



**LAGRANGE**  
GEORGIA

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MAYOR'S UPDATE 2025



# MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

It has been a great honor to serve as your mayor. 2024 was a year of transition, progress, and unity for our community. In February, we faced the heartbreaking loss of my dear friend and mayor, Willie T. Edmondson. His leadership, compassion, and vision left a huge mark on LaGrange, and it has been my privilege to continue his legacy and lead our beloved city.

One of my first commitments as mayor was ensuring Edmondson's vision of bringing the community together at the Mayor's Christmas Ball continued. The proceeds from this event will continue to go to the Willie T. Edmondson Memorial Scholarship Fund. These efforts were near to his heart, providing financial assistance to high school seniors who may need a little financial help going to college. By continuing these initiatives, we honor his passion for investing in our young people and their future success.

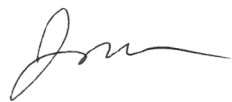
While these initiatives are important to me as well, public safety is a top priority of mine. I continue to work alongside the LaGrange Police Department to address crime and promote safer neighborhoods for all residents. We have strengthened our partnerships, implemented new initiatives, and remained vigilant in making LaGrange a secure place to live, work, and raise a family.

Bringing people together is essential to a thriving community, which is why I am committed to bringing more free events across the city. Whether it's a Back to School Bash in Lafayette Square, a Snow Day event in Hillside, or horse and buggy rides in downtown, my goal continues to be creating more opportunities for neighbors to connect, celebrate, and enjoy all that our city has to offer.

As we look ahead to 2025, I remain committed to making LaGrange a stronger, safer, and more united city. We will continue working together to create opportunities for our youth, enhance public safety, and foster a community where everyone feels welcome and valued.

Thank you for your support, your partnership, and your unwavering love for our city. It is an honor to serve as your mayor, and I look forward to what we will accomplish together in the years to come.

With gratitude,



Jim Arrington  
Mayor, City of LaGrange, GA



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## In Memoriam

On February 16, 2024 the City of LaGrange lost Mayor Willie T. Edmondson. Edmondson became the first African-American mayor in LaGrange, Georgia's 195-year history. He served the City for 24 years as a city council member before being elected mayor in March 2023. In the position of mayor, he spent much of his time tirelessly working for unity in LaGrange. His life and career were based on helping the community.

Edmondson began his career in the medical field as a nurse, then became the Senior Pastor at one of the largest churches in Troup County, Bethlehem Baptist Church. Serving in yet another capacity to help the community, Edmondson owned and ran Lakes-Dunson-Robertson Funeral Home.

Willie T. Edmondson was inducted into the 2024 Georgia Municipal Government Hall of Fame posthumously on Monday, June 24th at GMA's annual convention in Savannah.



LaGrange Mayor Jim Arrington, Edmondson's Wife Faye Edmondson & Son Jay Edmondson accept Hall of Fame Induction for the late Mayor Willie T. Edmondson.



## New City Manager

The LaGrange City Council officially appointed Patrick Bowie City Manager February 27th, 2024. Bowie began working with the City of LaGrange on August 22, 1988, as the Assistant Director of Utilities. He was promoted to Director of Utilities in July 1992. He comes highly qualified after overseeing the water, sewer, natural gas, and electric utility divisions, as well as Customer Service and the Utility Service Center.

## City of LaGrange Mission Statement:

The City of LaGrange will satisfy our customers and citizens by providing responsive and effective services, and well-maintained public infrastructure, which will add value to our community.

## LaGrange City Council

The council serves as the community's legislative body, comprised of decision-makers dedicated to advancing the community's objectives. With a focus on goals, major projects, and long-term considerations such as community growth, land use development, capital improvements, financing, and strategic planning, the council plays a pivotal role. To efficiently handle administrative responsibilities, a professional manager is appointed, and the council oversees the manager's performance.

Council meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers located at 208 Ridley Avenue. Additionally, council work sessions take place at 11:00 a.m. in the third-floor conference room at City Hall. This structure ensures effective governance and transparency.

## PARKS

Parks are vital to our community, providing various benefits. The vision is to create unique spaces for personal health and visual beauty while attracting both locals and tourists. The City established a Master Parks Plan in 2019 and partnered with Troup County to provide maintenance and capital funding in 2021. Since then, the City has been dedicated to the redevelopment, creation, branding, and maintenance of its parks.



### Pedal Park

Pedal Park, located across from Berta Weathersbee Elementary, is a Bicycle Playground with a 10-foot-wide bike path that teaches children road rules through stop signs, crossings, speed bumps, and a roundabout. It also includes fun features like a tunnel, railroad crossing, and bridge. The park was paid in part with ARPA funds.



Ribbon Cutting on October 30, 2024.

### W.T. Edmondson Park at Ridley Lake

The City is currently developing W.T. Edmondson Park at Ridley Lake, a 44-acre inclusive and accessible recreation facility with a 15-acre lake, a 22,000-square-foot playground, fishing dock, and a kayak launch. The Thread trail will extend into the park around the lake. The City received a \$3 million Georgia Department of Natural Resources Outdoor Stewardship Grant to create this regional park. Completion is expected in late 2025.



Above: New Construction on the latest segment of The Thread near the George Harris Baseball Fields.



Above & Below: New construction on the latest segment of The Thread by Mulberry Street Cemetery.



## THE THREAD TRAIL

The Thread is an ambitious 29-mile trail network designed to connect key destinations across LaGrange, including downtown, neighborhoods, parks, LaGrange College, and Wellstar West Georgia Health. This multi-use trail enhances the health and overall quality of life for residents and visitors alike.



To date, 14 miles have been completed, thanks to investments from the City, County, State, Callaway Foundation, Friends of The Thread, and various landowners.

### Newly Completed

- The **Clock Tower segment** extends from the Callaway Clock Tower to Mulberry Street Cemetery, completing the first large loop of The Thread, totaling 5.2 miles.
- The **George Harris Complex segment** connects the George Harris Complex to the future W.T. Edmondson Park at Ridley Lake, stretching 1.2 miles.

The Friends of The Thread committed over \$2 million toward these phases, with SPLOST funds covering the remaining costs. Every new segment brings us closer to a fully connected community, making LaGrange more walkable, accessible, and inviting.

### Down The Road

- The next phase will extend from Sweetland Amphitheatre through Shadowlawn Cemetery to the Mike Daniel Recreation Center on Lafayette Parkway.

# DEVELOPMENT

## Housing Development

LaGrange has seen a growth in housing availability, with around 1,700 new apartment units completed or near completion in the last 24 months. Additionally, we have a couple of affordable home projects seeking DCA tax credits. Three large townhome projects will add about 650 units, and four new single-family subdivisions will provide approximately 1,000 market-rate homes.



Bryant Lake Housing Development



Remington Firearms

## Industrial Development

City staff is reviewing plans for over 3 million square feet of new industrial floor space and nearly 1.1 million square feet of expansions projects from six existing manufacturing partners.

# COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION

## Lincoln Streetscape

Funded by SPLOST, the Lincoln Streetscape project in the Hillside community included creating a plaza with a fountain, green space, parking, utility upgrades, lighting, and new landscaping. The intersection of Lincoln, Garfield, and Dallas Streets was redesigned for better traffic flow and safety, while major stormwater and drainage issues were addressed. Garfield Street was converted to one-way to meet right-of-way width requirements.



Lincoln Streetscape in the Hillside community

## Roadways

GDOT's ongoing Hamilton Road widening project in LaGrange involves utility relocations, grading, and drainage work, with an anticipated completion several years away.



GDOT's Hamilton Road widening project

Simultaneously, GDOT's North LaGrange Bypass project is set to begin with property acquisition, utility relocation, and construction occurring in three phases.

- **Phase 1:** Hammett Road to Lafayette Parkway (SR-109). Right-of-way acquisition is underway, with construction tentatively starting in 2026.
- **Phase 2:** New Franklin Road (US-27/GA-1) to Young's Mill Road. Construction is tentatively set for 2027.
- **Phase 3:** Young's Mill Road to Hammett. Construction is also tentatively set for 2027.

Local roads that milled and resurfaced using Local Maintenance & Improvement Grant money include:

- Everette Street
- Wilburn Avenue
- Jackson Street
- McKinley Street
- 2nd Avenue
- Williams Street
- Washington Street
- Forrest Avenue
- Moores Hill
- South Lee Street
- First Avenue
- Taft Street
- 3rd Avenue
- Houston Street
- Brownwood Street
- Freeman Street
- Clark Street
- Grant Street
- Palm Street
- Wilson Street
- Stonewall Street
- Jefferson Street

# PUBLIC SAFETY/POLICE

The LaGrange Police Department is dedicated to fairness, compassion, and excellence in public service. By strengthening community partnerships and implementing proactive safety initiatives, LPD continues to make significant strides in crime reduction and public engagement.

## Crime Prevention Initiatives

One of the most impactful successes of 2024 was a **90% decrease in the homicide rate**, dropping from 11 cases in 2023 to just one in 2024. This achievement was made possible through several key initiatives:

- Increasing traffic stops for excessive window tint and other violations to deter criminal activity.
- Installing additional surveillance cameras in high-priority areas.
- Deploying drones for rapid crime scene response.
- Adding two officers dedicated to patrols 16 hours per day without handling calls.
- Collaborating with the new GBI Columbus office for investigative support.

## Community Outreach

- Coffee With a Cop
- National Night Out
- Faith and Blue
- Back to School Bash
- Harmony House Dragon Boat Race
- Summer Youth Academy
- Christmas Youth Camp
- Leaving LaGrange Better Than We Found It litter cleanups
- A School Resource Officer in all LaGrange public schools
- Recently added a new mascot to boost engagement

## Rebranding & Training

LPD also completed a **department-wide rebranding**, including updated uniforms, equipment, and vehicles, along with a fresh new shoulder patch symbolizing a renewed commitment to excellence. In 2024, officers logged more than **12,000 training hours** and responded to **over 64,000 service calls**, demonstrating their unwavering dedication to public safety.



Clearview Elementary School students with LPD mascot Officer Cuff.

## Tip411

The LaGrange Police Department launched tip411, allowing residents to anonymously submit crime tips via text, mobile app, or online form.



- **Text:** Text "LAGRANGE" and your tip to 847411
- **Mobile app:** Download the free LaGrange Police app for iOS or Android
- **Online form:** Submit a tip at [www.lagrangega.gov/departments/police](http://www.lagrangega.gov/departments/police)

CLASS A CRIMES	2023	2024	%
HOMICIDE	12	1	-92%
RAPE	4	12	200%
ROBBERY	22	30	36%
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	90	207* (84)	130%
BURGLARY	172	160	-7%
LARCENY THEFT	1,145	1,272	11%
MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT	106	116	9%
ARSON	6	1	-83%

\*The FBI now mandates LPD logs one count for each victim involved. The number of aggravated assault incidents in 2024 was 84.

# PUBLIC SAFETY/FIRE

The LaGrange Fire Department (LFD) provides fire protection and emergency medical services (EMS) across four stations, with specialized divisions for fire investigations, public education, and hazardous materials. The City maintains an 'ISO Class 2' rating, the second-highest possible, reflecting superior fire protection and offering savings on property insurance for residents and businesses.

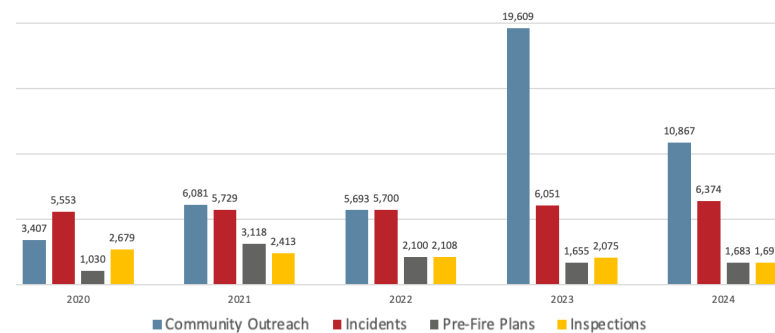
## Community Outreach

- Conducted **830** blood pressure checks and hosted **5** Red Cross and Life South blood drives
- Installed **45** smoke detectors
- Assisted in all **8** monthly litter cleanup events with the City's Leaving LaGrange Better Than We Found It campaign
- Hosted LFD Citizen's Day with more than **350** people
- Hosted LFD/LPD Summer Camps
- Held 11 training classes for **426** people
- Held annual 9/11 Stair Climb to raise money for the Terry Farrell Firefighter Fund of Georgia
- Participated in the annual Columbus Firefighter Charity 5K, 575 Fools Muster Competition, and the Harmony House Dragon Boat Race

## Training and Calls For Service

LFD completed more than **19,646 hours of training** and ran **6,275 calls for service** in 2024.

## Fire Department Activity 2020-2024



Citizens Day 2024



Citizens Day 2024



9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

## Never Forget

In 2024, LFD hosted its annual 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb Challenge at Callaway Stadium, inviting the community to walk 110 flights of stairs, representing the Twin Towers. All event proceeds benefited the Terry Farrell Firefighter Fund.

## Accreditation

In 2024, LFD submitted its Annual Compliance Report to the CFAI and was confirmed to remain accredited for another year. It is one of about 300 agencies worldwide with Internationally Accredited Agency status from CFAI and CPSE.

# SWEETLAND AMPHITHEATRE

## Concerts

The 2024 Kia Concert Series at Sweetland Amphitheatre presented a dynamic lineup of twelve shows, showcasing a diverse range of musical genres to cater to audiences of all tastes. Sweetland provided a diverse range of programming for the community including rap, country, rock, pop, southern soul, and folk/Americana musical experiences for all attendees.



## 2024 Concert Artists

- Sawyer Brown
- Trace Adkins
- Calvin Richardson
- Sammy Kershaw
- Collin Raye
- Aaron Tippin
- Tucka
- Pokey Bear
- Westlove
- Flo Rida
- Zach Williams
- Gabby Barrett
- Maddox Batson
- Everclear
- Sister Hazel
- Jewel
- Melissa Etheridge
- Kidd G
- Will Moseley
- Sara Evans



Trace Adkins Concert



Flo Rida Concert



## Sweetland Inside



**KEILLOR AT 80**  
GARRISON KEILLOR  
with Heather Masse, Richard Dworsky & Fred Newman

Sweetland hosted its first "Sweetland Inside" show at LaGrange College's Callaway Auditorium. Garrison Keillor with Heather Masse, Richard Dworsky, and local LaGrange legend Fred Newman took to the stage in November. Sweetland plans to offer more shows through this partnership in the future.

## Sweetland Verified



Sweetland successfully launched its "Sweetland Verified" program, an opt-in initiative designed to give priority access to the residents of LaGrange and Troup County. This program aims to ensure secure ticket purchases for our most sought-after shows while mitigating the influence of unscrupulous secondary sellers, commonly known as ticket scalpers. Becoming "Sweetland Verified" is a straightforward process – interested individuals can sign up at Visit LaGrange during regular business hours or at any Sweetland event.

## Sweetland On Ice



Sweetland Amphitheatre turns into Sweetland on Ice from November to February. Sweetland on Ice is a 5,500 square foot open-air ice-skating rink with real ice. Once again 2024 saw record-breaking attendance with fun and free community events including community movie nights and new this year, the Tinsel Trail Christmas trees.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



## Youth Council

The LaGrange Youth Council, established in 2015, gives local students a voice in decision-making while offering leadership and real-world experience. Due to its overwhelming success, the City expanded the council from 24 to 32 members in 2024, allowing more students to participate in shaping LaGrange's future.



Councilman Gaskin with LaGrange Youth Council Members.

## Leaving LaGrange Better Than We Found It

The City also upholds its Leaving LaGrange Better Than We Found It initiative, hosting monthly litter cleanups with participation ranging from 25 to 125 community members. In April, the City shuts down and all employees spend a dedicated cleanup, reinforcing our commitment to a clean, vibrant city.

## Mayor's Ball

The Mayor's Christmas Ball, hosted by Mayor Arrington, continued for a second year in 2024, honoring Edmondson's legacy. This event not only united the community but also raised funds for scholarships and collected hundreds of toys for the Empty Stocking Fund, benefiting local children during the holiday season.



L-R: Jordan Brock, Saralynn Pelt, Dominique Graves, and Zykia Gray

## Willie T. Edmondson Memorial Scholarship Fund

In 2024, four Troup County School students pursuing higher education received scholarships:

- **Dominique Graves**, Troup High School Student
- **Zykia Gray**, LaGrange High School Student & Youth Council Member
- **Saralynn Pelt**, Callaway High School Student
- **Jordan Brock**, Troup High School Student & Youth Council Member

## Candy Cane Food Truck Lane

To build excitement for the annual Christmas Parade, the City launched the Candy Cane Food Truck Lane, closing West Haralson Street to create a festive dining experience for residents. With nine food trucks offering a variety of treats, this event was a resounding success, bringing holiday cheer to the community.

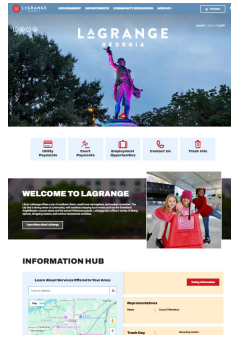
## Back To School Bash

The City, alongside the Downtown LaGrange Development Authority, Troup County School System, Troup County Government, Troup County Sheriff's Office, and the LaGrange-Troup County Chamber of Commerce, collaboratively held a Back to School Bash and Movie on the Square, featuring live entertainment, information on children's resources, and free treats for the community.



## Website Update

In 2024, the City updated its website to improve navigation for residents, with key information like trash details, job opportunities, and payment links at the top. New features include an events calendar, city news, and a personalized information hub based on residents' addresses. Visit [www.lagrangega.gov](http://www.lagrangega.gov).



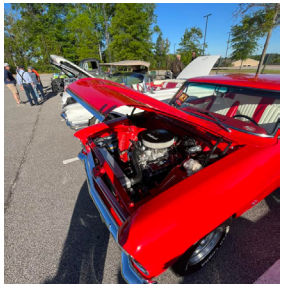
## Troup County Resources

To improve access to essential community resources, the City launched a user-friendly website, [www.troupcountyresources.com](http://www.troupcountyresources.com), which provides information on free services offered by local nonprofits to support those in need. The City also continues to place free computer resource centers in key locations such as LaGrange City Hall, LaGrange Police Department, Hogansville City Hall, and the Branches of Hope Homeless Shelter, ensuring residents can access these resources at no cost.



## The Ride for Willie T. and Car Show

The City of LaGrange and City Councilman Quay Boddie hosted the Ride for Willie T. and Car Show to remember late Willie T. Edmondson and raise money for the scholarship in his name. The event started with a car show then wrapped up with a procession to nearby Antioch, Edmondson's hometown.



## Government Departments

### Animal Services

(706) 298-3606

### Business License and Permits

(706) 883-2060

### City Hall

(706) 883-2000

### City Manager/City Clerk

(706) 883-2010

### Code Enforcement

(706) 883-2624

### Customer Service

(706) 883-2030

*To establish or disconnect services or to pay your utility bill*

### Human Resources

(706) 883-2025

### LaGrange Fire Department

(706) 883-2650 - non emergency

### LaGrange Police Department

(706) 883-2603 - non emergency

### Marketing/Communications

(706) 883-2055

### Municipal Court

(706) 883-2026

### Purchasing Department

(706) 883-2046



## Utilities

**Billing & New Service:** (706) 883-2030

### Want to pay a bill?

- **Pay online:** [utilities.lagrangega.gov](http://utilities.lagrangega.gov)
- **Pay in person:** Customer service located on the 1st floor of City Hall, 200 Ridley Avenue
- **Pay after hours:** There are 2 Drop boxes – one in drive thru and one in the city hall parking lot
- **Pay on the phone:** (706) 883-2030
- **Pay in the drive thru:** 200 Ridley Avenue, LaGrange, GA 30240
- **Pay by mail:** P.O. Box 4410, LaGrange, GA 30241-0088
- **Pay by setting up monthly autopay:** [utilities.lagrangega.gov](http://utilities.lagrangega.gov)

## Connect With LaGrange

200 Ridley Avenue • LaGrange, GA 30240

706-883-2000 • [lagrangega.gov](http://lagrangega.gov)

lagrangegagov  
cityoflagrangeutility  
lagrangepolicedept  
lagrangefiredept  
cityoflagrangeanimalshelter

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