

Setting Priorities: Citizen Survey Report

Pelham received the results of its second citizen survey, and the citizens ranked the city higher than the previous survey in 74 of the 88 areas assessed.

The results were presented at the City Council meeting on Monday, February 17th. The ETC Institute, which conducted the survey, is a national leader in citizen engagement surveys with more than 3,000,000 persons surveyed since 2006 for more than 1,000 cities in 49 states.

The methodology uses lists to identify a respondent pool that matches the community's demographics instead of putting a survey online and making it available to everyone - a process that typically results in responses from a very limited and similar demographic group.



The high points of the survey include:

- Residents have a positive perception of the city. 83% are satisfied with overall quality of life in the city with only 3% expressing dissatisfaction.
- Satisfaction with city services is higher in Pelham than in other communities and among the highest in the nation. The city rated 34% above the U.S. average and 29% above the Southeast regional average in the overall quality of services provided.
- Ratings increased in most areas since the 2022 survey. The largest increases in satisfaction were in the quality of the stormwater runoff/management system, city recreational programs and availability of cultural activities and the arts.

The overall priorities for improvement over the next two years are:

- Flow of traffic and congestion management
- Economic development
- Maintenance of city streets and facilities



"We are proud of all we have accomplished as a city and immensely grateful that our citizens recognize the work and experience the results in everyday interactions with us," said DiFante. "Our citizens help us all become better. Our residents and business owners take pride in the city and want a city committed to smart growth, increased outdoor recreational opportunities, and the addition of more public gathering spaces and opportunities. They also feel safe in the city and appreciate the work accomplished on their behalf to keep the city safe."

DiFante also described how the city council will use the results to inform the budget priorities for the next two years when another survey will be completed. "We have a planning session scheduled for March 7, during which council members will review the results and apply those to the budget prioritization for 2026," she said. "We have used the results from the 2022 survey to help make critical decisions over the past two years, and will continue to do so, ensuring the voice of the citizen is present in the way we allocate city funds," DiFante added.

Access the full survey report on the [City of Pelham website](#).



Pavilion Rental Rates Established

With construction set to begin on two new pavilions at the Pelham City Park playground and splash pad, the Pelham Parks & Recreation Board recognized the need to implement a rental fee due to high demand. The Board proposed a rate of \$20 per hour for Pelham residents and \$40 per hour for non-residents, with rentals available in two-hour blocks.

Pelham Parks & Recreation Director Brian Cooper explained that the rates were determined after researching comparable fees in other cities. "We compared rates to other cities, and ours are on the low end. Most communities have a resident and non-resident rate, and others charge per hour or a flat fee," he said.

The new rental system allows people to reserve pavilions for birthday parties, picnics, and other gatherings, ensuring exclusive use during their scheduled time. "A facility normally open to the public on a first-come, first-served basis can now be reserved for private events," Cooper said. "However, if no reservation holder is present, pavilions remain open for general use. Renters will receive a permit and must have it on hand during their event."

An exception applies to the pavilion near the sand volleyball courts, which will not be available for reservations due to its frequent use by volleyball players. However, it may be included in a larger rental of the courts.

The Pelham City Council unanimously approved the proposal.

Pelham Senior Center Receives New Bus

As membership at the Pelham Senior Center continues to grow, so does the need for reliable transportation to outings, overnight trips, and activities. While the Senior Center already had a bus, program organizers quickly recognized the need for a wheelchair-accessible vehicle to serve all members better.

In response, the City of Pelham submitted a letter of interest for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to fund a new handicap-accessible bus. However, before the application process could proceed, City Manager Gretchen DiFante received an unexpected phone call from Shelby County Manager Chad Scroggins.



He shared that the County had recently purchased a bus of the same make and model for donation purposes and offered it to the City of Pelham.

The new bus was delivered within days, providing an immediate and valuable resource for the Senior Center. At a recent meeting, the Pelham City Council formally recognized the generous donation and expressed gratitude for the new addition that will enhance mobility and accessibility for Pelham's senior community.

Statewide Recognition

After winning four district awards from the Alabama Recreation & Park Association (ARPA) in December, Pelham Parks & Recreation recently received awards at the state level.

Winners from ARPA's seven statewide districts moved on to a competition comprised of entries from all over Alabama. Two of Pelham Parks & Recreation's four winners won in their divisions.

Recreation Coordinator Jared Thornton received the ARPA Innovative Program of the Year Award for NHL Street, and the Pelham Garden Club

took home the Community Service Award for the State of Alabama. Pelham resident Jim Collins accepted the award on behalf of the club.

As highlighted in the January issue of the City of Pelham e-newsletter, Tabitha Dudley was recognized at the district level as the ARPA New Professional of the Year for 2024. Jake Dickens won the ARPA District III Merit in Parks Award.

You can read the full story and see details of each award on the [Pelham Parks & Recreation website](#).



Two Decades of Service

Pelham resident Connita Turner was honored with a proclamation for 20 years of dedicated service to the Pelham Library Board. This meeting was bittersweet, as it marked her last with the board.

Pelham City Council President Maurice Mercer presented the proclamation to Connita on behalf of Mayor Gary Waters, who could not attend.

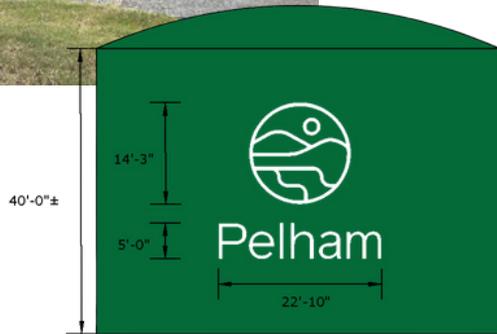
Connita's commitment and passion for our library have left a lasting impact on our community, and we are so grateful for her unwavering support.



Pelham Rodeo Named Best of 2024

The Pelham Civic Complex & Ice Arena's first rodeo event was named Alabama's Best Rodeo of the Year by the Professional Cowboy Association.

The venue hosted the event in July 2024, partnering with Kidz Outdoors and 3R Rodeo Company to host the Making a Difference for Kidz Pro Rodeo. Read the complete article on the [Pelham Civic Complex & Ice Arena website](#).



Water Tower Facelift

A well-known Pelham landmark is getting a new coat of paint and a fresh look. The green and gold-trimmed water tower on Highway 52, a familiar sight for residents and travelers, is set for a facelift.

The new design will feature Pelham's official dark green branding color, with the City's new logo prominently displayed in white on the front of the tower.

The Pelham City Council awarded the project to Robinson & Sons Construction Services, selecting their low bid of \$98,000. The contract includes painting both the water tower and the adjacent retaining wall. Work is scheduled to begin this month, with completion expected in 60 days, weather permitting.

World Police & Fire Games

Pelham will host events for one of the world's largest sporting competitions this summer—the World Police & Fire Games. Comparable in size to the Summer Olympics, the Games will take place June 27–July 6, bringing elite first responders from around the globe to compete.

Visit the [City of Pelham website](#) for the full story, including event details and the Pelham first responders who will compete.



Brighter Roads for Pelham

Drivers can look forward to improved lighting along Highway 31/Pelham Parkway as the City of Pelham upgrades its streetlights. From the Pelham/Hoover line to the Pelham/Alabaster line, the existing wooden pole lights will be replaced with decorative LED streetlamps.

The project will be implemented in three phases, beginning with the stretch between Amphitheater Road and County Road 52, and then proceeding to the northern and southern sections. Stay tuned for updates.

Pelham Tennis Center Fencing

The Pelham Tennis Center is getting a fresh update by replacing its old fencing, ensuring a better experience for players and visitors. Over time, the existing fencing has weathered the elements, showing signs of wear and tear that could impact safety and aesthetics.

These improvements reflect the city's dedication to promoting an active and vibrant community. Stay tuned for updates on the project, and come check out the newly improved courts once the work is complete!





Your City At Work

Here are some of the recent items approved by the Pelham City Council. Please visit the City of Pelham website for the complete text of the agendas, minutes, ordinances, and resolutions.

- Approved a professional services contract with the Centers for Public Safety Management to provide support for the selection of a police chief.
- Designated certain city officials with the authority to execute financial documents on behalf of the City. The change was necessary because the City of Pelham has a new City Clerk.
- Accepted a bid to construct two pavilions at Pelham City Park and approved an agreement with Shelby County Parks and Recreation Authority to perform clearing and grading for the pavilion projects.
- Accepted a proposal to install one gateway sign at the intersection of U.S. Highway 31 and Alabama Highway 261.
- Approved a contract with Gonzalez-Strength & Associates for an ALTA boundary survey.
- Approved a deductive change order for the Industrial Park Drive Turn Lane and PVC Replacement Project. The project is complete and under budget by \$13,000.
- Accepted a proposal for maintenance to the outside concrete porch areas at the Pelham Racquet Club.
- Entered into an agreement with Alabama Power Company for public safety services.
- Approved ABC License for Pub 261 (administrative change to existing license).
- Declared 84 lockers at the Pelham Civic Complex & Ice Arena as surplus and authorized disposal.
- Adopted newly revised bylaws of the Pelham Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.
- Authorized payment of an invoice from Live Nation Entertainment for parking lot lighting at Oak Mountain Amphitheatre.
- Authorized an automatic mutual aid agreement and EMS transport between the City of Pelham and the following municipalities: City of Alabaster, City of Chelsea, City of Helena, and the North Shelby Fire District.
- Accepted a bid for services related to the CR-52 water tank painting project.
- Accepted a bid for services related to the Crosscreek Trail and Creekview Drive PVC replacement project.
- Approved a change order and final project amount related to the Aaron Road and Kristen Circle PVC replacement project.
- Authorized a time extension for product procurement related to the upgrades of the Business Center sewer lift station.
- Authorized a purchase agreement for the Live Nation Oak Mountain Amphitheatre property.
- Approved a deductive change order and final project amount related to the Shelby County Highways 35 and 361 water main replacement project.
- Authorized a time extension for product procurement related to the Business Center sewer lift station upgrades.
- Approved a deductive change order and final project amount related to the Shelby County Highways 35 and 361 water main replacement project.
- Authorized the removal and replacement of 2,000 linear feet of black chain-link fence at the Pelham Tennis Center. A USTA grant of \$47,000 funds the project.
- Entered a public works contract for site preparation of the Pelham Park Street Hockey Rink and authorized the purchase and installation of an NHL street hockey/soccer court.
- Entered into an agreement with the State of Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) for the U.S. Highway 31 lighting installation, operations, and maintenance project.
- Accepted the donation of three medical transport ambulances and one bus from the Shelby County Commission.
- Established pavilion rental rates for Pelham Parks.
- Granted an ABC License (Restaurant Retail Liquor) for La Gran Riviera Maya Cantina & Grill and Yamato Steakhouse.