



An Improved Place to Play Ball

Families who spend their spring, summer, and fall evenings at the ballpark will soon notice some exciting changes at the Pelham City Park Baseball & Softball Complex. The City of Pelham is moving forward with a major renovation project designed to make the complex more welcoming, functional, and enjoyable for players, families, and fans.

The updates include six brand-new covered batting cages—four located near the front entrance and two situated between Fields 2 and 3—while retaining the existing cages in place. This expansion means more room for practice and easier access for teams as they prepare for game day.

At the heart of the project is a completely reimagined central plaza. Natural wood accents, shaded seating, and a new modern concession stand and restroom facility will create a warm and inviting atmosphere.

With ample gathering spaces, the ballpark will become more than just a place to play—it will be

A PLACE TO CONNECT....

to relax and celebrate the game together.

Construction is expected to begin later this year, with the \$3.4 million project scheduled for completion by early 2026. When it's finished, the complex will offer a fresh, modern experience while keeping the same community spirit that makes baseball and softball in Pelham so special.



City Council Approves Fiscal Year 2026 Budget

At its September 8, 2025, meeting, the Pelham City Council approved the Fiscal Year 2026 budget. City leaders describe the new budget as both forward-thinking and responsive, with priorities heavily shaped by the results of the 2024 Citizen Satisfaction Survey. The budget reflects steady growth, with projected revenues of \$91.2 million, representing a \$2.5 million increase over the current year.

Planning for the Future

City Manager Gretchen DiFante noted that this year's budget was compiled three months earlier than usual, giving Council members more time for review. She emphasized that the 2026 budget builds on recent work to define the City's mission, values, and strategic priorities. Beginning in 2026, department leaders will participate in a joint planning process to set measurable goals, aided by new software that links department-level priorities to the City's overall objectives.

Key Budget Priorities

Several focus areas shaped the FY 2026 plan:

- **Conservative Approach:** The City will continue to manage finances conservatively, with growth in revenues matched by careful investments in public services.
- **Public Safety and EMS:** The most significant increase, \$1.4 million, supports the Fire Department, including the first full year of ambulance transport services.

- **Support for Schools:** Nearly \$400,000 more is included in the City Clerk's budget for school district tax collection and transfers.
- **Insurance and Utilities:** Liability insurance premiums rose by 15 percent, adding nearly \$200,000 in costs.
- **Investing in Staff:** Rising healthcare and retirement costs are included, along with a 3% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) and step increases for eligible employees. These measures keep Pelham's pay competitive while ensuring the City retains top talent.

Recreation and Quality of Life

Pelham residents have made it clear that recreation is a top priority. In fact, citizen survey data shows visits to Pelham's recreation facilities, including the Racquet Club, Ballantrae Golf Club, Civic Complex & Ice Arena, and City Park, now surpass annual visits to Oak Mountain State Park. To support this growth, the FY 2026 budget funds a variety of projects:

- A new maintenance building and elevator upgrade at Pelham Racquet Club.
- Driving range improvements at Ballantrae Golf Club.
- Safety and facility upgrades at the Civic Complex & Ice Arena, including new dasher boards.
- Renovation design work for the Senior Center, where participation has grown 200% in five years.
- A new disc golf course at City Park.

- Trail drainage improvements at Coker Park and resurfacing at the baseball complex.

Infrastructure and City Services

Beyond recreation, the budget also funds necessary infrastructure improvements:

- Street resurfacing and ADA accessibility projects.
- Design work for renovations at Fire Station No. 1, which will house the City's new 100-foot ladder truck and expanded EMS quarters.
- Landscaping at the I-65 interchanges at CR-52 and Highway 119.
- Funding for Pelham's share of a new Grey Oaks traffic signal, to be cost-shared with Shelby County.

Water and Sewer Investments

The budget also supports long-term planning for water and sewer projects, which are funded entirely through service fees. These projects are guided by a rolling five-year capital improvement plan to ensure that utility infrastructure keeps pace with growth.

Looking Ahead

City officials say the FY 2026 budget reflects Pelham's strong financial position while addressing citizen priorities head-on. From investments in public safety and schools to parks, recreation, and infrastructure, the plan supports both today's needs and the city's long-term vision.

As DiFante noted, Pelham is also preparing to pursue the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Budget Award in the near future, an added measure of accountability and transparency. "Pelham takes financial transparency and accountability seriously," she said, "and we will continue to do all we can to protect the City and its finances."



City of Pelham and Mi Pueblo Move Forward Together

At the September 8, 2025, Pelham City Council meeting, Mayor Gary Waters read a joint statement on behalf of the City of Pelham and Mi Pueblo Supermarket. The statement addressed the resolution of recent matters and reaffirmed the shared commitment to partnership and community support. The complete statement is published below.

Mi Pueblo Supermarket and the City of Pelham are pleased to announce that, after reaching an agreement to resolve outstanding matters to the satisfaction of both parties, the public hearing scheduled for September 8, 2025, has been canceled. Both parties are moving forward in a continued partnership with a shared commitment to supporting the Pelham Community and its vibrant local businesses.

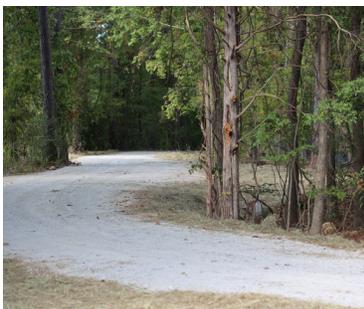
Mi Pueblo: "Mi Pueblo has long been a valued part of Pelham, not just as a grocery store, but as a gathering place, a source of jobs, and a reflection of the community's spirit. Our company remains deeply committed to serving Pelham residents with the same care, quality, and cultural pride that have made it a local favorite."

City of Pelham: "The City of Pelham is grateful for Mi Pueblo's ongoing presence and contribution to the City. Additionally, the City sincerely appreciates Mi Pueblo's efforts to swiftly and amicably resolve this matter and their assurance of internal procedures implemented that will ensure that collaboration by and between Mi Pueblo and the City of Pelham going forward will continue."

Both: "Mi Pueblo and the City look forward to building on this positive partnership and working together in the years ahead to help Pelham thrive."

GREENWAY TRAIL UPDATE

City Manager Gretchen DiFante reported to the Pelham City Council that Shelby County has completed grading and drainage work for the next phase of the Pelham Greenway Trail. Paving bids will be opened on October 7, 2025. Phase IV will connect the Pelham Civic Complex & Ice Arena to Park 124, and is expected to be finished by January 2026.

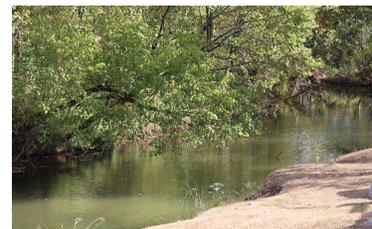


TRAFFIC STUDY APPROVED

The Pelham City Council has approved a traffic signal warrant study for the intersection of County Road 11 and Grey Oaks Parkway. Skipper Consulting, Inc. will conduct the survey at a cost not to exceed \$7,500. Findings from the study will help determine whether a traffic signal is warranted at this busy intersection.

BETTER STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The Pelham City Council has approved an agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to install and maintain a stream gauge at Buck Creek. This new equipment will provide real-time data on water levels and flow, helping the City monitor water quality and make informed decisions about stormwater management. The information will provide Pelham with better tools to protect local waterways and prepare for heavy rainfall events.



Pelham First Responders Honored at Public Safety Awards

The Shelby County Chamber recognized outstanding first responders at the Annual Public Safety Awards Luncheon on September 24, 2025, held at the Pelham Civic Complex & Ice Arena. Members of both the Pelham Police Department and Pelham Fire Department were honored with Officer of the Year and Firefighter of the Year awards.

From the Pelham Police Department, Officer Berry, Officer Harnden, Detective Hayakahua, Officer Perkinson, and Officer Rhodes were named Pelham's Police Officers of the Year. These officers were recognized for their teamwork, vigilance, and investigative excellence during a multi-jurisdictional case that began in Hoover and extended into Pelham. Their coordinated surveillance and decisive actions led to the arrest of two suspects in possession of more than 5,000 gift cards—300 of which had been altered—resulting in an estimated \$1 million in losses to businesses nationwide. Thanks to their thorough work, the case was later adopted by federal law enforcement and the U.S. Secret Service. Their recognition reflects the very best of the Pelham Police Department and the City of Pelham.

Fire Medic David Douglass was named Pelham's Firefighter of the Year. With 23 years of experience in the fire service, a background as a U.S. Marine, and the recent completion of his paramedic licensure, David exemplifies dedication and perseverance. His award comes in recognition of his lifesaving actions on August 25, 2025, when he quickly responded to a choking 7-month-old child. By immediately assessing the situation and removing the obstruction, he saved the infant's life before anyone else could act.

"David's quick action that day, which saved the life of the choking child, embodied the very best of what it means to be a Pelham firefighter," said Fire Chief Mike Reid.

Pelham is fortunate to have first responders whose courage, skill, and dedication reflect the highest standards of public service. Their work reminds us that our community is in capable and caring hands every day.



TRICK-OR-TREAT IN PELHAM



In Pelham, trick-or-treating is held on Halloween night, Friday, October 31. Families should look for porch lights as a signal that a home is welcoming trick-or-treaters. Children typically begin making their rounds around 5:00 p.m., with most activity winding down by 8:00 p.m.

Several local churches and organizations will also host Trunk-or-Treat events on other dates, including the Parks & Rec's own Fall-O-Ween on October 26 at Pelham City Park. And don't forget, Pelham Fire Stations will be handing out candy on Halloween night.

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.

- Accepted a proposal and entered into an agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) for a stream gauge to monitor water levels along Buck Creek in Pelham.
- Approved the final summary change order for the County Road 52 water tank painting project (the project came in under budget).
- Entered into lighting service agreements with Alabama Power Company for the Silverleaf subdivision.
- Declared certain vehicles as surplus personal property and authorized the disposal of the same.
- Considered the repair and resurfacing of a portion of Mitoba Trail due to settlement of the existing roadway.
- Amended certain general ledger accounts regarding operational transfers within the General Fund and Pelham Racquet Club.
- Accepted the lowest responsive and responsible bid from Peregrine Solutions for outsourced utility billing services. Peregrine Solutions is the current vendor.
- Appointed citizens to the Pelham Storm Water Board: William Carroll, Place No. 1; Kathryn Davenport, Place No. 2; Will Moore, Place No. 3; James Morris, Place No. 4; and Aaron Wilkes, Place No. 5.
- Approved an amendment to zone district boundaries of the City of Pelham, changing the present zoning B-2 (General Business District) to R-1A (Single Family Residential District) for property located near Ridge Drive, containing 5.22 acres (+/-).
- Approved the Fiscal Year 2026 Operating and Capital Budgets, and Debt Service Schedule.
- Accepted all real property and easements associated with the Eagle Cove Subdivision Sewer Lift Station rehabilitation and improvement project.
- Adopted the City of Pelham Classification Pay Plan for Fiscal Year 2026.
- Accepted a proposal and entered into an agreement with Skipper Consulting, Inc. for a traffic signal warrant evaluation study located at the intersection of County Road 11 and Grey Oaks Parkway.
- Appointed citizens to serve as polling officials during the City of Pelham Municipal Runoff Election on September 23, 2025.
- Accepted the lowest responsive and responsible bid from Coston General Contractors, Inc. for the Pelham Sports Park Renovations Project.
- Appointed citizens to the Pelham Parks & Recreation Advisory Board: Leonard Smith, three-year term; Kevin Jones, three-year term; Emery Plunkett, Student Representative, one-year term.



City Council Approves Business License Ordinance Update

The Pelham City Council will formally introduce a comprehensive amendment to the City's business license ordinance in the City Council meeting on October 6, 2025. If approved, the updated fee schedules would take effect January 1, 2026 and continue annually thereafter. This would be the first major revision of the code since 2008.

According to Finance Director Jamie Wagner, the updated ordinance aligns Pelham's business licensing with current Alabama law and today's business environment. The revisions clarify administrative authority, strengthen oversight tools, and enhance taxpayer protections. "The Finance Department believes this draft balances enforcement with taxpayer rights and positions the City for fair, transparent, and sustainable economic growth," Wagner said.

The amendment also establishes a reduced vendor license for temporary events such as festivals and nonprofit fundraisers. This makes it easier and more affordable for small businesses and community organizations to participate in events. The amendment was requested by the nonprofit Two by Two Rescue and received unanimous support from the Council.

The ordinance would repeal and replace the existing business license code upon its adoption. Officials say the update will improve clarity, simplify compliance, and provide a stronger foundation for economic growth in Pelham.