


2009 Annual Report



The Time is Now

A scenic view of a lake with a dense green forest in the background and tree branches in the foreground. The image has a soft, slightly blurred quality, with the foreground branches being more in focus than the background. The text is overlaid on the lower left portion of the image.

*“The world is not yet
exhausted; let me see
something tomorrow
which I never saw before.”*

Samuel Johnson

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MAYOR'S MESSAGE



Greetings!

The time is now—you have spoken and have elected me for a second term. Thank you! As this report reflects the year's accomplishments, I think this is a great opportunity to talk about what we are doing now to lay the groundwork for many great years ahead. Please remember, while we have concrete goals, our number one priority is always top-rated customer service.

The Roswell Road Bridge over I-285 is moving closer to reality. The Public Works staff is working closely with engineering specialists and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). Design work is underway, and the City has funds on hand toward the improvement, including a Federal earmark, which Congressman Tom Price procured for Sandy Springs several years ago.

The project will include the construction of additional width on the northbound (east) side of the existing bridge. This will allow for two, 11' wide, northbound and southbound travel lanes as well as two, full, 11' wide, dedicated left turn lanes onto the entrance ramps for I-285. This should ease the congestion along Roswell Road during peak hours. With the proposed dedicated turn lanes, now turners on to I-285 can stack easily. This, along with the dual turn lanes on the ramps, will reap the benefit of our traffic light synchronization along this artery.

We need another transportation improvement urgently: the widening of Hammond Drive from Glenridge Drive to Roswell Road. We have all experienced the congestion on this artery. The ramps to Georgia 400 to and from Hammond Drive may worsen this problem as GDOT will be spending \$12.5 million to replace the four-lane Hammond Drive overpass with a higher, nine-lane bridge with north and south bound turn lanes. While the City was an integral partner with the Perimeter Community Improvement Districts (PCID) and GDOT, no widening will occur on my watch that does not adequately protect the continued viability of the adjacent Glenridge and Hammond Hills neighborhoods.

We are all paying the 50-cent tolls on Georgia 400, and several years ago, we were fortunate that our State legislators corrected previous laws so that now all the revenue collected at the toll station must be spent on Georgia 400 and the roads that lead to its ramps. I am actively pursuing this source of revenue to help us finance improvements to Hammond Drive.

My last major priority is no secret: We must obtain justice regarding the infamous 21 percent penalty rate we pay the City of Atlanta for every gallon of water. It is the same water Atlanta drinks, and there is no justification that it should cost us more. Atlanta has been using our water revenues to pay off the bonds on their sewer improvements. Sandy Springs residents do NOT use the Atlanta sewer system, but instead we are on the Fulton County system. The water issue is being litigated, and the Courts do not move quickly. But we will not rest until we obtain a fairer solution to our water rates, as well as better maintenance of our water mains.

Thank you for putting your faith in me and your Councilmembers. As you can see in this report, we have much to be proud, but we cannot rest on our laurels. The time is now to become involved, attend a council meeting or just come to one of our parks. You make a difference in the life of Sandy Springs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eva Galambos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eva" and last name "Galambos" clearly distinguishable.

Mayor Eva Galambos, PhD
City of Sandy Springs

YOUR 2009 CITY COUNCIL



Doug MacGinnitie
Councilmember
District 1



Ashley Jenkins
Councilmember
District 4



Dianne Fries
Councilmember
District 2



Tiberio "Tibby" DeJulio
Councilmember
District 5



Rusty Paul
Councilmember
District 3



Karen Meinzen McEnerny
Councilmember
District 6

CITY MANAGER'S MESSAGE



Hello,

As we look back on 2009, we can be proud. There have been numerous accomplishments in the life of our City this year. The time has been right to plant new seeds and soon we'll be able to watch the fruits of our labor grow. We continue our investment in our infrastructure, our capital projects and most of all our people, which means the ultimate customer service experience for you.

Most notably, the bold new initiative of the Chattahoochee River 9-1-1 Authority, or ChatComm, started. Not only does this model give residents a more rapid and more reliable response from police, fire and EMS, it is the largest, and perhaps only, outsourcing of a 9-1-1 center in the United States. The company must maintain strict standards that have been set forth: answer 90 percent of 9-1-1 calls within 10 seconds and process 90 percent of those calls for dispatch within 60 seconds. So far, they have done an outstanding job.

Our Public Works Department continues to improve the flow of traffic on Roswell Road. A recent study found the traveling public saved \$1.4 million in time and fuel along Roswell Road from West Wieuca Road to Dunwoody Place. The most significant corridor improvements are in the northbound direction during the AM peak period. Improvements were also seen in the southbound direction during the AM commute. The completion of Sandy Springs' Traffic Management Center (TMC) played a key role as staff was able to use the TMC to see what type of conditions existed on the streets and adjust changes along the whole corridor as compared to only seeing the timing from intersection to intersection upon a visual inspection.

As recreation programs grow, cities across the nation are moving toward online registration. Sandy Springs is no exception. Our gymnastics program enrollment increased more than 40 percent, which resulted in more than 900 participants this year in the newly equipped gymnastics facility. The online registration program freed up staff to: work with the children participating in the recreational programs; provide quality instruction; open more classes; and have more competitive teams on site.


As we look to next year, we can be pleased with our accomplishments and look forward to where we are going. The model of government we have chosen continues to serve us very well. The City continues to garner attention on every level: from attention in the media to having awards bestowed on us to hosting international visitors to being chosen to present at conferences.

I'm proud to be your City Manager.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John F. McDonough". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John McDonough, City Manager
City of Sandy Springs



*“The
only limits
to our realization of tomorrow
will be our doubts of today.
Let us move forward.”*

Franklin D. Roosevelt

PUBLIC SAFETY



9-1-1 Comes Online

After nearly two years of planning, the Cities of Sandy Springs and Johns Creek opened their joint 9-1-1 center known as the Chattahoochee River 9-1-1 Authority, or ChatComm. “The immediate impact for the public is a more rapid and more reliable response from police, fire and EMS,” said Mayor Eva Galambos. “It’s an exceptional accomplishment for both cities. We have more control over our emergency operations than ever before.”

After incorporation, Sandy Springs and Johns Creek focused a great deal of effort building their general government services and standing up their Police and Fire Departments. Once these agencies became operational, it was quickly apparent that the current 9-1-1 center could not support these Cities as they desired. The Cities used a consulting firm to perform a feasibility study and provide a business case for the establishment of a joint 9-1-1 venture. This analysis reviewed anticipated revenue streams and call volumes to generate their recommendations.

The outcome established an Authority (ChatComm) that would provide 9-1-1 services for both Sandy Springs and Johns Creek. ChatComm is overseen by a two member board of directors, with each city manager having a single appointee. ChatComm elected to outsource the implementation, operation, staffing and management of the 9-1-1 center to iXP Georgia, LLC. Through this arrangement, ChatComm’s board and executive director oversee a performance-based contract, which is the largest, and perhaps only, outsourcing of a 9-1-1 center in the United States.

*“The future depends on
what we do in the present.”*

Mohandas Gandhi

The two primary performance requirements of the contract are 9-1-1 call answer time and call processing time. Specifically, iXP is required to answer 90 percent of 9-1-1 calls within 10 seconds and process 90 percent of the highest priority calls for dispatch within 60 seconds. These industry benchmarks were not being achieved before ChatComm was established.

“ChatComm’s success relies on the constant collaboration between iXP and a technical advisory council, comprised of the public safety agency chiefs, city leadership and a representative from Rural/Metro Ambulance,” said Noah Reiter, acting co-executive director of ChatComm. “This working group will constantly review the performance of the operation so we can provide the best service possible to our customers.”

“9-1-1 What’s your emergency,” asked the ChatComm operator?

A distraught voice on the other end of the phone line revealed extreme personal problems. The operator steadied herself for what she knew would be a tough call.

“You have no idea when you pick up the call, what it’s going to be,” Shireka Reed said. “I couldn’t understand her at first. I tried to calm her. The caller gave me the address, but no apartment number. I tried to get additional information—I felt like a negotiator.” The call went on for an hour.

Reed adds there is a lot of multi-tasking when a call of this nature comes in. The ChatComm supervisor was on the line as well, so there is a sense of safety involved. Also, other team members pitched in: Melissa Fair, another ChatComm operator, began Googling everything she could think of: the caller’s name, phone number, apartment complex, all to no avail.

Enter the Police: Sandy Springs Officer Michael Tuvlin. He searched around the complex but could not locate the caller. Meanwhile at ChatComm the Googling continued. Finally a hit: an afterhours maintenance number. Reed was still on the line with the caller while Officer Tuvlin was able to locate the apartment through the maintenance staff. Help arrived. When he met the caller, Reed was still on the line.

Reed says, “I made a difference. I felt good about this person. [They] thanked me over the phone that night and told me I was special. I thought about it when I got home and smiled.” Fair agreed, “I really made a difference. Someone was really lonely and just wanted to talk. We got through that.”

ChatComm operators excel in customer service. While the call illustrated is not a typical example in length, operators do go the extra mile in service. In a typical month, ChatComm...

- Answers 16,000 calls from the public;
- Dispatches 8,500 calls for service; and
- Serves as the central point of communications for Sandy Springs Police and Fire Rescue, Johns Creek Police and Fire and Rural/Metro Ambulance.



“I made a difference. I felt good about this person. [They] thanked me over the phone that night and told me I was special. I thought about it when I got home and smiled.”



Fire Rescue Department



Public Safety in Sandy Springs is multi-dimensional. While always a top priority for the Mayor and City Councilmembers, the City's fire and rescue personnel not only provide a safe and secure City, they also provide unparalleled customer service. This year, both the Sandy Springs Fire Rescue Department (SSFRD) and the Sandy Springs Police Department travelled our streets day and night to make sure our residents and all who pass through the City were protected.

With 91 full-time firefighters and 52 part-time firefighters, SSFRD provided nearly 17,000 responses to 8,205 calls for service. Once again, the Fire Department had a remarkable year:

- The Fire/EMS response rate continues to improve due to new equipment and reliability. Of the nearly 17,000 calls answered, 76 percent were emergency medical calls.
- Five senior fire personnel and a fire protection engineer achieved the designation of "Chief Fire Officer" and became nationally accredited from the Center of Public Safety Excellence and nine Chief Officers have completed the National Staff and Command School.
- Training enables the Department to provide innovation and cutting edge technology to residents. The Training Division brought eight NIMS 300/400 classes to Sandy Springs that reached 287 public safety persons from the metro Atlanta area and international speaker Dave Dodson and national leadership speaker Kimberly Allen held seminars. The staff continued to excel in their personal training by completing more than 16,000 total hours of training, this included employees attending a combined total of 325 training events. The Department's firefighters are recognized by Georgia Public Safety Training Center (GPSTC) to hold trainings and have held 10 state and national academy training classes in Sandy Springs. A nationally recognized apparatus operator class was developed this year as was an in-house 80-hour Fire Inspector-I program and a 340-hour fire recruit class.



- Protecting life safety is the primary objective of the Fire Marshal's Office. They conducted a total 27 fire investigations: one structure fire caused by vehicle fire, six structure fires caused by arson, two discarded smoking materials; eight misuse of heating equipment; three cooking fires; one act of nature; two electrical wiring and five undetermined/not suspicious. They also play an instrumental part in the safety of new and existing buildings in the City.
- More than 525 Community Events had 24,413 participants, which included fire station birthday parties, car seats installations, career day programs, fire safety education programs (community and schools) and Boy and Girl Scout merit badge programs. SSFRD also trained 1,631 residents in CPR and AED use.
- SSFD established a Car Safety Seat Training Program to assist expecting and new parents with car seat installation. Twelve new car seat technicians were trained, which made the service more assessable throughout the City. The technicians installed 126 car seats.
- There were a total of 36 residents (three classes), who went through the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program graduation ceremony. The CERT Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may have an impact on their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills. This will be invaluable to residents in the event of a large-scale emergency.
- The Department conducted the first Hydrant Inspection Program, which ensures all municipal fire hydrants are in working order. As part of the program, a map was created in the City's Geographical Information Systems (GIS) Department based upon the coordinates of the fire hydrants' locations.



“History
*never looks like history when
 you are living through it.”*

John K. Gardner



Fire Department Surpasses CPR Goal

Of the 1,631 people Sandy Springs Fire Rescue (SSFR) trained in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) use last year, 469 were students at North Springs High School. One of SSFR's long-standing goals has been to train at least 1,000 people per year on CPR and AED use and each year they have not only made that goal but surpassed it.

On November 3, 2008, members of SSFR trained students at North Springs High School because of an idea Capt. Donny Willbanks had from a program he had done at a neighboring jurisdiction's high school that was quite successful. "The motivating factor for participating in the event with Sandy Springs Fire was the opportunity for students to take what they learned about CPR training and share it with their family and friends," said Paulette Diener, healthcare science instructor, North Springs High School. "One hundred percent of our administration was very supportive."

Diener adds that the feedback from the students was very positive. "The [students] could hardly wait to go home and share the CPR kits with their family. The majority of them did go home and share what they learned and I believe the student body as a whole now has a better understanding of what to do in the event of an emergency," she said.

As a result of this and the hard work and dedication by the City's leaders in their commitment to training employees in CPR, hosting community CPR events, the proliferation of AEDs for public access in the community and providing life saving public services at the highest level, the City was named a Heart Ready City by the American Heart Association. The Heart Ready Award establishes a statewide standard for communities so that the effectiveness of AED programs can be measured.

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Police Department

With 125 sworn officers, Sandy Springs Police Chief Terry Sult reported figures to the Uniform Crime Report (UCR,) that Part 1 crime numbers in the City of Sandy Springs declined 5.09 percent in 2009. Answering 81,979 calls last year, averaging 6,831 per month, Sandy Springs Police had a noteworthy year.

- SSPD transitioned to geographical policing districts in 2009. The districts, north and south are divided primarily along the line of Johnson Ferry Road east from the Chattahoochee River to the City Limits of Dunwoody. The North District commander is Lt. Bo Eskew. The South District is headed by Lt. Scott Jamison. District commanders are responsible for the crime activity within the district and as such, give greater attention to community problems. They have the flexibility to initiate their own crime control strategies. Officers feel this has worked well since there was a reduction in overall Part 1 crime numbers.
- In 2009, the HEAT grant was again renewed. The unit averaged more than 25 DUIs each month for a total of 307 DUI arrests for the year. As a unit they wrote 3,264 citations both moving and nonmoving; 1,175 of which were speeding citations. Not including the 307 DUI arrests the Department also had 54 other physical arrests. They had 10 joint operations with other agencies, nine road safety checks, 11 media events and 19 educational events.
- SSPD participated in the Special Olympics again in 2009 and raised more than \$10,000. In addition to the Law Enforcement Torch Run, the Department did a number of fundraisers, such as an event at the Flying Biscuit. The Department sells items throughout the year, such as t-shirts, ball caps and coffee mugs, and the proceeds return to the organization. These efforts will continue into 2010 as law enforcement has a strong history of support for Special Olympics.
- SSPD, along with John's Creek Police and Dunwoody Police formed the North Metro SWAT Unit. The combined resources allow jurisdictional flexibility in response capabilities. There are 35 officers with NM SWAT. Of the 35 members, 21 are SSPD officers. The expanded unit will increase response flexibility and shorten response times to tactical situations.



- SSPD, in conjunction with the FBI and other metro police agencies, participated in the Innocent Images Program targeting sexual predators using the Internet to find victims. Several arrests were initiated by the Sandy Springs detective attached to the unit. Most notable was the case of a perpetrator who was engaged in a series of chats and telephone conversations with someone whom he believed was a mother of a seven-year-old girl. He contacted the SSPD detective via a chat in a pedophile related room and the relationship started. He drove to Sandy Springs to have sex with a fictional seven-year-old daughter, where he was later arrested, tried, found guilty and is awaiting sentencing.
- Kenneth DeSimone was appointed as Sandy Springs first Deputy Chief of SSPD in 2009. He joined the Sandy Springs Police Department after a 20-plus year career with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police. He is the commander of the operations section of the Department, which includes uniform patrol, specialized units and criminal investigations unit. He functions as chief of police in the absence of the chief.
- Grant money for the “Safe Streets” anti-gang program were renewed with the Target Corporation. The funds were used for educational equipment to support anti-gang training for students and parents.
- SSPD created the community coordinator officer position. Each district has one community coordinator sergeant and two officers assigned. They are tasked with functioning as a close liaison with both residential and business communities in the role of community-oriented problem policing. Neighborhood Watch will be transitioned to the community coordinators. There are 67 Neighborhood Watch programs active to date.



*“How wonderful it is that
nobody need to
wait a single moment
before starting to
improve the world.”*

Anne Frank

Citizen's Academy Benefits Community

By day Mary Poskanzer is a mild mannered Sandy Springs business owner specializing in linens for special events; by night she is a full throttle wanna-be police officer. Poskanzer is a graduate of the second Sandy Springs Citizen's Police Academy. This 10-week course taught at Police headquarters this past year to 50 residents covered topics from the legal process and warrants to gang investigations to how the K-9 Unit works to the ever popular crime scene investigation techniques.



"I was naïve when it came to things in my own city," Poskanzer said. "I didn't know how involved our own Police department was. I needed to know the good and the bad things, and that's why I signed up."

"I was very impressed and I wished there was more. All divisions were represented and they did this on their own time. It's very demanding what they do. They put their lives on the line every day—it's amazing how dedicated these men and women are. They want to make a difference in the City of Sandy Springs," she added.

Poskanzer said she wants to take the knowledge she learned at the Citizen's Academy and put it to use in the local schools or with the elderly. She also said one of the most important things to know is that if you see something wrong, call 9-1-1.



"All divisions were represented and they did this on their own time. It's very demanding what they do. They put their lives on the line every day—it's amazing how dedicated these men and women are."



TRANSPORTATION



The City of Sandy Springs Public Works Department Transportation Division consistently and constantly makes improvements in their services based on customer feedback. This year saw numerous accomplishments, innovations and system upgrades for the traveling public.

Bridge Maintenance Management Program

Detailed inspections of 11 of the City bridges were completed, providing customer service to all users who travel over the bridges. Additionally, contracts were executed for bridge maintenance and bridge component painting. These sites included: Brandon Mill Road over Marsh Creek, Riverside Drive over Marsh Creek and the Crooked Creek Bridge on Spalding Drive. Non-destructive testing such as ultrasound devices are used to evaluate the condition of bridge support beams and bridge decks. Additional areas of evaluation are footing condition, surface condition of steel beams, road approaches, bridge settlement and traffic safety device condition.

Traffic Management Center Program

Activities improving service to travelers with the City's Traffic Management Center (TMC) included installing fiber and traffic cameras at multiple locations around the City.

Improvements to the Roswell Road corridor showed travel time benefits over previous years' studies. Overall estimates showed fuel savings, time savings and emissions reductions that were substantial, indicating that the implemented improvements had a positive impact. A third party study estimated \$5,000,000+ in annual time and fuel savings were realized by travelers on this corridor.



Sidewalk Program Construction

Pedestrian needs were met with more than 5,000 feet of sidewalk construction this year. Contracts were implemented and executed for an additional \$5.3 million in sidewalk projects throughout the City for 15 separate project sites. These include:

- Roswell Road – Dalrymple Road to City Limits
- Roberts Drive – Spalding Drive to Dunwoody City Limits
- Spalding Drive (North Springs High School)
- Pitts Road/Ison Road (Ison Springs Elementary)
- Mt. Vernon Highway at the Library
- Abernathy Road at the Tennis Center
- Hammond Drive – Mt. Vernon Highway to Lake Forrest Drive
- Glenridge Drive – Hammond Drive to Johnson Ferry Road
- Glenridge Drive – Mt. Vernon Highway to Abernathy Road
- Spalding Drive – Mt. Vernon Highway to Nesbitt Ferry Road
- Glenridge Drive – Roswell Road to Northland Drive
- Mount Paran Road – Long Island Drive to Powers Ferry Road
- Long Island Drive – Roswell Road to Mount Paran Road
- Glenridge Drive – Royervista Drive to Highpoint Road
- River Valley Road – Amberidge Trail to Abernathy Road



Capital Program Project Construction

The Department received more than \$10,000,000 in stimulus funding for resurfacing, intersection improvements and streetscape projects. More than \$1,500,000 was delivered in Capital Transportation Projects, including the Intersection Improvement of Spalding Drive, Roberts Drive and Dunwoody Club and the improvement of more than a mile of both sides of the roadway for Sidewalk Improvements on River Valley Road. Widening and construction on Johnson Ferry Road and Abernathy Road (\$20,000,000 construction) was performed in conjunction with GDOT.

Pave On

The Pavement Management Program included in excess of 28 miles of street resurfacing on more than 35 separate street segments, providing better riding surfaces to the residents of Sandy Springs and the traveling public. The paving was accomplished in three major phases and included \$7,374,000 in resurfacing contracts. Much of the resurfacing was accomplished at night to minimize traffic impacts on the public and to accelerate completion.

The background image shows a construction site for an intersection improvement project. In the foreground, a large pile of gravel is visible. In the middle ground, several construction workers wearing hard hats and high-visibility vests are working. One worker is standing and looking towards the camera, while others are bent over, possibly working on the ground. In the background, a dark blue car is parked on the left, and a white pickup truck is on the right. Orange and white striped traffic cones are placed around the work area. The scene is outdoors with trees and a clear sky in the background.

Intersection Improvement Program

The City was involved in both large- and small-scale intersection improvements, including the following:

- **Riverside Drive at River Valley Road**
installed new signal facilities including mast arms and pedestrian indicators
- **Roswell Road at Cliftwood Drive**
modified signal equipment and trimmed trees out of the signal sight lines
- **Roswell Road at Sandy Springs Circle**
installed dynamic turn restrictor signs, illuminated overhead street name signs and signal modifications
- **Glenridge Drive at Hammond Drive**
modified the turn lanes westbound, added additional signal equipment and signage and modified the operations
- **Installed 62 new traffic cabinets**
- **Installed more than 20 new communication switches at intersections**
- **Installed illuminated or overhead streets name signs at 30 intersections**

*“Change is not made
out of inconvenience.”*

Richard Hooker

Studying and Fine Tuning Traffic

Continuing traffic improvements on Roswell Road is a number one priority. The Transportation Division of the Public Works Department, under the Mayor and Council's guidance, are constantly fine tuning the Roswell Road corridor. To that end, traffic on Roswell Road has improved due to better timed signals resulting in a savings of time and fuel to the traveling public.

The City hired Geostats to study traffic along this busy thoroughfare. The study also found that the completion of Sandy Springs' Traffic Management Center (TMC) played a role as staff was able to use the TMC to see what type of conditions existed on the streets and adjust changes along the whole corridor as compared to only seeing the timing from intersection to intersection upon a visual inspection.

"We are seeing traffic times improve significantly," said Mayor Eva Galambos. "Nearly \$1.4 million was saved in time and fuel—that equates to more than 88,800 hours and 53,200 gallons of fuel."

The travel time data was collected during morning and evening rush hours on Roswell Road, which includes Roswell Road from West Wieuca Road at the southern end to Dunwoody Place to the north. This route crosses over I-285 at Cliftwood/Carpenter Drive in the southbound direction and Lake Placid Drive in the northbound direction.

The most significant corridor improvements are in the northbound direction during the AM peak period, with a 12 percent reduction in the travel time from 22 to 19 minutes. Improvements were also seen in the southbound direction during the AM commute. The travel time dropped by 1.83 minutes.

Numerous intersections had higher travel speeds in 2009 as compared with 2008. In particular, travel speeds increased at the congested southern end of the corridor during the peak periods.



"We are seeing traffic times improve significantly. "Nearly \$1.4 million was saved in time and fuel—that equates to more than 88,800 hours and 53,200 gallons of fuel."

CODE ENFORCEMENT



Community Development's Code Enforcement Division made a major commitment to upgrade processes and to develop new and innovative approaches to existing programs. The Division also developed new programs to address customer needs and City issues. Code compliance is the ultimate goal that the Code Enforcement Division has set to prevent and abate violations on private and commercial property. The Code Enforcement officer is charged with the responsibility of enforcing ordinances enacted by the Mayor and City Council.

The Code Enforcement Division pioneered the integration of technology into field operations allowing staff more time to apply their expertise and spend less time in the office. The presence of staff in the field increased efficiency and reduced costs. With staff handling thousands of inspections, enforcement actions and investigations per year, utilizing laptops offers real-time, critical information. Case updates including permits, licenses, property ownership information, prior code enforcement cases and photographs can be seen in vehicles. Inspectors are also able to search City, State and Federal codes thus providing a superior level of customer service.

Foreclosed, blighted and vacant properties demand a comprehensive approach to enforcement. Such broad approaches require a blend of compliance strategies and enforcement remedies. In order to address the issue of an increasing amount of vacant/substandard properties, the Code Enforcement Division used a systematic inspection program called the Vacant Property Enforcement Program (VPEP). VPEP was extremely effective and by the end of June 2009, more than 100 properties throughout Sandy Springs were identified as vacant. During the year, a total of 12 blighted houses were demolished.

The goal of the Apartment Sweep Program is to ensure that all multi-family rental dwellings and units are in compliance with City codes and ordinances. On a monthly basis, teams of building, land development and fire inspectors are led by Code Enforcement officers on an exterior sweep of a property. Shortly thereafter, a comprehensive report depicting all conditions on the property that require abatement is prepared and delivered to the property owner/manager. Code Enforcement staff monitors the property until all conditions reach full compliance.

Another area that keeps the public safe is the Service Station Sweep Program. The sale of various goods not associated with convenience store items such as adult materials, digital media, drug paraphernalia and weapons detract from the quality of life of a community. Random Code Enforcement inspections at service stations in the City were conducted to safeguard the health and welfare of residents and the public. Excessive signage, graffiti and trash and debris type issues were addressed with the same consistency as environmental conservation type regulations, and the property owner was given time to abate all of the violations on the property.

These and a number of other initiatives to streamline procedures have been put in place during 2009, to make the Code Enforcement Division and the Community Development Department a place where customers can find consistency, innovation and a level of customer service beyond compare.

VPEP Goal: No Vacancies

Vacant properties can oftentimes present problems. They can attract crime, vagrants and pests. Because of the state of the economy and issues with existing construction sites and foreclosures, the City of Sandy Springs established the Vacant Property Enforcement Program. The numbers of vacant properties in Sandy Springs has ranged from a low of 21 to 53 in July of 2008 to 100 in November of 2008.

Hinson McAuliffe, Sandy Springs resident wrote to the City to complain about “the total neglect” of a property located on Mt. Paran Road.

“We were contacted by Walter Osario, Code Enforcement Officer, who visited us to inquire as to the nature of our complaint,” wrote Mr. McAuliffe. “Subsequently, Mr. Osario contacted the owner of the property and advised the owner that the property would have to be cleaned up and the neighbors are grateful.”

“Mr. Osario was very courteous in dealing with this matter,” Mr. McAuliffe added. “He was very diligent in carrying out the duties of his office. We feel like he is a credit to the City of Sandy Springs.”

“We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop.”

Mother Teresa



“Mr. Osario contacted the owner of the property and advised the owner that the property would have to be cleaned up and the neighbors are grateful.”



RECREATION AND PARKS



In 2009, the Sandy Springs Recreation and Parks Department continued to deliver extended program offerings and implement park improvements that enhance the customer service experience. The Department expanded its program delivery in a variety of ways. The year saw records in participation and facility rentals, online registration skyrocket and a formation of new partnerships.

Online Registration

The Recreation and Parks Department launched its online registration site in 2009. While online, customers can explore the recreation activities and facilities available instead of driving to the park and waiting in line. They can enroll in activities at their convenience 24 hours a day. Customers also have access to these additional features of online registration:

- Create and update their own personal account information;
- Make payments through a secure credit card processing option; and
- Receive automatic confirmation e-mail receipts and reprint historical receipts.

Inter-Local Agreements

School partnerships are very beneficial to the Department allowing for needed space to expand leisure and sports program delivery. Without inter-local agreements that grant the use of these schools' facilities, the Recreation Department would be limited in its programming.

The Sandy Springs Middle School gym was utilized for the adult spring and fall volleyball leagues and free play nights as well as the high school age basketball free play program. Woodland Charter Elementary School hosted the youth winter basketball league while Lake Forest Elementary School hosted a youth winter basketball clinic. Riverwood High School hosted a youth wrestling summer camp. North Springs High School provided a venue for the Department's youth spring lacrosse clinic and also the Sandy Springs Youth Sports (SSYS) fall youth football program's practices and games.



Scholarship Program

The Recreation and Parks Department included more than 100 youth in Department programs ranging from basketball and football to tennis, soccer, gymnastics and summer camps through scholarship funds provided by a grant to the Friends of Sandy Springs by Kaiser Permanente and Whole Foods Grocery of Sandy Springs.

The scholarships were awarded to local school students that are eligible for free or reduced lunches in Fulton County's public schools in Sandy Springs. Sandy Springs' schools have a total of 53 percent of the student population receiving free or reduced lunches. This program is expected to grow.

Hammond Park Gymnastics Center

Since the conversion of the Hammond Park gymnasium into a fully-equipped gymnastics center the participation nearly doubled for the popular gymnastics program. The conversion also allowed for additional class space to implement new programs such as Mighty Mites, Ballet, Jazz, Ballroom Dancing, Holiday Camps, Cardio Kickboxing, Pilates and Sliver Fitness classes.

The Department added a team gymnastics program during 2009 with 95 of the 900 enrolled gymnastics students becoming members of artistic gymnastics competitive teams that participate in competitions throughout the year. There are also an additional 17 rhythmic gymnastics team members that participate in local, sectional, state, regional and national competitions.



*“Never doubt
that a small group of thoughtful, committed
citizens can change the world;
indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”*

Margaret Mead

City Parks

Abernathy Park

254 Johnson Ferry Road • 404.252.6310

Allen Road Park

5900 Lake Forest Drive • 404.252.6310

The John Ripley Forbes Big Trees Forest Preserve

7645 Roswell Road • 770.673.0111 • www.bigtreesforest.com

East Conway Pocket Park

254 Johnson Ferry Road • 404.252.6310 (Approximately) 4811 East Conway

Hammond Park Gymnasium

705 Hammond Drive • 404.705.9154

Hammond Park Offices Community Building

6005 Glenridge Drive • 404.252.6310

Island Ferry Park

8850 Roberts Drive (under construction)

Johnson Ferry Road Greenspace

254 Johnson Ferry Road

Lost Corner Preserve

Riverside Drive and Brandon Mill Road (undeveloped)

Morgan Falls Overlook Park

450 Morgan Falls Road (under construction)

Ridgeview Park

5200 South Trimble Road • 404.252.6310

Sandy Springs Tennis Center

500 Abernathy Road • 404.303.6182 • www.northfultontennis.com

Sandy Springs Historic Site and Park

6075 Sandy Springs Circle • 404.851.9111 • www.heritagesandysprings.org

Online Registration Improves Recreation Program Attendance



Improving customer service to residents is always a priority. As recreation programs grow, cities across the nation are standing behind their decision of offering online registration for Recreation and Parks programs.

Sandy Springs is no exception. For example, the changes made at Hammond Park in the gymnastics program, along with online enrollment, increased attendance to more than 900 students in the newly equipped gymnastics facility. The online registration program freed up staff to:

- Work with the children participating in the recreational programs;
- Provide quality instruction;
- Open more classes; and
- Have more competitive teams on site.

The innovative approach to online registration at www.sandyspringsga.org is one of the top pages people visit among the Recreation Web pages. Nearly 90 percent of registrations are completed through the online registration site. The future and evolution of our business as a leisure provider is dependent upon maintaining these types of innovations. Providing online registration for residents of Sandy Springs has boosted our ability to provide better customer service.



*Improving
customer service
to residents is
always a priority.*

FINANCIALS



The Finance Department is responsible for financial accounting and reporting, treasury management, preparing the City budget, preparation of an annual audit with the City auditor, administering the processing and preparation of the City's payroll and payments to City vendors.

As attested to by the financial data in this Annual Report, the Mayor and Council of Sandy Springs subscribe to a conservative approach in running the City. We project revenues by taking into account all possible scenarios: will the economy grow or shrink and how will this affect our various revenue sources. For expenditures, the City budget includes some leeway, because it is better to end with excess funds in various categories, than to have overspent.

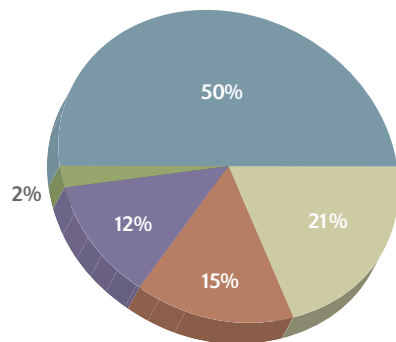
These policies resulted in a fund balance of \$9 million in 2008-09, with a one-time expenditure of \$16 million to expedite a series of needed capital projects. In this way we are not encumbering operating departments with ongoing costs that might present a problem in coming years.

It is prudent for a city to operate with a reserve to accommodate unforeseen events. The reserve for the fiscal year is \$22.1 million, which represents 25% of the annual budget. If there is a sudden change in economic conditions, this reserve is the cushion that prevents sudden cuts in services or the need for tax increases. Neither of these outcomes is acceptable in Sandy Springs.

Prudent spending on operating costs has enabled Sandy Springs to undertake capital projects and to acquire a site for an eventual city hall. It is heartening that these investments can be made without borrowing or new taxes. The elected officials of Sandy Springs are keenly aware that they are spending the taxpayers' funds, requiring the utmost prudence in their decisions.

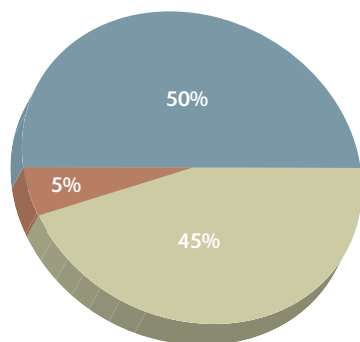
*“The best thing
about the future is that
it only comes one day at a time.”*

Abraham Lincoln



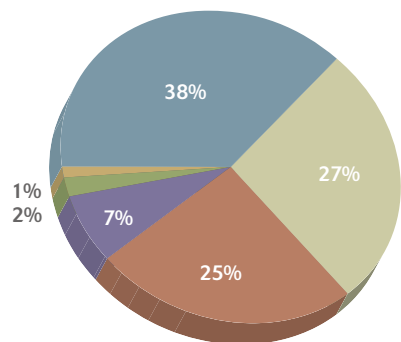
GENERAL FUND BALANCE SHEET

- Assets • 32,807,309 (50%)
- Liabilities • 7,861,045 (12%)
- Unreserved Fund Balance • 9,914,945 (15%)
- Unreserved Fund Balance Designated for Operations • 13,568,857 (21%)
- Fund Balance Reserved for Stormwater Projects • 1,136,637 (2%)
- Fund Balance Reserved for Capital • 104,151 (0%)
- Fund Balance Reserved for Prepaids • 221,673 (0%)



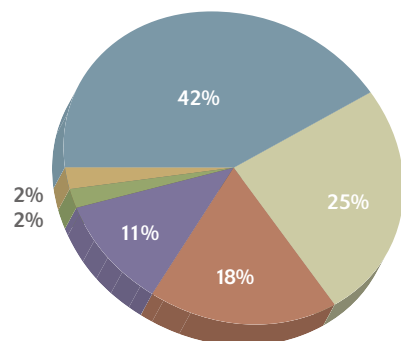
CAPITAL PROJECTS BALANCE SHEET

- Assets • 22,306,475 (50%)
- Liabilities • 2,224,708 (5%)
- Fund Balance Reserved for Capital Projects • 19,986,152 (45%)
- Fund Balance Reserved for Prepaids • 95,615 (0%)



GENERAL FUND REVENUES

- Property Taxes • 32,061,197 (38%)
- Sales Taxes • 21,193,266 (25%)
- Other Taxes • 23,272,007 (27%)
- Licenses and Permit • 1,532,973 (2%)
- Charges for Services • 486,287 (1%)
- Intergovernmental • 252,651 (0%)
- Other Revenues • 6,006,974 (7%)



GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES

- General Government • 15,084,752 (25%)
- Judicial • 1,149,765 (2%)
- Public Safety • 25,687,516 (42%)
- Public Works • 11,290,715 (18%)
- Culture and Recreation • 1,040,815 (2%)
- Housing and Development • 6,505,741 (11%)
- Intergovernmental • 0 (0%)

STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE

FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDING JUNE 30, 2009

	General Fund	Capital Projects Fund	Federal Grant Fund	Non-Major Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
ASSETS					
Cash and cash equivalents	16,267,771	20,056,444	200,466	1,206,576	37,731,257
Investments	10,863,817	-	-	-	10,863,817
Taxes receivable	4,947,736	-	-	302,600	5,250,336
Intergovernmental receivables	-	83,222	1,423,710	-	1,506,932
Due from other funds	506,312	2,071,194	-	62,311	2,639,817
Prepays	221,673	95,615	-	-	317,288
Total Assets	32,807,309	22,306,475	1,624,176	1,571,487	58,309,447
LIABILITIES					
Accounts Payable	3,512,503	206,158	937	410,155	4,129,753
Accrued liabilities	737,145	1,991,028	1,389,110	-	4,117,283
Deferred Revenues	1,398,235	27,522	51,265	-	1,477,022
Due to other funds	2,133,605	-	234,129	272,183	2,639,917
Due to component unit	79,657	-	-	373,747	453,404
Total Liabilities	7,861,145	2,224,708	1,675,441	1,056,085	12,817,379
FUND BALANCES					
Reserved for:					
Capital Projects	104,151	-	-	-	104,151
Stormwater Projects	1,136,637	-	-	-	1,136,637
Prepays	221,673	95,615	-	-	317,288
Unreserved:					-
Designated for operations	13,568,857	-	-	-	13,568,857
Undesignated, reported in:					-
General fund	9,914,946	-	-	-	9,914,946
Special revenue funds	-	-	(51,265)	371,753	320,488
Capital projects fund	-	19,986,152	-	93,292	20,079,444
Debt service fund	-	-	-	50,357	50,357
Total fund balances (deficit)	24,946,264	20,081,767	(51,265)	515,402	45,492,168
Total liabilities and fund balance	32,807,409	22,306,475	1,624,176	1,571,487	

These are audited figures.

STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCE

FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDING JUNE 30, 2009

	General Fund	Capital Projects Fund	Federal Grant Fund	Non-Major Governmental Funds	Total Governmental Funds
REVENUES					
Property Taxes	32,061,197	-	-	-	32,061,197
Sales Taxes	21,193,266	-	-	-	21,193,266
Hotel/Motel Taxes	-	-	-	3,691,845	3,691,845
Franchise Taxes	8,561,826	-	-	-	8,561,826
Business Taxes	14,710,181	-	-	-	14,710,181
Licenses and Permits	1,532,973	-	-	432,657	1,965,630
Intergovernmental	252,651	441,585	2,739,783	426,687	3,860,706
Charges for Services	486,287	11,443	-	85,003	582,733
Fines and Forfeitures	4,657,134	-	-	307,751	4,964,885
Contributions	-	150,375	-	17,397	167,772
Interest Earned	945,691	-	-	8,210	953,901
Miscellaneous	404,149	43,958	-	14	448,121
Total Revenue	84,805,355	647,361	2,739,783	4,969,564	93,162,063
EXPENDITURES					
Current:					
General Government	15,084,752	8,039,124	-	-	23,123,876
Judicial	1,149,765	-	-	-	1,149,765
Public Safety	25,687,516	449,140	346,367	194,269	26,677,292
Public Works	11,290,715	9,966,951	2,438,484	170,437	23,866,587
Culture and Recreation	1,040,815	3,089,873	6,800	3,305,491	7,442,979
Housing and Development	6,505,741	795	-	-	6,506,536
Debt Service:					
Principal	-	-	-	3,266,252	3,266,252
Interest	-	-	-	307,919	307,919
Total Expenditures	60,759,304	21,545,883	2,791,651	7,244,368	92,341,206
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenditures	24,046,051	(20,898,522)	(51,868)	(2,274,804)	820,857
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES)					
Transfers in	1,054,395	29,590,824	31,071	4,070,101	34,746,391
Transfers out	(33,261,996)	-	-	(1,484,395)	(34,746,391)
Total other financing sources (uses)	(32,207,601)	29,590,824	31,071	2,585,706	-
Net Change in Fund Balance	(8,161,550)	8,692,302	(20,797)	310,902	820,857
Fund Balance (deficit), beginning of Year, restated	33,107,814	11,389,465	(30,468)	204,500	44,671,311
Fund Balance (deficit), end of year	24,946,264	20,081,767	(51,265)	515,402	45,492,168
The notes found in the comprehensive annual financial report are an integral part of these financial statements.					
These are audited figures.					

SANDY SPRINGS FACTS



During the fiscal year 2009, the Sandy Springs Web site logged 627,017 visits from more than 300,081 Web surfers, 57,301 of whom visited more than once.

The Sandy Springs Police Department has four full-time community coordinators as well as two community coordinator sergeants to support the north and south districts.

The Recreation and Parks Department included more than 100 youth in programs ranging from basketball and football to tennis, soccer, gymnastics and summer camps through scholarships provided by the Friends of Sandy Springs.



During the fiscal year 2009, the Call Center fielded 101,327 phone calls.

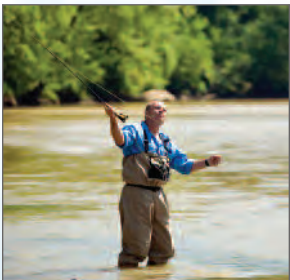
Public Works continued Citywide pavement management by completing more than 28 miles of street resurfacing on 35 separate street segments, providing better riding surfaces to the traveling public. This was accomplished in three major phases and included approximately \$7,374,000 in resurfacing contracts.



Using US Census Data, the median household income grew from \$60,428 in 2000 to \$78,338 in 2009. The median home value in 2009 was \$343,012.

Sandy Springs is a Certified City of Ethics as designated by The Georgia Municipal Association. The designation means Sandy Springs has agreed to hold itself to a strict set of ethical principles and conduct.

The City's Communications Department won an International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Atlanta Gold Flame, an IABC Regional Silver Quill and international MarCom Platinum and Gold awards for various communications with the public.



Public Works directed construction of more than 5,000 feet of sidewalk and has initiated design work for sidewalks at 15 locations with a constructed value of approximately \$5,300,000.



The top 10 employers in the City employ 6,102 people.

According to the US Census, the average household size in Sandy Springs is 2.2 people, and the median age for a Sandy Springs resident is 35.2.

Sixty percent of the residents of Sandy Springs have earned a bachelor's degree and/or a master's degree.



Part 1 crimes in the City have decreased 18 percent from fiscal year FY 2008 to FY 2009.

Sandy Springs Fire Rescue trained 1,631 people in CPR and automated external defibrillator (AED) use.

Since the conversion of the Hammond Park Gymnasium into a fully equipped gymnastics center in the fall of 2008, participation has nearly doubled for the popular Hammond Park gymnastics program, resulting in more than 900 children enrolled.



The City adopted the Water Conservation Ordinance, which provided an incentive-based approach to encourage conservation. This optional program contains four different levels of water conservation achievement with corresponding building permit fee reductions.

The elevation of the City of Sandy Springs ranges from 754 feet at the lowest point to 1,178 feet at the highest.

Forbes.com named Sandy Springs as one of America's Top 25 Towns to Live Well. The study looked at key factors such as employment rates, quality of life and business and school systems.



Public Works executed more than \$1,500,000 in stormwater maintenance projects at 30+ locations and directed the inventory and assessment of more than 17,000 stormwater structures.



7840 Roswell Road, Building 500 • Sandy Springs, Georgia 30350
770.730.5600 • www.sandyspringsga.org