

2020

From A1

and Northside Parkway in Buckhead to the Governor's Mansion.

The situation was exacerbated June 12, when Rayshard Brooks was killed by an Atlanta police officer after running following an altercation stemming from a DUI arrest.

That incident touched off more protests, riots and looting in the city, where the police force has dropped from about 2,000 officers during Mayor Kasim Reed's administration to about 1,600 today.



Staff - Everett Catts

Fulton County residents wait to vote outside Chastain Park's gym in Buckhead Oct. 12 during the first day of early voting for the Nov. 3 general election.

Bottle boys

Starting in the late spring, teenagers and youths were seen at intersections across Atlanta, including Buckhead, selling water bottles. Nicknamed the Bottle Boys, the males were seen as entrepreneurial by some and dangerous by others, especially when reports flooded social media and other channels about some boys getting too aggressive by stopping traffic, threatening drivers and even throwing items at cars.

In June and July, two boys were arrested for assaulting or threatening drivers and/or passengers in Buckhead, and a third teen is wanted in a shooting incident in the city's southwest area. In videos posted to social media, some of the bottle boys have been shown throwing water bottles at cars.

In late July a woman posted a message on Facebook saying when her car was at the Peachtree-Piedmont Road intersection in Buckhead, some boys asked if she wanted to buy water bottles. When she said no and showed them she already had some, about a dozen boys ages 14 to 21 banged on her windows, cursed at her, demanded she give them her money and even stood



Special Photo

A car is impounded after being involved in illegal street racing.

in front of her car before she was able to drive off.

Illegal street racing

Illegal street racing remained a problem throughout the year in the city of Atlanta, though it's also been reported in other cities. Countless times residents have reported street racers tying up traffic on major thoroughfares and even interstates such as the Downtown Connector. In May the Atlanta Police arrested 44 individuals and impounded 29 cars in a street-racing bust, and they've made similar arrests since then, including a recent one, but the problem persists.

The Atlanta City Council

has made some strides. In August it approved penalties for street racing non-driver participants, and this fall Councilman Antonio Brown said he is in talks with the street racers to see if they can find a commercial or industrial area where they can race safely without disturbing neighbors.

A committee comprised of 11 local organizations has launched the Buckhead Security Plan, which will include off-duty police officers patrolling the community's commercial district to augment the police's own patrols. The plan, also known as Buckhead Blue, was created in part to combat illegal street racing.

Justice overhaul

In the Aug. 11 Democratic primary election runoff, residents calling for changes to the Fulton County justice system got their wish when Pat Labat defeated Ted Jackson in the sheriff's race and Fani Willis beat Paul Howard in the district attorney's campaign. With little or no contested Republican races on both the June 9 and Aug. 11 elections, Buckhead Council of Neighborhoods chair Mary Norwood called on the GOP to vote in the Democratic primary to help influence the vote.

Funding feud

When Fulton County received \$104 million from the federal government as its share of the state's allocation of Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds, it originally allocated only \$2.5 million to 14 of the county's 15 cities (Atlanta received its own funds, \$88 million, directly from the feds).

The cities cried foul, saying they were each owed \$174.79 per resident, based on a for-



Special Photo

Pictured are some of the masks Out Front Theatre's design team made for healthcare workers.

mula given by the state and/or feds. The cities' mayors even threatened to sue the county over the issue, and with the suit looming, the Fulton Board of Commissioners at first allocated a total of \$15 million and then doubled it to \$30 million, with \$5 million spent on PPE.

However, that was well below the 70% of the \$104 million the cities had hoped to receive. For example, Sandy Springs only got \$4.56 million.

Blue wave continues

In the Nov. 3 general election, the blue wave of Democrats winning long-held Republican seats locally that started in 2018 continued, with Joe Biden beating Donald Trump in the presidential race. In Georgia, the election drew a record nearly 5 million votes.

Biden held a 14,000-vote lead until the first of two recounts, a hand recount/audit of the state's ballots completed Nov. 18, determined more than 5,000 votes combined in Douglas, Fayette, Floyd and Walton counties were found to have not been counted, with most of those for Trump.

After a second recount,

which was allowed by state law since Trump, a Republican, lost by 0.5% of the vote or less, Biden won by 12,670 votes, according to the secretary of state's website.

Locally, though the state Legislature held its majority control in the House and Senate, the District 52 House seat flipped blue when Democrat Shea Roberts edged Republican Deb Silcox. The district had been held by a GOP member for decades.

Runoff record?

Election fever didn't stop even after Biden was declared the victor in the presidential race both locally and nationally. Georgia's U.S. Senate seats are up for grabs in the Jan. 5 runoff election, where local resident Kelly Loeffler and fellow Republican David Perdue are facing Democrats Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff, respectively.

With party control of the Senate on the line, the election is expected to shatter records in terms of campaign spending and turnout. National politicians and celebrities have descended on the state to stump for one party or another.

City of Union City NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The City of Union City Mayor & Council will hold the second public hearing regarding the 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update at City Hall, 5047 Union Street, Union City, GA 30291 on January 19, 2021 at 7pm.

The purpose of this hearing is to brief the community on the contents of the plan, provide an opportunity for residents to make final suggestions, additions or revisions, and notify the community of when the plan will be submitted to the Regional Commission for review.

All interested should visit the Union City website for Zoom information at www.unioncityga.org. Questions should be directed to the Community Development Department or Ellis Still by calling 770-515-7955 or email at estill@unioncityga.org

Fulton County Invites Citizen Comment on Proposed Substantial Amendment to the 2013-2019 HUD Annual Action Plans

Substantial Amendment involves moving CDBG reprogrammed funds to eligible CDBG Projects
Fulton County invites the public to a virtual hearing for an amendment on the use of CDBG funds from prior years. This virtual hearing will be held on January 14, 2021 at 6 PM via Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/98012384663?pwd=SitkS0dUUmJ0eGQvenh4SzUibjhtQT09>
Meeting ID: 980 1238 4663
Passcode: 909628

All interested residents can submit written comments regarding the reprogramming of funds and eligible projects from December 30th 2020 until January 30th 2021. La información será proporcionada en español por petición. Residents in need of reasonable accommodations due to a disability or limited English proficiency should contact the Disability Services Liaison in the Community Development Department at (404) 613-7944. To obtain Georgia Relay Access, dial 711.

Comments received no later than 5:00 p.m., January 30th 2021 will be considered. Comments may be sent via email at communityfeedback@fultoncountyga.gov or to the address below:

Fulton County Government, Department of Community Development
137 Peachtree Street, S.W.
Suite 300, Atlanta, GA 30303
ATTN: CDBG Program
Kim Benjamin- Community Development Manager

In June, 2020, the County advertised an amendment to create 6 new activities using funds federal CDBG Funds left over from 2014-2018. Of those projects, two will be canceled, Demolition of the Kathleen Mitchell School, and improvements to Tom E. Morris Sports Complex. In addition, the County will cancel a 2013 activity, the DeLowe Demolition. There is an additional \$250,000 from 2018 and 2019 funds that will also be allocated to new activities. The total of all previously advertised activities and the proposed reprogrammed activities is now \$2,784,695.16.

The Fulton County Department of Community Development invites citizens to review and comment on proposed amendment to the 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019 HUD Annual Action Plans for the Community Development Block Grant Program. A copy is available on line at: <https://www.fultoncountyga.gov/inside-fulton-county/fulton-county-departments/community-development>

The County is recommending the allocation of reprogrammed funds to the following CDBG projects:

Fulton County Proposed Action Plan Amendments

Municipality/ Entity	CDBG Project Activity Type	Project Description	Population Served	CDBG National Objective	CDBG Recommended Funding Amount
College Park	Park Improvements	Charles E. Phillips Park Improvements for the development of a Water Splash Pad to be used in the summer for children, families, seniors, and all citizens in the immediate community. Scope includes site preparation and utility installation at 4400 Herschel Road College Park, GA 30337	Low-Moderate Income Citizens	Area Benefit	\$346,444.35: B-16-UC-13-0003 \$ 21,541.16: B-17-UC-13-0003 \$216,004.69: B-18-UC-13-0003 \$584,000.00 - Total
City of South Fulton	Public Facilities Improvements	Burdette Recreation Center remediation for lead based paint, system upgrades for HVAC, electrical, plumbing, roofing and ADA compliant upgrades at 2945 Burdette Road College Park, GA 30349	Low-Moderate Income Citizens	Area Benefit	\$188,141.77: B-18-UC-13-0003 \$ 61,858.23: B-19-UC-13-0003 \$250,000.00 - Total
City of Hapeville	Park Improvements	John R. Lewis Memorial Park & Dog park Improvements for bike pump track at 488 King Arnold Street, Hapeville, GA 30354	Low-Moderate Income Citizens	Area Benefit	\$300,000.00: B-18-UC-13-0003
Fulton County Department of Real Estate and Asset Management (DREAM)	Demolition and Abatement	Airway Motel demolition of property located at 720 Fulton Industrial Blvd Atlanta, GA 30036	Remove Blight	Spot Blight	B-13-UC-13-0003 \$265,708.16

For more Fulton County news, sign up for the weekly e-newsletter #OneFulton at <https://goo.gl/Nb1L84>. You can also visit Fulton County's website at www.fultoncountyga.gov or connect with Fulton County government on Twitter at @FultonInfo or Facebook at @fultoninfo.



Staff - Everett Catts

Clerk Richard Davis, center, helps a woman cast her ballot as other residents vote in the June 9 primary election at the Church of the Redeemer in Sandy Springs.



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Peggy Cobb, seated, talks to fellow Hammond Glen Retirement Community resident Bill Kegerreis during her 105th birthday party May 22. Cobb is one of the few individuals in the world who have experienced both the COVID-19 pandemic and the Spanish flu outbreak of 1918-19.