

DISCOVER



Timeline

- December 2022 - City of Pelham applies for FRA grant
- June 2023 - City of Pelham is awarded the grant for crossing elimination
- August 2023 - Project kickoff meeting is held with the FRA and City of Pelham

RAILROAD RELIEF

First Steps for Crossing Elimination Begin

The City of Pelham is one step closer to some much-needed relief regarding railroad crossings. On Thursday, August 31, City leaders participated in a project kickoff meeting with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

In June, the City of Pelham was awarded a \$42 million grant, the largest in the nation, to eliminate two at-grade crossings on CR-52 at Lee Street. According to Mayor Gary Waters, these crossings frequently restrict access across CR-52 and obstruct emergency vehicles responding to calls for help. "Pelham residents and visitors alike have long been plagued with the problem of blocked railroad crossings, and this is a concerted endeavor to alleviate this issue."

Now, the project is moving ahead. "The kickoff meeting was a way for the FRA team and the City of Pelham to meet and talk about project management, the scope of the project, and the timeline," said André Bittas, Director of Development Services and Public Works. "From here, we'll go through the grant requirements, and we're working with the FRA so they can obligate funds for the grant."

As part of the proposed realignment, the intersection of CR-52 and US Highway 31 will be reconfigured, and additional improvements will be implemented along Highway 31. The project will also widen and reconstruct CR-52 east of US Highway 31 to increase capacity and update the roadway to current design standards. The federal funds must be expended within five years of receipt.



Pelham's Path to the Future

The Pelham City Council voted on Monday, August 21, 2023, to enact an additional one-cent sales tax in the city to fund significant infrastructure upgrades, life safety enhancements, and new recreation and entertainment amenities for Pelham residents.

The move aligns Pelham with dozens of peer cities throughout central Alabama with similar sales tax rates. This would be the first local sales tax increase in decades, explicitly funding capital projects and enhancing city services in Pelham.

The sales tax rate in the city was previously nine percent, with five percent going to the state and Shelby County and one percent dedicated to Pelham City Schools. The proposed additional penny in sales tax would generate revenue to pay for multi-year projects currently underway or planned. It would also allow the City of Pelham to plan for community-inspired and requested amenities long-term.

"Pelham has a reputation for being a desirable place to live, work, and play," said Mayor Gary W. Waters. "This additional funding will allow the City to construct critical infrastructure and life safety enhancements."

The sales tax rate of ten percent becomes effective November 1, 2023.

"We realize no one likes to pay taxes, and decisions such as this are unpopular, but I think the Council made the best decision for Pelham," Waters added. "This infusion of additional revenue will stimulate economic growth, ultimately improving the quality of life for residents. Additionally, new recreational and entertainment amenities will help Pelham remain a destination for those seeking adventure and leisure activities."

The 2022 Pelham Citizen Satisfaction Survey found that residents thought the following areas should receive the most emphasis over the next two years:

- Quality of the stormwater runoff/stormwater management system
- The flow of traffic and congestion management
- Maintenance of City streets and facilities

All the projects listed fall within these three categories or are related to public/life safety. [Read about the projects.](#)

Where is your money going?

State of Alabama: 4%

Shelby County: 1%

City of Pelham: 5% (1% earmarked for schools)

TOTAL - 10%



Splash Pad Hours

Tuesday through Sunday | 9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. | Weather permitting

**Closed Mondays for maintenance*



Workers resurface Cedar Cove Lane.

Street Paving Update

After several delays due to weather and equipment issues, the 2023 Pelham street paving project is moving along. Contractors are finished with work on Cedar Cove Drive and Cedar Cove Lane. From there, they will continue to work on David Drive, Keith Road, and Adams Street. Pavement milling and prep work is taking place on Valley View Road and Valley View Drive. Other streets scheduled to be paved this year are Ivy Brook Drive, Ivy Brook Trail, Ivy Circle, Brook Circle, Juniper Circle, Lantana Circle, Chanbury Drive and Circle, and Chandacraft Drive and Circle.

To see complete details of the street resurfacing project, plus a 5-year plan, visit the [City of Pelham website](#).



Above and below: An artist's rendering of the proposed new playground at Pelham City Park.

City Park Improvements

The North Campus of Pelham City Park continues to grow, and Brian Cooper, Director of Pelham Parks & Recreation, couldn't be more pleased. The City Council recently approved a new playground, which should be ready in Spring 2024. The playground will join the newly-opened splash pad and the existing Pelham dog park as a new destination for residents.

"The new playground will provide new challenges and excitement for children ages 2 to 12," stated Cooper. "Planned features include a ramped play structure for ages 2-5, a ramped play structure for ages 5-12, an arch swing, an inclusive whirl, two zip tracks, and a triple bay covered swing set that includes two belt swings, two tot swings, one expression swing, and one zero-G swing. This playground will exceed ADA standards for compliance and promises fun for all."

Park-goers will be happy to know that improvement plans call for the gravel parking lot near the splash pad and dog park to be paved. "This paved parking lot will accommodate all our guests who want to visit the north campus of Pelham City Park. It will make access much easier once paving is complete," said Cooper.





Coker Park Upgrades

Coker Park is tucked away off Highway 35 near the Mallard Point subdivision. Despite the park's low profile, many residents utilize the park, and now it's getting an upgrade.

"The old swing set was dated and ending its useful and safe life expectancy," said Brian Cooper, Director of Pelham Parks & Recreation. "We will add a new swing set next to the existing playground, and work is ongoing to improve the drainage under the play equipment to ensure safety for the life of the product."

Cooper also provided details of additional work at Coker Park. "A new parking lot and some minor ADA compliance features are planned to provide adequate access to the picnic tables and benches. We will also make repairs to the track next to the playground area."



Amphitheater Road Progress

Construction is moving along at a good pace in the effort to widen Amphitheater Road. With the development of The Canopy, Oak Mountain Amphitheatre, and the Pelham Civic Complex & Ice Arena, the widening was needed to accommodate extra traffic on the existing two-lane road.

"I'd say construction is about 70 percent complete," said Deputy Director of Development Services and Public Works Mike Eddington. "We expect the crews to finish the project by mid-November."

Amphitheater Road will be widened from two lanes to three from State Park Road to U.S. Highway 31. A bicycle lane will also be added. Eventually, the bike lane will connect with the expansion of the Pelham Greenway Trail. Once complete, people can walk or ride bicycles from Pelham City Park to Oak Mountain State Park.

Eddington also said new street lighting is being installed along Amphitheater Road, and curbing is being added.



Your City At Work

Here are some of the recent items approved by the Pelham City Council. For the complete text of the agendas, minutes, ordinances, and resolutions, please visit www.pelhamalabama.gov.

- Voted to apply proceeds from the sale of assets to fund a new fleet of vehicles for the Pelham Police Department.
- Approved a resolution to authorize membership rates for Pelham City School employees at the Pelham Recreation Center.
- Adopted the City of Pelham Transportation Plan for Fiscal Year 2024.
- Entered into an agreement with the State of Alabama and ALDOT for the replacement of non-compliant curb ramps in three locations in Pelham.
- Entered into an agreement with the State of Alabama and ALDOT to cooperate for right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation, and construction funding for the addition of lanes on Valleydale Road and State Road 261.
- Voted to enter an agreement with AGUA Backflow to assist with inspections and documentation as part of the city's Cross Connection Control Program.
- Approved a public works contract to install a fence at the Pelham Street Department Shop.
- Entered a purchase agreement to install playground equipment at Pelham City Park.
- Voted to purchase a backup application/hardware through C-Spire Business to replace the current backup application/hardware.
- Approved a job description and pay scale for the position of Project Manager-Grants.
- Amended the Building Permit Fees.
- Passed a privilege license or excise tax against persons, firms, or corporations storing, using, or otherwise consuming or engaging in the business of selling at retail tangible personal property or conducting places of amusement in the City of Pelham.
- Approved an ABC application for a retail liquor license for Taco Mac.