



To: Honorable City Council
From: John Bradberry, Mayor
Date: June 21, 2022
Subject: **Fiscal Year 2023 Budget**

I am pleased to present the proposed Fiscal Year 2023 Budget for review and consideration. I will schedule Work Session discussions throughout the summer and have advertised an initial Public Hearing this evening to share the proposed budget with the community. Feedback from our residents will be encouraged via the city's website, e-mail, and social media. Copies of the proposed FY2023 Budget will be available at City Hall.

Overall, the proposed FY2023 Budget forwards our community's quality of life. The FY2023 Budget supports fundamental City services at a high level of quality including public safety and infrastructure maintenance. The FY2023 Budget also provides for the future growth of the City. The proposed budget supports the greater building of our community physically, socially, economically through the further development of our human capital and investments in Town Center.

Highlights

- General Fund revenues and expenditures are balanced at \$70,068,551
- Largest General Fund revenues streams are Local Option Sales Tax (39% of budgeted revenues) and property taxes (29% of budgeted revenues)
 - The FY2023 Budget assumes the current millage rate of 3.986 mills as a necessary placeholder. Although the millage rate will be set later this summer, that rate is for the FY2022 Budget. My hope is that in the future, the Council will consider a possible decrease in the millage rate.
- 45% of General Fund expenditures are personnel costs and 28% are operational expenditures
- 20% of General Fund revenue is transferred to accruals (including the Infrastructure Maintenance Accrual, the Vehicle Replacement Accrual, and the Equipment Accrual) towards expenditure on current and future maintenance and replacement needs of critical assets and infrastructure
- Stormwater Utility Fund provides for expenditure of \$3.8M to address stormwater needs

Moving our Community Forward

The FY2023 Budget moves the City forward and helps to unify our efforts and our community. The FY2023 Budget has five important themes. The projects highlighted below demonstrate how these themes resonate within the funded services and assets to guide our community toward continued growth and improvement.

1. Advancing Our Commitment to Public Safety

Essential to the quality of life in Johns Creek is the fortitude and service of our first responders. The FY2023 Budget continues to emphasize the significance of the safety and security of our residents by fully funding the operational needs of the Fire and Police Departments. The FY2023 Budget adds training, personnel, and replaces aging vehicles and apparatus.

- Police Department's Officer / Clinician Response Team - The FY2023 Budget adds a Behavioral Health Clinician as a direct staff member in the Police Department as well as adding another police officer to the Clinician Officer Response Team to better address the mental health and support services needed to serve our community.
- Fire Station #63 Replacement - The FY2023 Budget looks forward to future safety needs beginning the process of replacement for Fire Station #63. Turning 40 years old in 2023, Fire Station #63 has experienced significant plumbing, mechanical, and structural issues that indicate the building is nearing need for replacement. The FY2023 Budget sets aside funding for initial engineering and construction documents for a replacement station.
- Public Safety vehicles and apparatus - The FY2023 Budget replaces key public safety fleet vehicles and apparatus including the Fire Department's primary rescue boat and 14 police vehicles.

2. Expanding and Improving our Park System

The FY2023 Budget forwards two significant park projects: Creekside Park and Cauley Creek Park. Situated behind City Hall, Creekside Park is the anchor and catalyst for Town Center. Located off Bell Road, Cauley Creek Park will open in 2023. In addition, the current effort to update the Recreation and Parks Plan will culminate in a community-driven prioritized list for additional improvements to the existing park and recreational facilities.

- Creekside Park – presently in the engineering stage, the new park will provide a community gathering area and strengthen the City's identity. Creekside Park is a 21-acre area anchored by two in-line stormwater retention ponds including the North Pond behind City Hall. In 2022, Council adopted a conceptual design for the park and authorized engineering. Also in 2022, Council set aside TSPLOST I funds for the trail through the south pond area and TSPLOST II funds for finishing the loop of the trail around the north pond. The FY2023 Budget continues the effort to fund the park with \$1.5 million for right-of-way acquisition that will be necessary to propel the park to construction in FY2024.
- Cauley Creek Park – presently under construction, Cauley Creek Park is on schedule to open to the public in summer 2023. Cauley Creek's 203 acres will double the amount of city-provided recreational parkland. The FY2023 Budget includes funding for basic operational staff support and park maintenance. In the lead up to the park's opening, Council will face many significant decisions in terms of staffing, potential partnerships with organizations, and special events to enliven the park.
- Parks Plan Implementation Projects – an update to the Recreation and Parks Plan is presently underway. The community feedback gathered throughout the planning process will update the plan for park improvements and programming enhancements. The FY2023 Budget sets aside the first \$1 million to implement the projects and improvements prioritized by the community. The funding will provide for initial implementation projects for FY2023 not fully implement the recommendations.

3. Strengthening our Team and Community Communications

The City's ability to move forward depends on having the tools and personnel in place to serve residents and businesses. The FY2023 Budget contains two major initiatives, which will help to attract and retain city staff while improving the technologies that allow residents and businesses to interact with the City in a more efficient manner.

- **Compensation and Classification Study and Implementation** - In today's competitive job market, the City faces challenges in both retention and recruitment. Cost of living adjustments have attempted to keep the City competitive in terms of salary but the City has not kept pace with the local government market in terms of salary and benefits. The City has not completed a true salary and compensation study since incorporation. Engaging a third-party consulting firm to conduct a Compensation and Classification Study will guide the City as to how to appropriately compensate City employees and improve our ability to retain and recruit employees. In addition to the study, the FY2023 Budget sets aside funding to begin addressing needed adjustments. Based on our understanding of the market, Johns Creek is average or lagging the market for salary and benefits. Our lagging salary and benefits is a contributing factor to recruitment and retention issues facing the City (specifically the Police Department). Full implementation of the study will likely occur in phases over time. However, the FY2023 Budget provides initial implementation funding clearly and intentionally communicating to City employees that they are valued and that we desire to retain the best and brightest talent.
- **Website Redesign** - The City's current website is the main communication and engagement tool for residents, businesses, employees, and visitors. The last City website redesigned occurred in 2016. Software advances and needed changes to the website content management system necessitate a structural overhaul. The FY2023 Budget provides for the redesign of the website to leverage more powerful and innovative content management resources and platforms to allow for a more streamlined communications experience for website users/visitors and diverse technologies for users to access information and improved interaction and engagement.

4. Investing in our Critical Infrastructure and Assets

The FY2023 Budget continues the city's commitment to invest in our built infrastructure and maintain those assets to the quality standards expected by our community.

- **Infrastructure Maintenance** - The FY2023 Budget invests \$3 million into resurfacing neighborhood and main roads as well as \$1.2 million for park maintenance and improvement projects. Overall, the FY2023 Budget invests over \$7 million in the Infrastructure Maintenance Accrual Fund to maintain the quality of our sidewalks, traffic signal system, bridges, fire stations, and City Hall.
- **Stormwater Repairs and Maintenance** - The FY2023 Budget's Stormwater Utility Fund provides \$3.8 million for repair and maintenance of stormwater assets and infrastructure. The provided funding includes both the anticipated \$3.2 million of Stormwater Utility fees to be collected in FY2023 and \$600,000 from stormwater reserves to maintain the accelerated pace of repairs the team has been implementing since the activation of the Utility in July 2021.

5. Improving Roadway Safety and Traffic Issues

In order to address key safety and traffic congestion issues across the City, the FY2023 Budget provides funding to improve roadway safety and address traffic and operational issues.

- Taylor Road Lighting Expansion - With the proximity of several neighborhoods to Chattahoochee High School and Taylor Road Middle School, there is a high volume of pedestrian traffic along Taylor Road. The FY2023 Budget provides funding to expand the street lighting on Taylor Road from Anclotte Drive (where the current pedestrian lights end) across the front of Chattahoochee High School to Starfire Lane.
- HAWK Signal Addition on Brumbelow Road at Newtown Park and Mount Pisgah - Newtown Park is alive with activity (from athletic games and practices to special events like the summer concert series) as is the adjacent Mount Pisgah sports complex. Shared use of parking between Newtown Park and Mount Pisgah leads to significant pedestrian traffic crossing Brumbelow Road. Adding a HAWK (high intensity activated crosswalk) signal on Brumbelow Road near the Newtown Park entrance across from the Mount Pisgah sports complex will improve pedestrian safety.
- Collector Road Safety Improvements – several collector roadways (streets that “collect” traffic from neighborhood roads and convey it to arterial roadways) across the City have steep slopes outside the roadway such as Parsons Road. To increase the safety of the transportation system, the FY2023 Budget includes funding for evaluation of slopes along collector roadways and installation of improvements to enhance the safety of the roadways.
- Roadway Operational Improvements - The FY2023 Budget allocates funding from the GDOT Local Maintenance and Improvement Grant (LMIG) program to construct a right-turn lane extension for the Autrey Mill Middle School (to reduce the queuing on Old Alabama Road) and operational improvements along Taylor Road to mitigate congestion at Chattahoochee High School.

Through the investments proposed in the FY2023 Budget, we will proactively build a greater community for Johns Creek: physically, economically, and socially while maintaining our strong fiscal health. FY2023 anticipate revenues fully fund all the General Fund expenditures and investments in the accruals. By not tapping into reserves, the City remains fiscally well prepared to weather challenges and unexpected turns. The proposed FY2023 Budget expenditures will improve quality of life for residents and businesses that call Johns Creek home.

I look forward to discussing, refining, and finalizing the FY2023 Budget with you this summer through Work Session discussions and a final Public Hearing prior to adoption in September.