



Mayor's Message ***January, 2009***

Our biggest news, of course, is that we are finally ready to begin construction on the new City Hall and Park. Much planning has brought us to this point, and you are all invited to a **groundbreaking ceremony** on Saturday, January 17th at 11 AM. Please see the special invitation enclosed, and join us if you can on that day. If you can't attend, there is quite a lot of information about the plans, elevations, etc. on our website. We expect to pay for all of this with funds from the county's Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST), rather than with your city property taxes.

City Hall has temporarily relocated to the Capital Commons office park, so that construction can begin. The City will continue to receive mail at its current address, but if you need to see us in person you can find us at 4729 Peachtree Industrial Blvd., Suite A, Berkeley Lake, Georgia, 30092. Telephone numbers and all other contact information will remain the same. The children's playground is now closed, but a new one will be constructed as part of this project.

I regret that the post office must remove the **drop box** located at the corner of South Berkeley Lake and Bush Roads while the new city hall is under construction. The tentative date for it to be gone is January 15. According to the post office, they can reinstall it after construction, but it will not be in exactly the same spot. We'll try to keep you informed about that, because I know a lot of you use this.

Many things still happen in our city because of the work of **volunteers**. Thanks to those who worked so hard to give us all a great Fall Festival: Kay and Scott Lee, Eileen Barnes, Rebecca Spitler, Becky Kaffezakis, June Spruell, Selina Loper, Faye Gaddis, Ellen Lee, Ann Tuck, Chip McDaniel, and Lesley and John Pendleton. Thanks also to Britt Collins, Kay and Scott Lee, and Gene Rodgers who helped on Earth Day.

Our city has completed its **Comprehensive Plan** for now through 2030. During that process public input was solicited from 41 community leaders at special meetings and from the rest of our citizens at multiple public meetings. Information about this plan can be accessed on our website. Thanks to all of you who shared your ideas and desires for our future.

Our City Council has made **ethical behavior** a goal in its relationships with each other and with citizens in general. We recently spent a whole Saturday working with a respected expert on ethics from the University of Georgia's Vinson Institute of Government. As a result a Code of Conduct was created. After some additional work and consideration, it was formally adopted at the December council meeting.

You will recall that our city has undertaken to manage its own **stormwater** inspections and infrastructure issues so that our citizens are not paying the county's Stormwater Utility Fee. This requires, among many other things, that we undergo regular audits by the Environmental Protection Division. I recently received a letter from the EPD Director which certifies that our staff provided documentation showing compliance status and a schedule for future compliance. This is a significant achievement for which I know you join me in thanking our staff.


The **Capital Commons** area has been sold to a new owner. We have given the buyer extensive information in writing about our concerns and expectations for the area. My hope is that this will lead to a positive resolution to some problems in that area shortly.

I will be making my usual **State of the City** address at the regular council meeting in February. Some of the issues concerning me now are police issues and public safety options, possible tax changes for our elderly residents, etc. Please feel free to contact me and let me know what issues are on your mind.

We have had another incident with **outside solicitors in our community**. Two individuals whose appearance was reported to me as being somewhat scary to our citizens were going door to door after dark without a Solicitation Permit from our City. These people usually claim to be selling magazines and/or raising money for high school athletic trips, good causes, etc. The stories vary but they should not be doing this in our City without permission, and there is a risk that they are in fact casing the neighborhood, or just pocketing the money. I have urged our citizens in previous communications not to encourage such people by opening their doors or giving them money. Our City has yet to issue a Solicitation Permit to anyone, although we cannot curtail people's religious freedoms as in the case of Jehovah's Witnesses who come through rarely. Please think twice about opening your door to strangers without a Berkeley Lake Solicitation Permit, and if you feel threatened, call the police.

I know it seems early to be thinking about this, but I want to remind you that this is an election year for our city. Three council seats will be voted on in a General Election to be held Tuesday, November 3rd. **We need good leaders**, and I hope some of you will carefully consider public service to our city. Sometimes the best public servants are the ones who would not put themselves forward in their own ambition, but are encouraged by their neighbors to serve. If you aren't comfortable to run yourself, please look around your homeowner association or neighborhood and see if there is someone you could support in this way. Talk to them about it. Potential candidates can begin now to pay more attention to city issues, attend meetings, talk with current council members, etc. to prepare themselves for a decision about public service. Qualifying week for candidates is Monday, August 31st through Thursday, September 3rd. Candidates would sign up that week in City Hall from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The last day for citizens to register to vote in our General Election is October 5th.

Happy New Year to all!



The City of Berkeley Lake
cordially invites you to attend our
Groundbreaking Ceremony
for our
New City Hall & Park
Saturday, January 17th
11:00AM—11:30AM
to be held at
4040 South Berkeley Lake Road
Berkeley Lake, Georgia 30096.

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Much planning has brought us to this point, and you are invited to our groundbreaking ceremony. Please join us if you can on that day, but if you can't attend, there is quite a lot of information about the plans, elevations, etc. on our website at www.berkeley-lake.com.

Program

Welcome and Comments - Mayor Lois Salter
Project Overview - Barbara Carroll, Chair, Architectural Design Committee
Introduction - Lindell Sherrill, Architect, Wakefield Beasley & Associates
Introduction - Dave Lee, Builder, W. H. Bass, Inc.
Groundbreaking Ceremony