



LIVE.LOVE.LOWELL

CITY OF LOWELL FALL 2023 NEWSLETTER

DEMOLITION UNDERWAY AT FORMER DYE PLANT

Demolition of the former abandoned dye plant at 1602 N. Main Street kicked off with a bang at the City's Groundbreaking Ceremony on August 29, 2023. Shortly after the ceremony, Trifecta Services started the demolition of the buildings and as of early October, only a few buildings are remaining for them to demolish and clean up. NC State House Representative John A. Torbett included \$2 million of funding for this project in the annual budget. The city will seek funding for all phases of the park, beginning with the kayak launch and fishing pier as well as restoration of the stream bank on that segment of the South Fork River. For more information on this project: www.lowellnc.com/upcoming-riverfront-parks-and-public-works-facility/



Pictured from left to right: Councilman Gillespie, NC State Representative John Torbett, Councilwoman Funderburk, Mayor Railey, Mayor Pro Tem Smith, Councilwoman Fulbright

HAROLD RANKIN PARK TO RECEIVE \$1M IN FUNDING FOR RENOVATIONS

The City of Lowell has been awarded a combined \$1 million in grants from NC's Parks and Recreation Trust Fund and the National Park Service's Land & Water Conservation Fund. Both of these grants are a 50/50 match however; these grants offset each other and no match is required by the City of Lowell. Phase 1 of the park renovations will begin in 2024 and will include upgraded restroom facilities, a nature trail, pickleball courts, a bocce ball court, a new half-court basketball court, conversion of land to a multi-purpose field, & a playground expansion with upgrades. The playground will be designed to be universally inclusive and the restroom facility will be ADA / ABA compliant. Future improvements will include: ballfield bleachers, ballfield dugouts, ballfield fencing, a

batting cage, parking and access improvements, paving and relocation of northern entry drive, a new concessions/restroom building, and an additional shelter.

WELCOME NEW CITY OF LOWELL DEPARTMENT HEADS!

Tori Dellinger serves as the Parks and Recreation/Events Director for the City of Lowell. A proud graduate of Appalachian State University, Tori holds a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and a Master's degree in Public Administration. Before joining the City of Lowell, Tori worked as an Economic Development Specialist for the City of Gastonia for five years. She is thrilled to take on her new role and continue making a positive impact in the community. In her free time, she enjoys fishing, outdoor recreation, golf, and spending quality time with her husband and three cats: Luna, Loki, and Cheeto.



YOUR CITY COUNCIL

MAYOR

Sandy Railey
704-860-3664
srailey@lowellnc.com

MAYOR

PRO-TEMPORE
Travis Smith
980-329-9690
tsmith@lowellnc.com

COUNCILMEMBER

Phil Bonham
704-674-1452
pbonham@lowellnc.com

COUNCILMEMBER

JoAnna Fulbright
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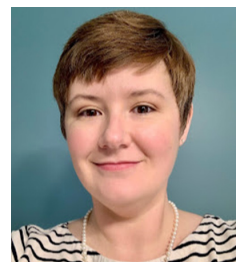
COUNCILMEMBER

Candy Funderburk
704-678-0292
cfunderburk@lowellnc.com

COUNCILMEMBER

Thomas Gillespie
704-824-1249
tgillespie@lowellnc.com

Jamie Watkins is the City of Lowell's new Stormwater Administrator. She is currently wrapping up her Master of Science in Environment and Sustainability at UNC Greensboro. Her thesis research is on urban flooding events and the strain they put on emergency response personnel. Jamie is a Volunteer Hunter Education Instructor for the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and a certified Environmental Educator through the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality. She has worked for the Catawba Riverkeeper as part of the education staff and is excited to take on the new position of Stormwater Administrator in Lowell. Jamie's role is to maintain compliance with EPA regulations regarding stormwater runoff under the Clean Water Act of 1972. Jamie is passionate about protecting water quality and is working to implement a Citizen Science Initiative to foster greater connection between the citizens of Lowell and the South Fork River. In her spare time Jamie enjoys hiking, camping, and kayaking with her dog, Nugget, and her husband, Josh.



EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to Thad Buchanan, the City of Lowell's 2023 Employee of the Year! Department Heads submitted nominations to the City Manager for the Employee of the Year award and Thad Buchanan received the vast majority of the nominations! Thad works in the Public Works Water Department as a Public Works Supervisor. Thad has been employed by the City of Lowell for five years.



ONLY RAIN DOWN THE STORM DRAIN



FAST FACTS ABOUT LITTER



250 million tons of trash is created each year in the United States.

5.25 trillion pieces of trash are currently in the world's oceans, 80% of which are plastic.



\$11.5 billion is spent in the United States annually on litter clean up.



New on the City of Lowell's Stormwater page: Education, Activities, and Games - including our new "Trashy Timeline"- a matching pairs game.



Scan to learn about the Stormwater program, find resources, & report a concern.

\$8.25 MILLION GRANT FOR WATER/SEWER UPGRADES

LOWELL RECEIVES \$8.25M GRANT

The recently enacted NC State budget included a \$8.25M grant for the City of Lowell which was taken from the state's Clean Water State Revolving Fund. The funding received will be utilized to improve the City's existing water & wastewater infrastructure, as well as the facility's regionalization efforts.

2023-2024 BUDGET BY THE NUMBERS

Budget Highlights:

- Tax rate of 49¢ and no utility fee increases
- No unrestricted fund balance appropriation
- 7 new full-time positions, 2 part-time positions
- The adopted budget absorbs mandatory and inflationary increases in personnel and operating costs

\$5M TOTAL GENERAL FUND BUDGET

WHERE DOES THE CITY GET ITS REVENUE?

2023-2024 CITY COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The City of Lowell FY 24 Budget incorporates the City Council's Strategic Vision and Goals with the creation of a Community Investment Fund (CIF) to prioritize city infrastructure projects, capital equipment, parks and recreation, and transportation improvements that will better serve our residents, businesses, and visitors.

56.9%	Property Tax \$2.8M Projected General Fund Revenue
24.4%	Sales and Other Tax \$1.3M Projected General Fund Revenue
16.1%	Fees, Licenses, & Permits \$793K Projected General Fund Revenue
0.3%	Grants and Other Donations \$15.5K Projected General Fund Revenue
0.3%	Other \$14.8K Projected General Fund Revenue

PROPERTY TAXES AT A GLANCE

HOW IS PROPERTY TAX REVENUE CALCULATED?

Total assessed value \$577.8M
x Tax rate (0.0049)
x Estimated collection rate
= Projected property tax revenue

ADOPTED
FY 2024 TAX RATE
49¢
PER \$100 OF VALUE

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PROPERTY REVALUATION

- Gaston County conducted a reappraisal in 2023
- NC Law requires counties to do a property reappraisal at least every 8 years

WHERE DOES THE 49¢ GO?

12.25¢ PUBLIC SAFETY	10.25¢ ADMIN	7¢ CIF	5.75¢ PLANNING	5¢ ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	3.25¢ SANITATION	3¢ STREETS DEPARTMENT	2.5¢ PARKS & REC
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CITY OF LOWELL RIVERSWEEP BY THE NUMBERS:

41	BAGS OF GARBAGE
35	VOLUNTEERS
6	LARGE METAL OBJECTS
2	COOKING POTS
1	TIRE
1	HATCHET
1	PLASTIC LAWN CHAIR

RIVERSWEEP SUCCESS

A record number of folks came out to help with this year's Riversweep on October 7! So many people showed up that we had to make a second cleanup site. Between the Riverview neighborhood and the George Poston River Trail, 35 volunteers collected a total of 354 pounds of trash from the banks and channel of the South Fork River! Thank you to everyone who made this happen! Our next litter clean-up will be in April 2024, stay tuned for details!

NEW CITY HALL & POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Lowell City Hall and the Lowell Police Department will soon be housed in a new City Municipal Building on North Main Street. The property is currently under contract between the City of Lowell and the Lowell-Smyre United Methodist Church. The new municipal building will be built beside the church at 201 North Main Street.

In Budget Planning sessions earlier this year, the City Council focused on the Community Investment Fund (CIF) to get ahead of critical infrastructure including buildings, parks, and water/sewer. This focus also tied back to their FY 2022-2024 three-year goal in their Strategic Vision to develop and update public facilities, which included Lowell City Hall.

The City's current City Hall was built in 1958 and has served the City of Lowell well for the past 65 years but needs many updates, additional office space for employees, more parking for both employees and visitors, and increased meeting space. The Police Department is in a comparable situation and needs building updates, more office space, and additional parking.

More details available on our website: www.lowellinc.com

CITY CALENDAR

November 2023

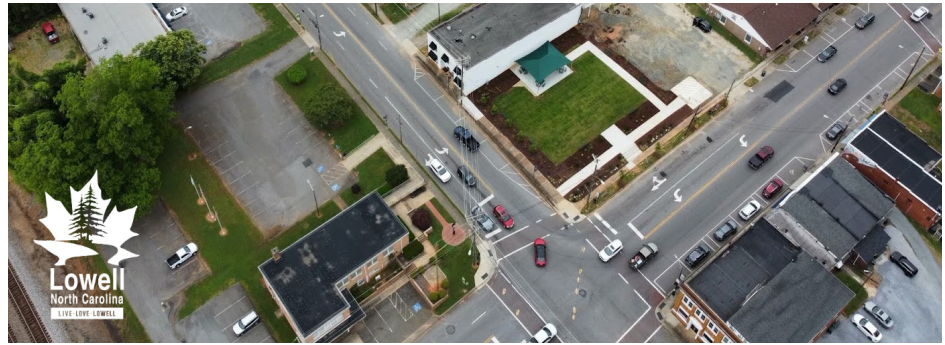
- 7 Planning Board & Stormwater Committee, 6pm, City Hall
- 10 City Holiday (City Offices Closed)
- 14 Council Meeting, 6pm, City Hall
- 16 Thanksgiving Senior Lunch, Presbyterian Church
- 23 City Holiday (City Offices Closed)
- 24 City Holiday (City Offices Closed)
- 27 Community Committee Meeting, 6pm, City Hall
- 30 Music in the Park + Tree Lighting Ceremony, 5-8pm, McCord Family Park

December 2023

- 5 Planning Board & Stormwater Committee, 6pm, City Hall
- 9 Christmas Parade, Market & Santa Photos, Santa Photos 1-3pm, Market 1-5pm, Parade 4pm, McCord Family Park
- 12 Council Meeting, 6pm, City Hall
- 18 Community Committee Meeting, 6pm, City Hall
- 22 City Holiday (City Offices Closed)
- 25 City Holiday (City Offices Closed)
- 26 City Holiday (City Offices Closed)

January 2024

- 1 City Holiday (City Offices Closed)
- 2 Planning Board & Stormwater Committee, 6pm, City Hall
- 8 Free Bulk Pickup
- 9 Free Bulk Pickup
- 9 Council Meeting, 6pm, City Hall
- 10 Free Bulk Pickup
- 15 City Holiday (City Offices Closed)
- 22 Community Committee Meeting, 6pm, City Hall



CITY CONTACT INFORMATION

City Manager	Scott Attaway	704.824.3518	sattaway@lowellnc.com
City Clerk	Cheryl Ramsey	704.824.3518	cramsey@lowellnc.com
Planning & Zoning	Joe Gates	704.617.0141	jgates@lowellnc.com
Police Chief	Carl Moore	704.824.8540	moore@lowellpd.org
Fire Chief	Robbie Cunningham	704.824.3357	rcunningham@lowellfd.com
Parks & Recreation	Tori Dellinger	704.315.8165	tdellinger@lowellnc.com
Stormwater	Jamie Watkins	980.390.7316	jwatkins@lowellnc.com
Public Works	Thomas Shrewsbury	704.824.1072	tshrewsbury@lowellnc.com
Public Works After Hours Emergencies		704.506.3146	
Police Non-Emergency Dispatch		704.866.3300	

Recycling Center at Harold Rankin Park
 715 N. Main Street
 Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 12-6pm; Saturday 10-6pm





Lowell
North Carolina

City of Lowell
101 W First Street
Lowell, NC 28098

Std. Mail
Non-profit
Permit #1
Lowell 28098

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Lowell
North Carolina

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Conceptual rendering for Harold Rankin Park Master Plan
Phase 1 will include: pickleball courts, half basketball court, multi-purpose field,
new restrooms, bocceball court, new expanded playground, and a walking trail.



www.lowellinc.com