COMMUNITY NEWS
News & Events for the City of Vestavia Hills | October · November · December 2026
A joint publication of the City of Vestavia Hills & Vestavia Hills City Schools

From Mayor Ashley Curry

A Time to Remember & Celebrate

I hope you were able to attend one of the community's 9/11 memorial services this year. Each year, the cities of Homewood, Mountain Brook and Vestavia Hills come together to honor and remember those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001. This year, the City of Homewood hosted the memorial service on Friday, September 11.

We will always remember the nearly 3,000 people who lost their lives in the terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and aboard United Airlines Flight 93, which crashed in Pennsylvania. We should also remember the nearly 4,000 first responders, recovery workers and others who have died in the years since 9/11 from illnesses associated with exposure to toxic substances at the disaster sites.

On that tragic day, first responders rushed toward danger without concern for their own well-being. Their unwavering courage, selflessness and compassion demonstrated the very best of public service. These heroes, and those who continue to suffer from the consequences of their service, are owed a debt of gratitude that should never be forgotten.

As we move into the fall, there are several exciting community events on the calendar.

Community Night Out will be Thursday, October 1, beginning at 5:00 p.m. at City Hall. Hosted by the Vestavia Hills Police and Fire Departments, this free, family-friendly event will feature food, bouncy houses, music and opportunities to meet our first responders, civic organizations and neighbors. It's a great evening for the entire community.

One of our largest annual arts events, **ARTStober**, will showcase the work of local artists from throughout the Birmingham metro area, including several talented Vestavia Hills residents. The exhibit will be on display at City Hall throughout the month of October.

On October 13, I will present the annual **State of the City** address to the Vestavia Hills Chamber of Commerce. This year's luncheon will be held at Mountaintop Church while Vestavia Country Club undergoes renovations.

Our annual **Salute to Veterans** is shaping up to be our largest veterans event yet. In addition to the traditional 9:00 a.m. commemorative service, an all-day Veterans Resource Fair will continue through the afternoon. Representatives from VA programs and community organizations will be on hand to provide information and connect veterans and their families with a wide range of resources, all in one location.

Looking a little farther ahead, our annual **Christmas Tree Lighting** will take place November 19 at 6:00 p.m. at the Civic Center.

Then, on Sunday, December 6, at 4:00 p.m., we will celebrate the season with our annual **Christmas Parade and Party in the Park**. This year's parade will conclude with a second tree lighting event on The Great Lawn at The Bray.

As we enter this busy holiday season, I hope you will find time to enjoy the many events and activities taking place throughout our community, but more importantly, that you will have meaningful time with family and friends. It is a wonderful time to pause and reflect on the many blessings we share as a community here in Vestavia Hills.

Salute to Veterans

Honoring Those Who Served

Monday, November 9, 2026
Vestavia Hills Civic Center | 1090 Montgomery Highway, 35216

9am Program & Keynote Address
10am-5pm Veterans Resource Fair

Mayor Ashley Curry and the City of Vestavia Hills are proud to host a celebration honoring veterans from all branches of service. Enjoy light refreshments, entertainment and patriotic-themed programming, a veterans resource fair organized by Central Alabama Veterans Collaborative and more. **This year's keynote speaker is David P. Burford, Major General (US Army, retired).** We hope you will join us to celebrate and honor those who have served our country.

Share your photos! We would love to include veteran photos of you or a family member in our event video. To participate, email a scanned photo of yourself, family members or friends who have served or are currently serving in any branch of the military to eanderson@vhal.org. Please include: (1) service member's first & last name; (2) military rank; (3) branch of service; (4) military conflict/ theater of operation; and (5) dates of military service (if available). *If you previously submitted a photo, no need to resubmit.*

Community Calendar

October

1 **ARTStober Art Exhibit Opens,** City Hall, during regular business hours
1 **Community Night Out,** City Hall, 5-7:30pm (rain date 10/22)
5 **City Council Meeting,** Council Chamber, 5:30pm
6 **Design Review Board,** Council Chamber, 6pm
8 **Planning and Zoning Commission,** Council Chamber, 6pm
12 **Senior Citizens Association Luncheon,** Civic Center, 12pm
13 **Chamber Luncheon,** Mountaintop Church, 11:30am
15 **Board of Zoning Adjustment,** Council Chamber, 6pm
19 **Parks and Recreation Board,** Civic Center, 7:30am
19 **City Council Meeting,** Council Chamber, 5:30pm
20 **Vestavia Hills Historical Society,** Council Chamber, 2pm
23 **Haunt the Hills,** Wald Park, 4:30pm
24 **Halloween in the Heights,** Cahaba Heights Merchants, 10am-7pm

November

2 **City Council Meeting,** Council Chamber, 5:30pm
5 **Design Review Board,** Executive Conference Room, 6pm
8 **City of Vestavia Hills Anniversary** (1950)
9 **Salute to Veterans Celebration,** Civic Center, 9am
9 **Veterans Resource Fair,** Civic Center, 10am-5pm
9 **Senior Citizens Association Luncheon,** New Merkel House, 12pm
10 **Chamber Luncheon,** Shades Mountain Baptist Church, 11:30am
11 **Municipal Offices Closed,** Veterans Day
12 **Planning and Zoning Commission,** Council Chamber, 6pm
16 **City Council Meeting,** Council Chamber, 5:30pm
17 **Parks and Recreation Board,** Civic Center, 7:30am
17 **Board of Zoning Adjustment,** Council Chamber, 6pm
19 **Tree Lighting Festival,** Civic Center, 6pm
26-27 **Municipal Offices Closed,** Thanksgiving*

December

3 **Design Review Board,** Executive Conference Room, 6pm
6 **Holiday Parade & Party in the Park,** Liberty Park, 4pm (rain date December 13)
7 **City Council Meeting,** Council Chamber, 5:30pm
8 **Chamber Luncheon,** Old Overton Club, 11:30am
10 **Planning and Zoning Commission,** Council Chamber, 6pm
10 **Menorah Lighting,** City Hall, 5:30pm
12 **Breakfast with Santa,** Civic Center, 7:30am
14 **Senior Citizens Association Luncheon,** Civic Center, 12pm
15 **Parks and Recreation Board,** Civic Center, 7:30am
17 **Board of Zoning Adjustment,** Council Chamber, 6pm
21 **City Council Meeting,** Council Chamber, 5:30pm
24-25 **Municipal Offices Closed,** Christmas*
31-1/1 **Municipal Offices Closed,** New Year's*

*** Sanitation holiday.** Amwaste closed Thursday, November 27, Friday, December 25 and Friday, January 1; routes will be serviced on a one-day delay.

Make a Splash ... Year-Round!

The calendar may be changing, but the fun doesn't have to end when summer does! **We can't wait to welcome you to a longer, warmer, year-round swim season at the Vestavia Hills Aquatic Complex.**

Thanks to a newly installed pool heater, the water will stay at a relaxing 82 degrees so that residents can continue to enjoy swimming laps, participating in aquatic programs or simply making a splash!

Fall Swim Season: September 8-December 31

Residents under age 55:
$85 per person for the full season
<OR> $25 per person per month

Seniors age 55+:
$40 per person for the full season
<OR> $10 per person per month

Fall memberships are available on an individual basis only. Family memberships and caregiver passes will continue to be offered during the Summer Swim Season but will not be available during the new swim seasons.

Want to stop by for a day or bring a friend?
Day and guest passes are also available:
Day Pass: $15 per person
Guest Pass: $10 per person

Fall VHAC Schedule

Sunday:
1-5pm: Membership: Open Swim

Monday: CLOSED

Tuesday–Friday:
8-10am: Membership: Lap Swim & Programming
1-5pm: Membership: Open Swim

Saturday:
10am-5pm: Membership: Open Swim

(Schedule is subject to change)

From City Manager Jeff Downes

Planning Responsibly, Investing in Our Community

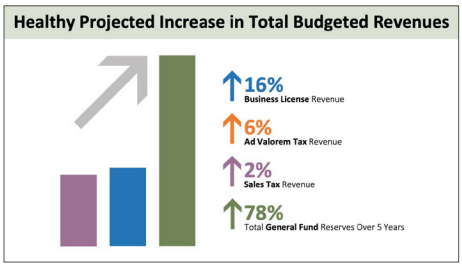
A strong community starts with thoughtful planning, and that is exactly what the City of Vestavia Hills has continued to do with its Fiscal Year 2027 budget.

For years, we have taken a conservative approach to city finances, basing our budget on actual revenues rather than counting on growth that may or may not happen. At the same time, we focus our resources on the priorities identified by the Mayor and City Council.

The proposed FY27 budget follows that same approach, while making meaningful investments in the roads, stormwater systems, public safety, parks, facilities and services that matter to our community.

A Strong Financial Foundation

We are in a healthy financial position heading into FY27. Total revenues are projected to increase by 5%, while General Fund reserves have grown 78% over the past five years.



Projected revenue growth includes:

- Sales tax: +2%
- Ad valorem taxes: +6%
- Business licenses: +16%

Our strong reserves and conservative financial practices have also contributed to exceptional financial ratings from Moody's and Fitch.

That is good news for Vestavia Hills. It means we can continue investing in important community priorities while maintaining a responsible financial position.

Where Your Tax Dollars Are Going

The FY27 budget puts a particular focus on several areas that residents see and experience every day:

Better Roads and Stormwater Infrastructure. We are planning to resurface at least 9 miles of streets, make significant stormwater improvements and begin new efforts to proactively clean and maintain public stormwater pipes. Long-term transportation projects, including the Greendale sidewalk project and the Dolly Ridge/Rocky Ridge pedestrian connection, are also moving forward.

Keeping Vestavia Hills Safe. Public safety remains a top priority. The budget includes the renovation of the Liberty Park Fire Station, two new fire apparatus, site work for the eastside VHPD operations and training facility, improvements to the VHPD roll call room and EOC, and a full year of employment for 12 new firefighters.

Taking Care of Our Employees. Our City employees are the people who keep Vestavia Hills running every day. The budget provides a 2% cost-of-living adjustment for all employees and 5% merit increases for eligible employees. It also includes additional longevity, educational reimbursement and premium-pay benefits.

The City will absorb a 3% increase in health insurance costs, so that increase will not be passed along to employees.

Maintaining Our Facilities and Technology. We are also investing in the behind-the-scenes infrastructure that keeps City services working. That includes a comprehensive facilities maintenance program, an additional maintenance technician and an after-hours/weekend IT technician.

Making Our Community Even Better. FY27 investments include improvements to athletic fields at Liberty Park, an additional park maintenance employee, completion of the Veterans Memorial at Altadena Valley Park and the beginning of an update to the City's comprehensive plan.

The budget also includes partial funding for a Performing Arts Center and Multi-Purpose Athletic Facility at VHHS through Vestavia Hills City Schools.

Looking Toward the Future. The proposed FY27 budget represents a balance: being good stewards of taxpayer dollars while continuing to invest in the future of Vestavia Hills.

We are proud of the City's strong financial position, but we are even more focused on what that financial strength allows us to do – maintain the services our residents count on, address infrastructure needs, support public safety and continue making Vestavia Hills a great place to live, work and raise a family.

Thank you to our residents, elected officials and City employees for helping make Vestavia Hills such a strong and vibrant community. We look forward to continuing that work together.

The Vestavia Way:
A Look at Our Schools' 2025-26 Year

Even if you don't have a child in a Vestavia Hills classroom, our schools remain one of the community's greatest shared investments – and this year's Annual Report shows that investment paying dividends.

Vestavia Hills City Schools earned a 97 on the Alabama Education Report Card for the third year running, with all nine schools receiving an "A." Superintendent Dr. Todd Freeman was named 2026 Alabama Superintendent of the Year, and the Class of 2026 accepted a record $19 million in college scholarships – the most in school history.

None of this happens in isolation. Local PTOs, the VHCS Foundation, and booster organizations contributed nearly $1.5 million combined this year, while the City of Vestavia Hills has invested $3.5 million over the past three years in shared facilities like gymnasiums and athletic spaces. Students gave back too: the RISE philanthropy program alone raised more than $217,000 for UAB's O'Neal Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Fiscal discipline remains a priority – four of every five dollars in the district's budget go directly to personnel, the teachers and staff serving nearly 6,920 students across the district.

It's a strong return on a community-wide commitment, and proof that "The Vestavia Way" belongs to the whole city, not just the families with kids in school.

Want the full report? Pick up a printed copy at any Vestavia Hills school, the Board of Education office, City Hall or the Chamber of Commerce. You can also request a mailed copy by contacting the Board of Education office or read it online at vhcs.us/reports.

Where Your Tax Dollars Go:

Inside VHCS' 2026-27 Budget

VESTAVIA HILLS CITY SCHOOLS

Stewardship has defined Vestavia Hills City Schools for 56 years, and this year's budget reflects that same commitment to our community.

Every budget decision ties back to The Vestavia Way – our promise of student experience, employee engagement, community partnership and responsible stewardship. In practical terms, that means four out of every five dollars in the general fund goes directly to the 953 VHCS employees who serve our community's children each day. This investment recruits and retains elite educators, keeps class sizes manageable, and funds the counselors, nurses, and support staff who make our schools safe and effective.

One in four teachers in Vestavia Hills is paid for by your tax dollars, funding opportunities in STEM, the arts, languages, and advanced coursework that wouldn't otherwise exist.

On the facilities side, this year's capital dollars are going toward safety, accessibility, technology, and facility upgrades across the district, while long-range planning continues for larger projects at Vestavia Hills High School and beyond.

Just as important is what the district is protecting: a two-month operating reserve, twice the state requirement, that safeguards the community's investment against the unexpected.

Every dollar in this budget has a purpose – and that purpose is Learning Without Limits for the children of Vestavia Hills.

We invite you to see exactly where every dollar goes. Explore the full 2026-27 budget through our ClearGov transparency portal at vhcs.us/finance.

2026-27 Budget Highlights

953 Total Employees

533 Total Teachers

127 Locally Funded Teachers

13:1 Student-Teacher Ratio (Total)

7:1 Student-Teacher Ratio (Special Education)

18:1 English Learner Student-Teacher Ratio
48:1 Gifted Student-Teacher Ratio
349:1 Student-Counselor Ratio

Educational & Support Programs

5 World Language Programs

26 Advanced Placement Courses

2 Dual Enrollment Courses

16 Career & Technical Education Courses

35 K-12 Arts Education Teachers

5 Arts Education Programs

101 Athletic Teams

5 Elementary STEM Teachers

13 School Resource Officers

21 School Counselors

8 Behavior Specialists & Social Workers

15 School Nurses

STAY IN THE LOOP!

Sign Up TODAY for Text or Voice Messages!

To receive notifications from the City of Vestavia Hills ...

SMS TEXTING

Text 'Join' to

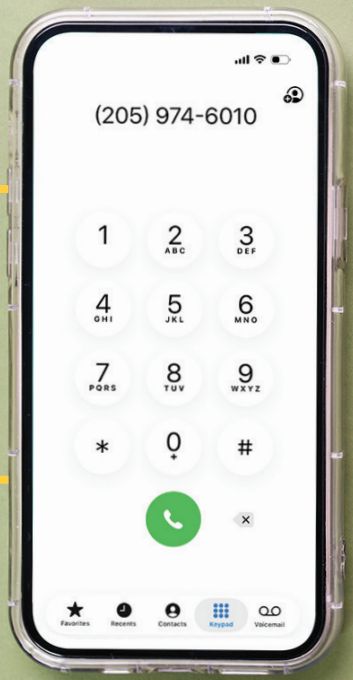
205.974.6010

VOICE CALL

Call

205.974.6010

Press '1' to Opt In



STEM-TOBER

GRADES 6-12

Mondays • 10 am - 1:30 pm
Thursdays • 2 - 5:30 pm
Open Maker Lab

Oct 5 • 4 pm
Oct 8 • 10 am
Intro 3D Printing

Oct 19 • 4 pm
Oct 22 • 10 am
Intro CNC Engraving

Oct 27 • 4 pm
VEX Robotics

MAKERSPACE

vestavialibrary.org/makerspace

2026

HAUNT the HILLS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2026
4:30 PM
WALD PARK

Join the Chamber of Commerce and local businesses to trick-or-treat on the lawn at Wald Park, and enjoy games and bounce houses.

Dress in your best family-friendly costume for the Costume Contest and bring your carved or decorated pumpkin to enter the Pumpkin Contest.

Then wrap-up the night with a Halloween movie!

Trick-or-Treating & Bounce Houses: 4:30-6pm

Pumpkin Contest: voting 4:30-5:45pm; winners announced: 6pm

Costume Contest: 6pm

Halloween Movie: 6:30pm

Regional Fire Training Facility Strengthens Public Safety

The Vestavia Hills Fire Department (VHFD) and Mountain Brook Fire Department (MBFD) celebrated the completion of a new four-story joint fire department training facility with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Thursday, September 17, 2026.

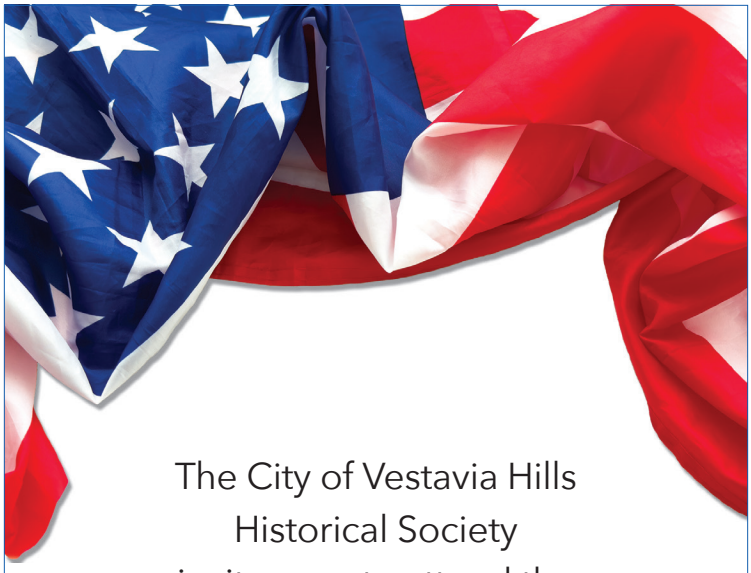
This shared investment in firefighter training and regional public safety was made possible through the collaboration and mutual commitment of the Cities of Vestavia Hills and Mountain Brook and provides firefighters with a state-of-the-art environment to train in realistic, live-fire scenarios and prepare for the challenging conditions they may encounter during emergency response.

The four-story training structure allows firefighters to practice a variety of scenarios, from fires in single-story residential settings to emergencies in larger, mid-rise commercial structures. Live-fire training gives firefighters valuable experience operating in high-heat and smoke-filled environments while strengthening the skills, confidence and teamwork necessary to respond safely and effectively.

The facility will also provide opportunities for multi-agency training exercises, bringing together firefighters from area departments to practice working collaboratively during complex emergencies. These exercises will strengthen coordination and interoperability among regional fire departments and further enhance the effectiveness of automatic aid agreements.

Through these partnerships, multiple fire departments can respond to emergencies with additional personnel and resources, improving response capabilities and helping expedite incident mitigation.

The new training facility is a significant investment in the continued training and preparedness of firefighters in Vestavia Hills, Mountain Brook and throughout the region to help ensure our emergency responders are ready to serve when their communities need them most.



The City of Vestavia Hills Historical Society invites you to attend the

Liberty Tree Dedication

in commemoration of America's 250th Anniversary

October 20, 2026

2:00 p.m.

Vestavia Hills City Hall
1032 Montgomery Highway
Vestavia Hills, Alabama

AMERICA 250 ALABAMA

City of Vestavia Hills Historical Society

VESTAVIA HILLS BEAUTIFICATION BOARD
INVITES OUR NEIGHBORS TO

Light Up Vestavia Hills

beginning December 1

Vestavia Hills residents are encouraged to **place a live or artificial tree (featuring white lights), a menorah or any celebratory holiday symbol** in the front yard, visible from the street.

Encourage your neighbors to join in!

VESTAVIA HILLS
BEAUTIFICATION BOARD

Winter Yard Judging

December 3-14, 2026

Residents are encouraged to decorate their home and yard for the holidays! Winter holiday yards are judged based on their upkeep and visual appeal both day and night.
We can't wait to see this year's décor!

COMMUNITY NEWS
1032 Montgomery Highway
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216

Presort
Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Boaz, AL
Permit No. 17

HOLIDAY in the HILLS

Vestavia Hills

Mark your calendar! For more information, visit https://vhal.org/community/city-events.

Saturday, November 14
Deck the Heights | 2-7pm
The Heights Village | 3162 Heights Village

Monday, November 16
Holiday Photo Booth Opens
Library in the Forest | 1221 Montgomery Highway

Thursday, November 19
Tree Lighting Festival | 6pm
Civic Center | 1090 Montgomery Highway

Sunday, December 6
Holiday Parade & Party in the Park | 4pm
Liberty Park (Rain Date: December 13)

Saturday, December 12
Breakfast with Santa | 7:30-10am
Civic Center | 1090 Montgomery Highway

Thursday, December 10
Menorah Lighting | 5:30pm
City Hall | 1032 Montgomery Highway

Tuesday, December 22
Christmas Cookie Challenge | 4pm
Library in the Forest | 1221 Montgomery Highway

DO YOU THE LIBRARY?

Join PALS

our Library Junior Board supporting the Children's Dept.

Volunteer, fundraise, support events and make new friends!!

vestavialibrary.org/joinpals