, enter into contracts and provide bond financing. Additional financing options include millage, special assessments, revenues from property owned or leased by the DDA, and contributions from local city government.

The DDA may also issue either tax-exempt or taxable revenue bonds. Tax exempt bonds are typically used to finance public facilities, benefit 501(c)3 organizations and, in some cases, may be used for manufacturing projects.

“Creation of the DDA was a positive move by city leaders,” said Mayor Donna Pittman. “The DDA will be able to fund large-scale projects that, in turn, can lead to new development opportunities within our downtown area.”

Mayor Pittman also noted the DDA concept results in the creation of a public board dedicated solely to the improvement of Doraville’s business sector.

DDA board members a diverse and professional group:



Doraville DDA members, left to right, Seth Fischer, Jonathan Wallace, Barry Brown, Harold Shin, Chris Avers and Kevin McCarron. DDA Chairman John Halpern is front center.

- ◆ **Jack Halpern** (DDA Chairman)—is Chairman of Halpern Enterprises, a commercial real estate firm that specializes in the development, leasing and management of shopping centers. His company has 500,000 square feet of space on Buford Highway.
- ◆ **Chris Avers** (Vice-Chair)—has lived in Doraville since 1998 and is an active community leader who participated in discussions on the city’s Comprehensive Plan and Livable Cities initiatives.
- ◆ **Kevin McCarron** (Secretary)—is a digital media specialist who works on enterprise content management and web-development.
- ◆ **Jonathan Wallace** (Treasurer)—is a traffic specialist with professional duties including planning, analyzing and improving roadway facilities throughout Georgia.
- ◆ **Barry Brown** (Director)—has 28 years of experience in structural engineering with a specific focus on bridges and transportation-related projects.
- ◆ **Seth Fischer** (Director)—is a staff

architect for a Midtown firm where he designs commercial and industrial buildings.

- ◆ **Harold Shinn** (Director)—is the owner of Buford Highway Farmers Market that encompasses over 100,000 square feet and employs 300 people.
- ◆ **Luke Howe** serves as city liaison to the DDA.

Meetings & Events

The best way to play an active role in how your city operates is to attend and participate in regularly scheduled city government meetings and social events. The public is welcome at all meetings/events listed below.

- City Council meetings are held the first and third Monday each month, 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.
- Doraville Planning Commission meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. at City Hall.
- Doraville Downtown Development Authority meetings are held quarterly at 6 p.m. at City Hall. Check the city website for meeting dates.
- Senior Citizens monthly potluck luncheon, held the second Wednesday of each month at the Doraville Civic Center.



The Oakcliff Neighbors group recently purchased signs to post at both entrances to the neighborhood on Oakcliff Road. Brigitte Weese (shown here) helps maintain the entrance planters with flowers and keeps them weeded with the help of Oakcliff neighbors including Doris Roberts and Sharon Spangler. Doraville Senior Citizens group provides assistance for various neighborhood planters throughout the city, too.



What's happening at the Doraville Library?

July-August-September

VACATION READING

Theme: FIZZ BOOM READ!

Ages 3 yrs -17 yrs Now through July 31st !

Kids, ages 3 yrs -12 yrs, can come in to the Doraville Library and sign up for our Summer Vacation Reading Program.

Teens, ages 13 yrs – 17 yrs, may sign up online @ www.dekalblibrary.org.

Read great books, win great prizes!

FAMILY STORY TIME – Ages 5-9

yrs. Tuesdays 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Our evening story time is a fun-filled hour of family literacy.

July 1,8,15,22,29

No story times in August

September 2,9,16,23,20

KIDS CRAFT CLUB

Ages 5-9 yrs

Wednesdays 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

We'll be doing cool science crafts.

Learn how to make a lava lamp, super slime, geysers, volcanoes and more!

July 2,9,16,23,30

PRE-SCHOOL STORY TIME - Ages

2-5 yrs

Wednesdays 10:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m.

Morning story times include stories, songs, games and crafts.

No story times in August

September 3,10,17,24

SATURDAY TEEN ZONE

2:30 p.m. – 4 p.m. Ages 11 -17 yrs

July 12th – Make cool paper flowers

July 26th – Game Day! Play Life Size Monopoly!

DINNER AT THE PERIODIC TABLE – ages 11 yrs-17 yrs

Join us as we welcome Barry Stewart Mann for a fun afternoon of role playing using the periodic chart. Learn about the elements and have a ball doing it!

July 19th 2:30 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.

AMERICAN SHORT STORIES DISCUSSION GROUP

Ages 18+ up

Our book club meets once a month.

Reading selections are available at the front desk.

Saturdays 10:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m.

July 12th - August 9th – September 13th

ESL (English as a Second Language)

Free ESL class. Learn basic English conversation.

No registration required.

Saturdays 12 noon – 1:30 p.m.

FRIENDS OF THE DORAVILLE LIBRARY MEETING

Ages 18+ up

Help support our library by joining the Friends group.

September 6th Saturday 10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

SENIOR PROGRAM

Ages 55+ up

Diabetes Association of Atlanta will present an awareness program. Topics include: Myths and facts, identifying different types of diabetes and helpful tips on exercise and nutrition.

July 10th Thursday 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

SENIOR BINGO

Ages 55+ up

Spend an afternoon playing bingo at the library. Prizes will be awarded.

August 14th Thursday 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

SENIOR CRAFT PROGRAM

Ages 55+ up

Make beautiful glass ball ornaments.

September 11th Thursday 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.



Paving (from Page 1)

Doraville streets would make the list any time soon, city leaders took the initiative to make the improvements. (In 2013, only 37 miles of DeKalb County roads were resurfaced using LMIG funds.)

Doraville has approximately 47 miles of streets, each with a “life” of about 10 years. Repairs have to be done on an ongoing basis to save the city the cost of even further repairs as deterioration exceeds repairs.

The winning bid for the paving project went to the engineering firm Keck & Wood, Inc. and work should begin this summer. The streets portions to be addressed are on: Drury Ct., North Carver Dr., Stewart Rd, Autumn Dr., Clearview Place, Peachtree Sq., Glenda Way, Green Oak Dr., Doral Dr., Clay Dr., and Chicopee Dr.

Tips to help make this a safe and happy summer

Summer break means a certain degree of freedom to most children. Here are a few safety tips to offer your children as they head out the door:

- Always make sure your child know his or her full address and phone number.
- Set clear landmark boundaries for where your child is allowed to play within the neighborhood.
- Instruct your child to steer clear of strangers. Inform them of the basic tactics child abductors use to manipulate children (i.e. free candy, lost pet, etc.)
- Always know *where* your children are going to play.
- Make sure your child understands the rules of pedestrian and biking safety.

As for parents and adults in our local neighborhoods, please be alert for children playing in residential areas. Also drive slowly and safely around local parks and playgrounds.



Clockwise from top left, John Maloney demonstrates an antique potato peeler to a young visitor at his bi-annual antique farm show; nearly 100 members of the World Mission Society Church of God held a cleanup day in Oakcliff; students from Evansdale Elementary learn about city council procedures from City Manager Shawn Gillen and Mayor Donna Pittman; City Council members Dawn O'Connor and Trudy Jones Dean host a town hall meeting; Merle Evans displays her art and jewelry at a Seniors luncheon; Councilman Robert Patrick gathers input at a town hall meeting; early arrivals at Movie Under the Stars.

Doraville On The Go!

Your City Leaders...

The City Manager, Mayor and City Council are there to serve all citizens. Keep the list below handy to contact these city government staff members:

City Manager Dr. Shawn Gillen
shawn.gillen@doravillega.us
Mayor Donna Pittman
donna.pittman@doravillega.us

Council District 1

Pam Fleming
pam.fleming@doravillega.us
Robert Patrick
robert.patrick@doravillega.us

Council District 2

Trudy Jones Dean
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Dawn O'Connor
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Council District 3

Maria Alexander
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Sharon Spangler
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Doraville City Hall
3725 Park Avenue
Doraville, GA 30340

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Doraville Memories



It's been 42 years since an early morning calm was shattered when a section of the Triangle Refineries tank farm exploded into chaos and apprehension for Doraville residents. On April 6, 1972, two people perished, three homes were destroyed and over 300 homes in the area were evacuated before the flames were brought under control four days later. The tragedy still burns bright in many local residents' memories. The flames were so intense, the huge storage tanks turned red and collapsed, the red light on a fire engine melted and fire hoses burst. (Photo reprinted from *Images of America: Doraville*)