ANNUAL REPORT

2024 - 2025

Certified City of Ethics

CITY OF CIVILITY



TIFTON Georgia

The Friendly City



TIFTON Georgia
The Friendly City

Our Vision

Continuously growing a safe and thriving community by providing progressive city services delivered with integrity and friendliness.

Our Mission

Striving to exceed the expectations of our community, our employees, and our friends.

Certified City of Ethics

Tifton is designated by the Georgia Muncipal Association (GMA) as a Certified City of Ethics, a program that promotes ethical standards at the local level that encourages cities to adopt ethical principles and ordinances that empower citizens and provide clear processes for addressing concerns.

CITY OF CIVILITY

The City of Tifton was re-designated as a City of Civility by the GMA in January 2025. To become a City of Civility, city councils are required to adopt a Civility Resolution and pledge to engage in civil behavior with each other as well as with residents and meeting attendees. Cities also have a civility pledge that can be published or recited at meetings.

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LETTER FROM THE MAYOR



Friends,

With great pride and a sense of shared accomplishment, I present to you the City of Tifton's Annual Report for the fiscal year 2024-2025. This report is a testament to the hard work of our city employees, the dedication of our community partners, and the unwavering spirit of Tifton's residents.

This past year has been one of significant progress and positive change. We have focused on fiscal responsibility, community development, and improving the quality of life for everyone who calls Tifton home. We were able to keep the millage rate the same as in past years, a decision that reflects our commitment to the financial well-being of our citizens and local businesses. This measure was a crucial step in ensuring that Tifton remains an affordable and prosperous community for all.

We also recognize the importance of community and culture. We were thrilled to welcome visitors and hometown folks alike to Tifton's numerous festivals and special events throughout the year, including Rhythm and Ribs, Fiesta Del Pueblo, The Arts Affair, and our popular First Fridays and Second Saturdays. These events showcase the vibrant spirit of our City and bring us all together.

Public safety is also a top priority. In our efforts to assist the Tifton Police Department with keeping our community safe, we have installed Flock Cameras throughout the city. This technology will enhance our ability to deter crime and respond to incidents, making our neighborhoods more secure for all residents. Additionally, I'm proud to note that through the City of Tifton Fire Department, our ISO ratings continue to remain extremely low, which helps with insurance rates and, more importantly, keeps you safe should you have an emergency.

We are also committed to improving our City's infrastructure, particularly our roads. We have successfully utilized grant funding to pave and stripe roads, creating a safer traveling experience for everyone. This ongoing commitment to road improvements is a key part of our vision for a more connected and efficient Tifton.

An especially important focus for us this year has been engaging with our youth, the future leadership of our City. We were proud to swear in our second Youth Council, a group of bright, young minds who will work closely with the City Council and City management. This provides them with valuable skills in working together and running a large organization like the City. Additionally, the Bateman Youth Center continues to be a cornerstone of our community, offering numerous programs, including tutoring, after-school activities, and field trips that support and enrich the lives of our young people.

As we look ahead, we will continue to build on this momentum. We will prioritize smart, responsible growth while preserving the small-town charm that makes Tifton so special. We look forward to continuing the strong partnerships we have with various organizations in Tifton, including our school system, the Chamber of Commerce, Tift County, our Development Authorities, and local industry. By working together, we can ensure Tifton remains a place where families thrive, businesses prosper, and our community spirit shines brightly.

I am also incredibly honored to work alongside the dedicated men and women who serve our City. They take great pride in their work, are conscientious with public money, and often go above and beyond to assist the public. Their commitment to their departments and our community is a key reason for our success.

Thank you for your trust and your partnership. I am honored to serve as your Mayor and look forward to the opportunities that the future holds for our great City.



Sincerely,

Julie Smith

Julie Smith Mayor, City of Tifton

LETTER FROM THE INTERIM CITY MANAGER



Larry Lawrence

Interim City Manager & CFO, Tifton

To our citizens,

As Acting City Manager this past year, it has been my honor to serve the residents of Tifton, working alongside the Mayor and City Council, along with our dedicated and passionate City employees to enhance the quality of life for all who live, work or visit here in Tifton.

I am also proud of our dedicated team of highly qualified Department Heads, who have provided a wide range of outstanding programs and customer service to the citizens of Tifton.

This past year, our City moved forward in many ways and we expect that next fiscal year will again bring great things to Tifton. This Annual Report provides a brief summary of many—but not all—of our accomplishments in 2024-2025. It includes snapshots of key data points and performance measurements that chart how the City's resources are allocated and the types of programs and services provided to our community.

We have had many achievements over this past year, including enhancements in public transportation with the paving of over 21 miles of streets, upgrades in our water and sewer infrastructure, installation of a new Burn Training Center for our Fire Department, and investments in our local Fulwood park.

This remarkable success and advancement on so many projects and initiatives happened thanks to the leadership and dedication of the Tifton City Council and the outstanding work and focus on customer service by our City employees.

We have maintained a fiscal financial strength that is the envy of many other cities throughout Georgia and the nation with a nine month reserve in our General Fund. This has enabled us to continually make significant investments in the City's infrastructure and improvements to key community services with our Fire Department and Police Department. With the guidance and policy direction of the City Council, the City of Tifton is poised to enter fiscal year 2026 in a strong financial position.

Looking forward, next fiscal year is expected to be another successful year for the City of Tifton, but there will be challenges. While the local economy remains relatively strong, revenue growth, particularly sales tax revenue, remains largely flat, while the cost of providing city services continues to escalate.

The City continues to move forward next year with investments in Water, Sewer, and Gas infrastructure, additional Fulwood park improvements, upgrades in equipment for Police, Fire and Public Works, and an additional 5.3 miles of street paving. The City of Tifton will continue its mission of delivering exemplary municipal services responsive to our entire community, and we will continue to further many of the projects and initiatives that began in 2025.

The Mayor and City Council remain strongly committed to ensuring Tifton is run with efficiency and that we continue our proud tradition of providing excellent services and a quality of life that makes our Tifton residents proud, while also making Tifton a premier destination for business, technology, culture and tourism.

Our progress would not be possible without the dedication of City staff, community partners, and engaged residents. Together, we are building a stronger, more vibrant Tifton.

Editor's Note:



We want to say a very special thank you to Larry, a leader who stepped up to serve as the City's Interim Manager from August 2024 through September 2025. While also handling the responsibilities of his Chief Financial Officer role, his positive leadership kept our City prosperous and growing. We will always be thankful for his kind demeanor, dedication to peace for all and for his drive to please our citizens and staff each day.

Thank you, Larry Lawrence.

MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL



JULIE SMITH
Mayor
juliesmith@tifton.net
(229) 391-3905

JOSH REYNOLDS
District 1 Councilman
jreyonolds@tifton.net
(229) 391-3901

MICHAEL FRANKS
District 2 Councilman
mfranks@tifton.net
(229) 391-3902

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Creating Great Neighborhoods
- Connecting Citizens to Parks and Recreation
- Services & Improving Infrastructure
- Enhancing Historic Downtown
- Economic Development
- Top Customer Service Experience
- Leading with a Cause

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LESTER CROMER JR.
District 3 Councilman
lcromer@tifton.net
(229) 391-3903

M. JAY HALL
District 4 Councilman
mhall@tifton.net
(229) 391-3904

ROB WILMOT
City Attorney
(229) 382-9081

SNAPSHOTS AND MEMORIES



Julie with State Reps. at the GMA Cities United Summit

Kennedy L. Sanders Outstanding Citizen Achievement

Small Cities Conference



Tour of Short & Paulk property with DDA and TURA

"The greatest good is what we do for one another." - Mother Theresa

TIFTON Georgia
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Councilmen M. Jay Hall and Lester Cromer, Jr. received the Certificate of Recognition from . Holtz Municipal Training Institute

FINANCE

TIFTON Georgia
The Friendly City

The Finance Department's primary role is to advise the City Council and the City Manager on the financial status of the City. This department is responsive to the needs of city government while safeguarding and responsibly managing assets and resources.

The City's fiscal year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30.



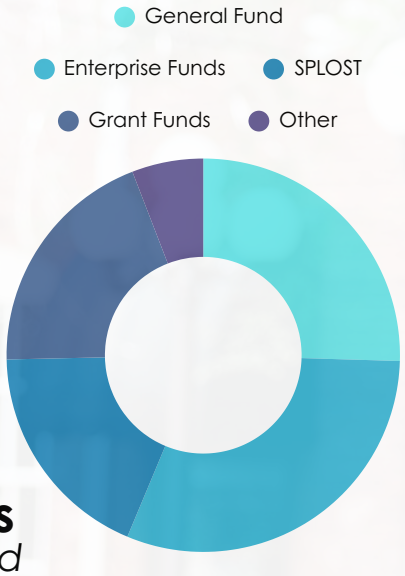
LARRY LAWRENCE
Chief Financial Officer
LLAWRENCE@TIFTON.NET
(229) 391-3939

Did you know?

Audits and Financial Reports are available online for public view 24/7 at tifton.net/191/Finance

FY 2025 BUDGET BY FUND

TOTAL: $80M





LISA FERGUSON
Finance Director
LFERGUSON@TIFTON.NET
(229) 391-3939

General Fund Revenues

FYE 2025 Budget to Actual, and Looking Forward to FYE 2026

	General Fund Revenues	Budget FYE 2025	Actual FYE 2025	Budget FYE 2026
31	Taxes	$ 13,112,420	$ 13,352,305	$ 13,704,048
32	Licenses & Permits	$ 492,977	$ 328,424	$ 426,200
33	Intergovernmental	$ 170,635	$ 424,263	$ 155,955
34	Charges for Services	$ 433,310	$ 300,207	$ 284,650
35	Fines & Forfeitures	$ 523,052	$ 868,999	$ 740,461
36	Investment Income	$ 576,599	$ 592,907	$ 450,000
37	Contributions & Donations	$ 2,000	$ 1,684	$ 1,100
38	Miscellaneous	$ 80,780	$ 180,740	$ 88,043
39	Other Financing Sources	$ 5,070,884	$ 2,112,829	$ 3,335,490
	Total Revenues General Fund	$20,462,657	$ 18,162,358	$ 19,185,947

General Fund Expenditures

FYE 2025 Budget to Actual, and Looking Forward to FYE 2026

Expenditures	BUDGET FYE 2025	ACTUAL FYE 2025	BUDGET FYE 2026
Council	$ 144,165	$ 149,932	$ 155,524
Management	$ 114,892	$ 126,465	$ 156,418
City Clerk	$ 177,784	$ 168,848	$ 202,891
General Government Admin	$ 1,036,050	$ 922,348	$ 1,074,050
Finance Dept	$ 605,692	$ 581,844	$ 608,297
Management Information Systems	$ 586,535	$ 596,260	$ 665,216
Human Resources	$ 216,506	$ 168,076	$ 218,125
Marketing & Communications	$ 92,689	$ 74,606	$ 97,855
Municipal Court	$ 252,900	$ 224,357	$ 262,254
Police Dept	$ 6,308,628	$ 5,891,714	$ 5,996,106
Fire Dept	$ 3,754,481	$ 4,305,724	$ 4,224,801
Public Works Dept	$ 2,284,153	$ 1,377.595	$ 1,039,908
ESG Operations-Street	$ 1,904,290	$ 1,858,423	$ 1,943,311
Building Maintenance Depart	$ 68,082	$ 37,570	$ 53,950
ESG Operations-Building Maint	$ 144,096	$ 141,049	$ 153,361
Shop	$ 28,500	$ 29,916	$ 28,500
ESG Shop	$ 287,536	$ 286,473	$ 295,069
Cemetery	$ 5,382	$ 5,449	$ 5,901
ESG Operations- Cemetery	$ 202,912	$ 198,888	$ 207,826
Senior Citizens Center	$ 340,332	$ 287,367	$ 333,587
Community Development	$ 791,005	$ 530,270	$ 646,234
Youth Center	$ 97,208	$ 64,036	$ 101,407
Main Street	$ 248,797	$ 243,314	$ 328,418
Tourism & Economic Development	$ 97,364	$ 88,153	$ 241,221
Financial Dept-Gen	$ 481,032	$ 132,099	$ 145,716
Other Financing Uses	$ 191,646	$ 192,646	$ -
Total Expenditures-General Fund	$ 20,462,657	$ 18,683,422	$ 19,185,947









SPLOST VI & VII

Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) is an optional, voter-approved, 1% sales tax used by counties and participating qualified municipal governments in Georgia to fund capital projects. Unlike the regular state sales tax SPLOST is not mandatory. Voters in the City of Tifton had to approve the tax through a referendum for it to be enacted.

SPLOST is in effect for a specific, limited period. Once the term expires or the project is paid for, the tax ends unless voters approve a renewal. The funds are designated for one-time, long-term investments in public infrastructure, not for day-to-day government operations.

SPLOST VI

1/1/2019 - 3/31/2025



72.47% *utilized*

Project	Referendum	Projected-Amended	Prior Yr. Expendures	Current Yr. Expenditures	Capital Outlay Budget 2026	Total Expenditures	SPLOST VI Remaining
Renovation and improvements to city buildings	$ 1,200,000	$ 1,200,000	$ 743,795	$ 650	$ 151,205	$895,650	$ 304,350
Vehicle, machinery, equipment and technology	$ 3,500,000	$ 5,225,815	$ 1,560,333	$ 919,563	$ 1,232,772	$3,712,668	$ 1,513,148
Road, street, bridge, drainage and parking	$ 9,000,000	$ 10,606,556	$ 3,295,156	$ 248,921	$ 4,119,649	$7,663,726	$ 2,942,830
Water and sewer system	$ 5,000,000	$ 6,400,000	$ 1,544,490	$ 34,694	$ 2,929,106	$4,508,290	$ 1,891,710
Property acquisition and demolition	$ 1,200,000	$ 1,631,277	$ 581,777	$ 501,314	$ 300,000	$1,383,091	$ 248,187
Totals	$19,900,000	$ 25,063,649	$ 7,725,552	$ 1,705,141	$ 8,732,732	$18,163,425	**$ 6,900,224**

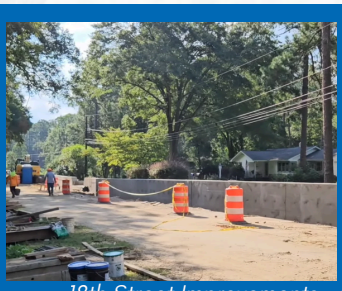
SPLOST VII

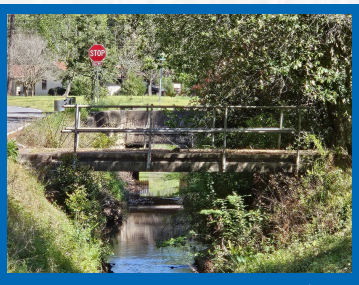
1/1/2025 - 12/31/2030



27.14% *utilized*

Project	Referendum	Projected-Amended	Prior Yr. Expendures	Current Yr. Expenditures	Capital Outlay Budget 2026	Total Expenditures	SPLOST VII Remaining
Renovation and improvements to city buildings	$ 1,200,000	$ 1,200,000	$ -	$ -	$ 200,000	$ 200,000	$ 1,000,000
Vehicle, machinery, equipment and technology	$ 3,500,000	$ 3,500,000	$ -	$ -	$ 51,500	$ 51,500	$ 3,448,500
Road, street, bridge, drainage and parking	$ 9,050,000	$ 9,050,000	$ -	$ -	$ 3,953,500	3,953,500	$ 5,096,500
Water and sewer system	$ 5,000,000	$ 5,000,000	$ -	$ -	$ 995,000	$ 995,000	$ 4,005,000
Property acquisition and demolition	$ 750,000	$ 750,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	-	$ 750,000
Technology Capital Outlay	$ 500,000	$ 500,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	-	$ 500,000
Economic development & Property Acquisition - URA	$ 1,000,000	$ 1,000,000	$ -	$ 500,000		$ 500,000	$ 500,000
Totals	$21,000,000	$21,000,000	$ -	$ 500,000	$ 5,200,000	$5,700,000	$15,300,000





18th Street Improvements - Georgia Transportation Investment Act





Short & Paulk Renaissance Project - Tifton Urban Redevelopment Agency/Downtown Development Authority/City of Tifton purchase



25-26 Fiscal Year Budget IN A NUTSHELL

$19,185,947
TOTAL GENERAL FUND BUDGET
6.2% DECREASE FROM PREVIOUS YR

FUNDS OPERATIONS FOR CITY DEPARTMENTS

REVENUES FROM TAXES, LICENSES & PERMITS, INVESTMENT INCOME, FINES, CHARGES FOR SERVICES AND MORE

FUNDS USED FOR GENERAL CITY GOVERNANCE, PUBLIC SAFETY, PUBLIC WORKS & OTHER COMMUNITY SERVICES

+

$22,484,325
ENTERPRISE FUNDS

Water, Sewer, Gas, Solid Waste

+

$32,385,665
OTHER FUNDS

SPLOST, HOTEL-MOTEL, CAPITAL PROJECTS, THEATRE, CONFISCATED ASSETS, CUSTOMER SERVICE, OPIOID SETTLEMENTS, CDBG, TURA, ARPA GRANT, MULTI GRANT FUNDS

$74,055,937
TOTAL FISCAL YEAR BUDGET ***ALL FUNDS***
DECREASE OF $9,422,652 FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

Grants Received

$13,529,353
WITH A CITY MATCH OF
$7,680,550

NOTED BUDGET INCLUSIONS IN 25-26

General Fund

We are fortunate to have built and maintained an adequate Fund Balance in the General Fund for future needs, and should end this fiscal year at approximately $15,500,000 in the Fund Balance. This equates to a 9 month reserve for General Fund operating expenditures.

3% COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT FOR ALL CITY EMPLOYEES
Accounts for Inflation

PROPERTY TAXES
Property tax revenues are budgeted at $3,957,159, a $29,366 decrease over last year.

WORKERS' COMP INSURANCE
Workers' Comp. budgeted for FYE 2026 is at a decrease from last year. This is a reflection of workers' comp claims decreasing over the last three years.

PROPERTY & LIABILITY INSURANCE
Property and Liability Insurance experienced a 7.8% increase.

HEALTH INSURANCE
The Health Insurance budget reflects a projected 6% increase for Jan. 1, 2026.

RETIREMENT PLAN
As of Jan. 1, 2025, the Retirement Fund is 101.16% funded, an increase from last year's funded ratio of 96.52%.

Enterprise Funds

What are Enterprise Funds?

Enterprise funds are financially reported separately from other funds to demonstrate the services' sustainability and the extent to which user fees cover its total costs, as opposed to relying on taxpayer dollars for their operation.

Water, Sewer, and Gas Funds are all operating favorably.

Gas pricing is monitoring monthly, and is projected to be 3% more in FYE 26 than last year.

The Solid Waste Fund is operating on a tight margin.

Our current landfill is at **93% capacity.** Engineers have projected a 1/22/2027 finish date.

Additional land was purchased during the last fiscal year for the expansion of the landfill.



LOOKING FORWARD: Capital Outlay Budget Summary Statement

Fund Source	Property Acquisition	Buildings	Equipment	Infrastructure	Total Budget FY2026
General Fund		30,500	1,010,854	32,750	1,074,104
ARPA				2,325,047	2,325,047
Grants		282,000	42,018	9,511,916	9,835,934
Hotel Motel		163,529	225,000		388,529
SPLOST VI	300,000	151,205	1,232,772	7,048,755	8,732,732
SPLOST VII		200,000	421,500	625,000	1,246,500
CDBG				790,945	790,945
Water Fund			315,000	1,272,344	1,587,344
Sewer Fund			230,000	1,592,203	1,822,203
Gas Fund			80,000	1,518,826	1,598,826
SWCD Fund			370,000		370,000
Theatre Fund		340,000			340,000
Totals	**300,000**	**1,167,234**	**3,927,144**	**24,717,786**	**30,112,164**







City of Tifton Chooses to Opt Into HB 581

Following the state-wide vote during November 5, 2024, the City chose to opt-in to the provisions of House Bill 581 (HB 581) to protect homeowners from significant property tax increases. HB 581 amended the Georgia Constitution and enacted a statewide floating homestead exemption that limits annual assessment increases on homestead properties to the rate of inflation, provides an optional sales tax to further offset property taxes, and other property tax process reforms.

Homeowners can contact the Tift County Tax Assessor's Office to ensure they have applied for and are receiving this homestead exemption if eligible.

Read more at: https://www.tifton.net/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=146

TIFTON Georgia
The Friendly City

CITY CLERK

The City Clerk's Office is responsible for preparing and documenting meetings and actions of the City Council, fulfilling requests for Open Records and Public Information, Business Licensing & Permitting, Bids & Appointments and manages many Special Programs and Grants.



JESSICA WHITE
City Clerk
JWHITE@TIFTON.NET
(229) 391-3940

2025 FISCAL YEAR IN REVIEW

32 Council Meetings

15 Ordinances

140 New Businesses

143 Open Record Requests

19 Proclamations

1241 Business License Renewals

453 Insurance Company Renewals



Accompanied the TURA to visit Techie Homes in Atlanta

GICH ALUMNI CERTIFICATION

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT of COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

The Georgia Initiative for Community Housing Initiative (GICH) offers communities a three year program of collaboration and technical assistance related to housing and community development.

71 Resolutions



Hosted a children's game at Georgia Cities Week's Touch-A-Truck Event

100 Alcohol Licenses Issued

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

TIFTON Georgia The Friendly City

The Department of Community Development is responsible for planning and visioning for the future growth of the City along with permitting, inspections and code compliance for residential and commercial developments. The department shapes, connects and plans for great places to preserve our history while planning for growth and guiding development to ensure the community thrives.

(229) 391-3950

ASSOCIATED COMMISSIONS

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission reviews rezonings, any LDC amendments, variances, and special conditions.

Historic Preservation Commission

The Historic Preservation Commission oversees the historic district and is responsible for reviewing Certificates of Appropriateness for any work being done on properties within the district.



The Daughters of the Revolution (DAR), Tallassee Chapter, presented Community Development a Georgia Flag on Georgia Day, 2025.







273
Residential Permits

Encroachment Permits
23

181
Commercial Permits

4
Land Disturbance Permits



CODE COMPLIANCE

Tifton is a beautiful place to live because our residents take pride in their homes and neighborhoods. To keep Tifton looking great, the City has adopted ordinances regulating property maintenance, business licenses and other code matters in both residential and commercial areas.

Code Compliance responds to complaints regarding property maintenance and other issues, and regularly patrols the City to identify violations. When violations are identified, enforcement action is taken. This enforcement action includes working with our citizens to abate violations through voluntary compliance, warnings and, as a last resort, citations to appear in Municipal Court.



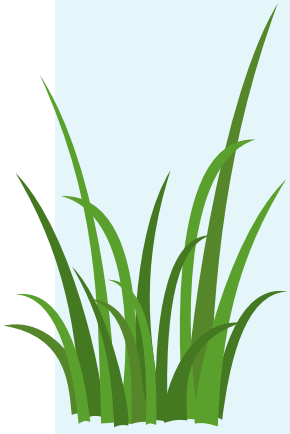
947

CODE ENFORCEMENT CASES

Scan to Access Tifton's City Ordinances

Common Violations & Reminders

Violations can negatively impact the safety and home values of neighborhoods.



GRASS

Residential or Commercial Property with overgrown weeds or grasses. Grass may only be a maximum height of 12 inches.

OUTSIDE STORAGE & CLUTTER

Storage of equipment, machinery or other clutter should be maintained in the rear or side yard and concealed from public view.



CART REMOVAL



All trashcans should be placed at curbside by 7:00am on the day of collection and removed from curbside by 11:00pm.

INOPERABLE VEHICLES



A vehicle that does not have valid insurance, tag and/or is inoperable stored on a public roadway or outside of a private property is not allowed.

TIFTON Georgia The Friendly City CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Customer Service Department, located on the first floor of City Hall, provides citizens with information and processes service requests and payments for the provided utilities:

- Water
- Sewer
- Natural Gas
- Curbside sanitation pickup
- Dumpster service
- Roll-off containers for debris
- Curbside yard debris pickup





2,341
NEW SERVICE ACCOUNTS

CONTACT

Monday-Friday: 8am-5pm

(229) 391-3957

CustomerService@Tifton.net

Ryland ENVIRONMENTAL

229-382-4411

Bulk Pickup is available Thursday and Fridays, depending on the regular pickup day for the address. Call the number above to arrange bulk pickup.
**Note, 5 items at a time per bulk pickup.*

START NEW SERVICE
First Floor of City Hall

Bring the following to start new service:

- Lease or Closing Disclosure
- Photo ID
- Social Security Card
- Deposit for service - $50 each (water, sewer, gas)
  - Trash Deposit - $18.33

HOW TO PAY UTILITY BILLS:

First Floor of City Hall: 8am-5pm
Drive Thru Window: 8am-5pm
Drop-Box: Available 24 hours
By Phone: 1-844-562-2098
Online: **www.tifton.net** - Available 24 hours

FAQs:

What is a grace period?
Customers have 7 days to remit payment after the due date before services are disconnected. A 10% late fee is added to the current balance the day after the due date.

Customers have until 7:30am on the cutoff day to remit payment. Afterwards, the cutoff list is automatically generated. Customers on the list will be charged a fee and services will be disconnected. Services can be reconnected the same day during hours of operation.

Non-Emergency After Hours Utility Number:
(229) 388-6078
**Call 911 for Emergencies*

HUMAN RESOURCES

156
TOTAL EMPLOYEES

APPLY FOR POSITIONS ONLINE @ TIFTON.NET



JOCELYN PAULK
Human Resources Director
JPAULK@TIFTON.NET
(229) 391-3941



The City of Tifton has been successful because of its employees. City strength and future success depends directly on the contributions made by each employee within our organization.

38
NEW HIRES



IMPLEMENTED:

NEW IN-SERVICE RETIREMENT OPTION

In-service retirement allows eligible employees to access their retirement funds while still employed by the City.

DEFERRED COMPENSATION RETIREMENT PLAN OPTION

Participants have the option of pre-tax or ROTH IRA contributions. Employees can either contribute funds before taxes or with ROTH options.

EMPLOYEE OF QUARTER 1 2025



Gail Drayton
Chief Clerk of Court

Gail has been with the City for nearly 10 years and constantly shows dedicated, caring and exceptional service to citizens and fellow employees.

EMPLOYEE OF QUARTER 2 2025



Katie Barton
Senior Police Officer

Officer Barton serves our community with unwavering dedication, professionalism, compassion and integrity.

TIFTON Georgia
The Friendly City

GRANTS & URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

2024 CDBG Award

The City of Tifton was awarded $790,945 towards neighborhood revitalization in October 2024 by way of Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The City is using the CDBG funds to address substandard housing. The project consists of the acquisition and clearance of one (1) dilapidated unit, and the rehabilitation of eleven (11) owner-occupied housing units and will benefit 20 persons, of whom 100% are low-to-moderate income persons.



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT of COMMUNITY AFFAIRS



CHIP Grant Home Rehab Program

The City of Tifton was awarded $500,000 in 2025 from DCA to assist eligible low to moderate income homeowners with housing rehabilitation. This amount follows $400,000 that Tifton received in 2023 in CHIP Grant Funding. *Read more on next page.*

Short & Paulk Renaissance Project

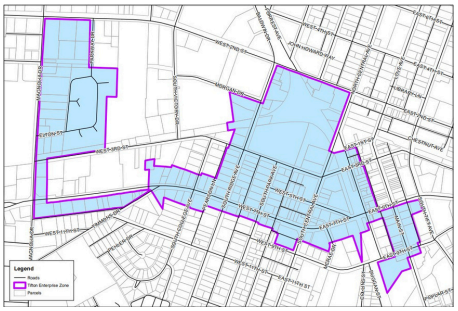
The City of Tifton, the Tifton Urban Redevelopment Agency (TURA), and the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) announced the successful acquisition of the 9.7-acre property located on South Main Street—commonly known as the Short & Paulk Supply Company property. This purchase marks the beginning of a bold and visionary redevelopment initiative termed the Short and Paulk Renaissance Project which will be guided by thoughtful planning, strategic development, and active community input, aiming to bring new life and opportunity to the heart of our city.

Signup for this citizen engagement group can be found by scanning the QR code below. Signing up for this group will allow citizens to receive emails about meetings, surveys and more that will help in the planning process by representing ideas from the public.





Members of the City, DDA and URA touring the site



Enterprise Zone Incentives

Tifton's Enterprise Zone was designated to encourage revitalization and business investment in the designated area by offering incentives to business owners and property owners. To be eligible for the program, a business or property must be located within the Enterprise Zone and create the minimum number of jobs or make significant property improvements.

CHIP GRANT CELEBRATIONS

CHIP stands for Community HOME Investment Program and is administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT of COMMUNITY AFFAIRS





In 2023, The City of Tifton was awarded $400,000 in CHIP Grant funding to assist homeowners within its target area by addressing home rehabilitation needs. These 2023 CHIP funds allowed the Pitts and Williams home rehabilitation projects to happen (bell ringing ceremonies pictured above).

The City of Tifton has now completed three home rehabilitation projects through the CHIP grant program and has one home in progress.

The City of Tifton was awarded $400,000 in 2023 and $500,000 in 2025 from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to assist eligible low to moderate income homeowners with housing rehabilitation.

The City of Tifton is currently accepting applicants for the 2025 funds. To be eligible for the grant program, applicants must own and occupy their home, be located within the target area, and be able to meet other applicant requirements.

Contact our Grant Administrators for more info at (229) 928-5779.

2025 GEORGIA CITIES WEEK

TIFTON Georgia
The Friendly City

Georgia Cities Week 2025 took place April 21-25 in Tifton. Each day, officials planned activities that were open and free to the community.

Georgia Cities Week is an annual event sponsored by the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) to celebrate and showcase the services provided by city governments.



imagine the possible

GA CITIES WEEK 2025 THEME

Pictured above: Mayor Julie Smith holds "Reading with the Mayor" during the Touch-a-Truck Event on Day 3 of GA Cities Week.

City staff created a Tifton-specific coloring book and narrative for Mayor Smith to read to the children.


admin
professionals
day


headstone
cleaning @
oakridge
cemetery


touch-a-truck


EVENT
GEORGIA
CITIES
WEEK
free movie
friday @ the tift
Free Movie Night
Featuring "IF"
Friday April 25th
6 PM

MAIN STREET

Historic Downtown TIFTON
MAIN STREET PROGRAM

@Downtown Tifton @downtowntifton

Community Impact
FYE 2024-2025



$2.7M+
Total Amount of Private/Public Investment in Downtown Tifton for FYE 2024 & 2025

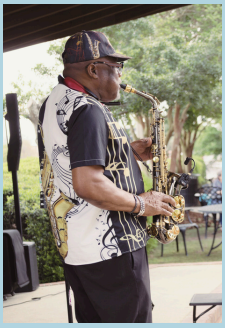


HILLERY CULPEPPER
Main Street Manager
HILLERY@DOWNTOWNTIFTON.COM
(229) 391-3966



Total Number of Promotional Events: **242**

13
New Businesses Growing or Expanding



New Jobs Created **58**

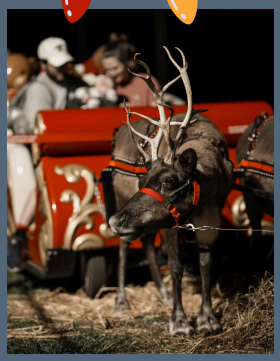
IMPLEMENTED
- ☑ *Downtown Loyalty Cards*
- ☑ *Support Local Mob*

99,370 PEOPLE
Attendance at Promotional Events

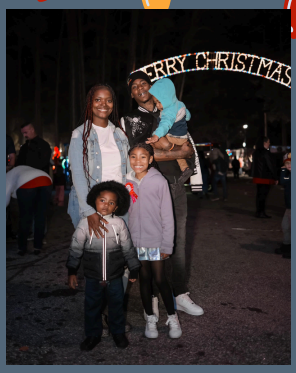
Volunteer Hours **847**

$320K
Total Cost of Building Rehabilitations in Downtown

Festival of Lights



In November of 2024, the community came together to celebrate a bright new tradition, Fulwood's Festival of Lights Celebration! We saw the magic in everyone's eyes as we turned on our beautiful new lights and displays. This event will continue in the future and is always held the night before Thanksgiving, 7-9pm.

























Hometown Holidays

In 2024, the Downtown Tifton Main Street Program oversaw the traditional Hometown Holidays festivities. A great success, the parade welcomed thousands of visitors to Downtown Tifton and featured a skating rink, marching bands, vendors and more.



First Friday Concert Series

First Friday Concerts on First Street Returned in 2024-2025, bringing life, dancing, business, and family fun to Downtown Tifton.













Tifton Farmers Market

The Tifton Farmers Market moved to Downtown Tifton in Fall of 2024, and continued to open their Spring and Summer markets in the downtown community. Hosted on First Street Extension, people flock to find handcrafted goods, homegrown produce, meats, flavor and fun for all ages. Approximately 3,200 people visited the Tifton Farmers Market, spending $150,369.

Support Local Mob





The Support Local Mob is an initiative that launched in April 2025 to gather local community members, business owners, and partners together as they commit to spending a minimum of $10 each in a local downtown shop. The fun part is, this is a complete surprise for the business. Since it's origination, the Support Local Mob has brought $1200+ to the Downtown Tifton community and gathered over 60 participants.



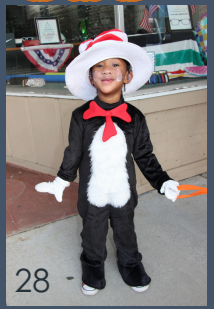


Easter Eggstravaganza

Over 20 Downtown Tifton merchants participated in this Easter celebration on Main Street. In the format of Trick-or-Treat, the event welcomed children and families for free candy and holiday celebration.

Trick or Treat in Downtown







SUPPORT LOCAL.
LOVE LOCAL.
Downtown Tifton.

Second Saturdays









Second Saturdays in Downtown Tifton are a once a month opportunity to attract visitors to Main Street. Merchants work together to offer storewide sales, live music, dining specials and more.

Back to School Fashion Show







The Back to School Fashion Show from late July 2024 provided fashion, fun, and fellowship as local school teachers and community members strutted their stuff wearing outfits from seven local outfitters.


Historic
Downtown
TIFTON

TIFT THEATRE

Tift Theatre @tifttheatre

MISSION
The mission of the Tift Theatre for Performing Arts is to educate and entertain through cultural enrichment opportunities and performances.

VISION
The vision of the Tift Theatre for Performing Arts is to offer opportunities and programs for all community members at affordable prices. Through its rich performance history, the theatre wishes to educate and enlighten the community through cultural enrichment programs while meeting the needs of the Tifton residents and tourists.



KEZIA LARRY
Tift Theatre Manager
KLARRY@TIFTON.NET
(229) 386-5150

4.6K+ ATTENDEES

44 EVENTS





10 IN-HOUSE PRODUCTIONS

TIFT THEATRE
EST. 1937





970 PATRONS

Disney's Little Mermaid the Musical

Spotlight Accomplishments



Theatre Tech Camp Available for High School Students Beginning Summer 2025

The Tift Theatre's annual kids camp included a new addition in the summer of 2025: a Theatre Tech camp! High school students were able to learn about the behind the scenes magic that takes place in order to create magic on stage.

Curtain and Roof Renovations

The Tift Theatre, originally opened in 1937, was in need of some TLC. In the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year, new curtains were purchased for the theatre and important roof repairs were made. These necessary upgrades will ensure the Tift Theatre can continue to serve the Tifton community for years to come.





Increased Community Engagement

Frequent social media presence on Facebook and local news stations helps Theatre Director Kezia Larry spread the word about shows coming up. Increased diversity of show offerings also ensures different interests and topics are represented at the Tift Theatre, welcoming and touching all parts of our community.

Original Shows Sweep Tifton off their Feet

10 in-house productions, directed, choreographed, costumed, musically arranged and coached took the stage over the last fiscal year at the Tift Theatre. Theatre Director Kezia Larry's background in performing and musical education greatly benefit the Tift's ability to expand capabilities and show offerings.



The Little Mermaid takes Tifton under the sea.



The Play That Goes Wrong takes stage and brings belly laughs to Tifton.



Kids camp 2025 brings together community children to learn and perform.



Tift Theatre's original event, The Masked Singer, takes flight with wild popularity!

ANTHONY G. BATEMAN YOUTH CENTER

A center for positive influence that will encourage growth and development for youth in the community. Holding free community events, the Bateman Youth Center welcomes all and serves daily with the purpose of improving lives of those underserved in Tifton.

Anthony G. Bateman Youth Center

Anthony G. Bateman Youth Center Tifton





Antron Johnson is awarded the 2025 Anthony G. Bateman Scholarship in May 2025.



Community Outreach

Among other involvements, Dr. Tift currently serves as President of the Tifton Rotary Club. There, she is able to share with community members and leaders about the Bateman Youth Center and Youth Council.



Hosting open house days for local children, summer camps, YMCA afterschool programs, community information sessions and more, the Bateman Youth Center is quickly becoming a community center in Tifton since opening in 2022.



DR. TONJA C. TIFT
Program Director
TTIFT@TIFTON.NET
(229) 391-3868

TIFTON Georgia
The Friendly City

YOUTH COUNCIL

Dr. Tift is leading the charge on the 2025-2026 Tifton Youth Council. During the 2024-2025 year, Dr. Tift made personal visits to Tift County High School and Tift Area Academy to talk directly to students about the importance of such an opportunity. From there, she garnered impressive interest from students that led to a strong and admirable pool of applicants to select from for the coming year.

The Youth Council Recruitment Committee chose nine honorable students, a group representative of both schools, to carry the torch of the Tifton Youth Council forward. In the 2025-2026 year, the students will meet monthly, design and execute a service project, work directly with Tifton City Council members and more.

TIFTON YOUTH COUNCIL

Tifton Youth Council







FINANCIAL LITERACY INITIATIVE



The goal of the Tifton Financial Literacy Initiative, since it's origination in January 2023, is to help solve challenges related to poverty, low homeownership rates and other issues by implementing a comprehensive financial literacy initiative through which every resident of Tifton can participate. It strives to better equip a population to make good decisions on credit and better position assets and resources that are effective and productive, resulting in significant personal, household-level, small business and community-wide impact. The initiative complements Launch Tifton, the city's plan to create and promote housing options for residents.

FLI classes are held at 5:30pm on the third Tuesday of each month at the Leroy Rogers Senior Center.

Scan to Learn More!

315+ ATTENDEES

12 CLASSES

CITY OF TIFTON
FLI
Financial Literacy Initiative


TIFTON
Georgia
The Friendly City

WELLNESS COMMITTEE

Employee Wellness Program

The City of Tifton was awarded a 2024 Health Wellness Grant by the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) in January 2025. The grant supports the city's commitment to facilitating positive change in the workplace culture and going the extra mile for employee health and wellness.

GMA collaborates with the City of Tifton at every step of the health wellness journey. Awards are made statewide to Participating Employers enrolled in one or more medical plans through the GMEBS (Georgia Municipal Employees Benefit Services) Life and Health Insurance Fund.

The Health Wellness Program at GMA helps members embrace a variety of skills, mindsets, and cultures to encourage utmost well-being through workplace health and wellness initiatives. These initiatives have a demonstrated track record of improving employee wellbeing and quality of life, while enhancing workplace morale, reducing medical claims, and maximizing cost impact.

The City of Tifton formed a Wellness Committee that plans and executes events for employees, promoting health and wellbeing.



January 2025 - Biometric Screenings in City Hall



February 2025 - Heart Smart Luncheon



Early April 2025 - Walk at Lunch Downtown Tifton



Late April 2025 - Biggest Loser Champion Awarded



June 2025 - Men's Health Luncheon



May 2025 - Mental Health Boxes delivered to each department



SENIOR CENTER

A Year of Growth, Connection, and Care

LEROY ROGERS SENIOR CENTER

LEROY ROGERS SENIOR CENTER TIFTON



NATASHA PATRICK

Senior Center Director
NPATRICK@TIFTON.NET
(229) 556-6189

The Leroy Rogers Senior Center continues to serve as a hub of wellness, activity, and community for seniors in our area. We are proud to provide a safe, engaging, and welcoming space for older adults to thrive. We offer a variety of services, programs, and activities that promote health, well-being, social connection, and continued independence. The center is contracted with the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's Area Agency on Aging. We are happy to provide timely support and services and advocate on issues related to aging.

Our Main Goal: To help older adults stay active, connected, and supported as they age while providing resources, reducing isolation and enhancing the overall quality of life.

Looking Ahead:
We are committed to expanding services, increasing outreach, and advocating for the needs of our senior population. Thank you to our participants, families, city leadership, and partners for helping us make a difference every day.
We are more than a center — **we are a community.**

Proudly Serving
115
SENIORS

Total Rides Provided:
7,124

Total Meals Served:
6,358

Total Home Delivered Meals Served:
11,661

Social Activities: Bingo, arts and crafts, dances, holiday celebrations, and group outings.

Wellness Programs: Exercise classes, health screenings, nutrition education, and mental health support.

Educational Opportunities: Computer classes, guest speakers, financial planning workshops, and lifelong learning.

Support Services: Assistance with benefits (like Medicare), legal aid referrals, transportation help, and meal programs (like congregate lunches or Home Delivered Meals).

Volunteer Opportunities: We offer chances for seniors to give back and stay engaged in the community.

Total Activities:
586

















LEROY ROGERS SENIOR CENTER TIFTON

OLDER AMERICANS MONTH

MAY 2025

Older Americans Month was celebrated in Tifton in May and featured many events, gatherings and celebrations to show support and appreciation for our community's seniors.











LEROY ROGERS SENIOR CENTER TIFTON

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Tifton Fire Department



BOBBY BENNETT
Fire Chief
BBENNETT@TIFTON.NET
(229) 391-3972

The Tifton Fire Department is committed to providing our citizens with the best fire protection service possible. This is accomplished in part by maintaining a staff of highly trained personnel. Currently, we have three fire stations fully staffed throughout the City. We run 12 firefighters per shift, and respond with two engines and two ladders and a rescue unit.

TIFTON 18 92 FIRE

In January 2025, the New Burn Building Training Center was unveiled and training began. Read more on page 41.

Year In Review

TOTAL INCIDENTS: 1,383

STRUCTURE FIRES - 24

GRASS FIRES: 21

TRASH FIRES: 30

VEHICLE FIRES: 31



MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENTS: 216



SERVICE CALLS: 71
GOOD INTENT CALLS: 209
FALSE ALARMS: 251

RESCUES: 12
MEDICAL: 295

WEATHER-RELATED: 78

TIFTON 18 92 FIRE

NEW BURN BUILDING TRAINING FACILITY



In January 2025, the Tifton Fire Department's New Burn Building Training Facility completed construction.

This type of hands-on fire training can save lives of firefighters by providing them scenarios they may face in the field.

The burn building is constructed of recycled shipping containers and will last for 1,000 evolutions, training both veteran and future firefighters to come.

"THIS IS A CRITICAL TRAINING PROP THAT IS AS REALISTIC AS WE CAN GET TO AN ACTUAL STRUCTURE FIRE. WE ARE VERY BLESSED TO HAVE A CITY COUNCIL THAT SUPPORTS OUR VISION AND MISSION."
-TIFTON FIRE CHIEF BENNETT



Featuring three levels, multiple doors, windows, chimney vents and movable indoor walls, the training building can be maneuvered to run various training scenarios. The burn building is a three-story structure that illustrates what it takes to manipulate stairwells like you may find in homes and motels.





TIFTON FIRE

18,617 TRAINING HOURS

99%

OF TIFTON FIREFIGHTERS ARE EMT CERTIFIED

Work-Based Learning
WBL
Georgia's Future Workforce

CONTINUED PARTNERSHIP WITH TIFT COUNTY SCHOOLS' WORK BASED LEARNING PROGRAM

"EVERY DAY IS A TRAINING DAY"

The Tifton Fire Department strives to ensure that every firefighter on staff is properly trained in the latest techniques and technological advancements to keep Tifton residents safe.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

"Greater love hath no man than this, That a man lay down his life for a friend."



Served food at the Tift County Special Olympics



Attended Career Fairs at Tift County Schools to answer student questions and encourage recruitment

42

(not including city events)

EVENTS

providing first aid to

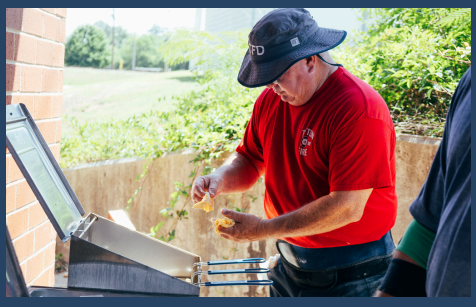
+4,192 PEOPLE



Participated in Touch-A-Truck for GA Cities Week and allowed children to learn about the fire department and trucks



Created a water day for children in the Nine Oaks Apartment Complex



Chief Bennett and Tifton Firefighters cooked for the annual Fish Fry at the Leroy Rogers Senior Center



Taught countless children about fire safety and firefighting



Hosted multiple elementary schools and classes for fire safety and a tour of the fire station



Helped citizens clean headstones at Oakridge Cemetery

Tifton Fire's Easter Egg Hunt in Fulwood Park

APRIL 2025









C.I.R.T. TEAM

"Together, we're ready."



CIRT Tifton Police officers and Tifton Fire medics train side-by-side, preparing to protect and save lives under fire. Together, we're ready.

TIFTON POLICE DEPARTMENT AND TIFTON FIRE DEPARTMENT TOOK THEIR PARTNERSHIP TO THE NEXT LEVEL BY CREATING THE CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE TEAM (CIRT).

CIRT IS BUILT FOR ONE MISSION: TO SAVE LIVES AND PROTECT OUR CITIZENS DURING THE MOST DANGEROUS MOMENTS - ACTIVE SHOOTER AND ACTIVE THREAT SITUATIONS - ANYWHERE IN TIFTON.

THIS ELITE TEAM COMBINES SRT-TRAINED POLICE OFFICERS WITH EMT-TRAINED FIREFIGHTER MEDICS, WORKING AS ONE. TOGETHER, THEY RESPOND FAST, STOP THE THREAT, AND DELIVER LIFESAVING MEDICAL CARE ON THE SPOT. EVERY MONTH, THEY TRAIN TOGETHER, SHARPENING THEIR TEAMWORK AND TACTICS SO THEY'RE READY WHEN OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS THEM MOST.

TIFTON POLICE AND TIFTON FIRE ARE PROUD TO SHOW WHAT TRUE TEAMWORK LOOKS LIKE: TWO DEPARTMENTS, ONE MISSION: KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY SAFE AND SAVING LIVES WHEN SECONDS COUNT.

MOBILE COMMAND UNIT



Tifton has a specialized, self-contained unit equipped with advanced technology and communication systems designed to facilitate on-scene coordination, communication, and decision-making during emergencies or large-scale events.



POLICE DEPARTMENT

Tifton Police Department

MISSION

The Tifton Police Department provides, with cooperation of the public, effective and efficient protection of life, individual liberty and property of all people within the City of Tifton.

VISION

The vision of the Tifton Police Department is to provide the mission accomplishment with a high degree of crime reduction, accident prevention and the appropriate investigation and apprehension of offenders.

The Tifton Police Department consists of 49 full-time, sworn men and women, nine civilian personnel and four part-time officers.



STEVE HYMAN
Police Chief
STEVEH@TIFTON.NET
(229) 382-3132

STANDOUT ACTIONS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Awarded by the community:
(Left) Lt. Chris Luckey was surprised with the 2024 J. Harvey Davis Award from Ruth's Cottage & The Patticake House.

(Right) Detective Roberto Torres received the 2024 Officer of the Year Award from the Tifton Exchange Club.







Organized Drug Crackdown:
February 2025 also saw a successful warrant executed at the Super 8 motel, leading to four arrests for drug distribution.





Major Narcotics Seizure:
On July 1, 2025, officers seized 20 pounds of marijuana and an illegally possessed firearm during a traffic stop on I-75. K-9 Officer Niko and his handler were key to this bust.



Theft Arrests:
In March 2025, quick work by patrol officers led to arrests following multiple vehicle burglaries on James Ave.



Homicide Arrest:
In February 2025, officers arrested a suspect in connection with a double shooting where two females were found wounded inside a Tifton residence.

BY THE NUMBERS

CALLS FOR SERVICE:
39,433

INCIDENT REPORTS WRITTEN:
3,497

CITATIONS ISSUED:
6,961

ARRESTS MADE:
1,056

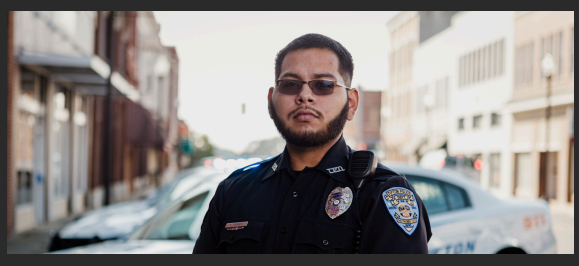
ACCIDENTS WORKED:
1,063

TRAINING HOURS LOGGED BY OFFICERS:
5,769





VIOLENT CRIMES:
135





PROPERTY CRIMES:
679

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY









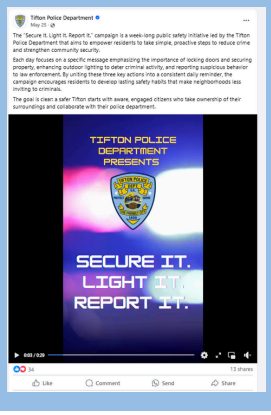




Social Media Campaigns

In FY 2024-2025, the Tifton Police Department launched original social media campaigns as another strategy to reach the community. These campaigns were based on sharing tips for deterring crime and driving safely.





Appearances on Local News

Chief Steve Hyman made appearances on local news channel WALB News 10 to spread awareness for parents of the uptick of children involved in gangs and other crimes, and shared tips on how to spot warning signs.





Tifton welcomed a new police dog this year, Officer Niko. Niko is a Narcotics Detection K-9.





Tifton Welcomes Officer Niko

Niko is a Narcotics Detection K-9 and has a proven track record of sniffing out crime. Officer Jacob Stubbs is Niko's handler and together they are committed to keeping Tifton safe.

In Niko's short time in Tifton, he has already helped detect trafficked illegal narcotics along I-75 in multiple instances and has located narcotics on city streets -- keeping drugs out of Tifton and citizens safe.

When Niko is not sniffing out crime, he represents our Friendly City as the friendliest dog. Please help us in welcoming Niko to our city.

MUNICIPAL COURT



GAIL DRAYTON
Chief Clerk of Court
COURT2@TIFTON.NET
(229) 391-3967

The City of Tifton Municipal Court adjudicates cases arising out of violations of traffic laws, local ordinances and certain State misdemeanors. The City of Tifton Municipal Court has jurisdiction over ordinance violations and state misdemeanors, including traffic violations, which occur within the city limits of Tifton.

The Tifton Municipal Court is in session every 1st, 2nd, and 4th Wednesday for Arraignments and every 3rd Thursday trials are held.

The Municipal Court also hears City Code Violation cases that arise in the City of Tifton.

MUNICIPAL COURT CITATIONS

7,205

MUNICIPAL COURT JUDGE

CHAD VANORMAN

TRAFFIC TICKETS CAN BE PAID ONLINE

Mail payments to:
130 East 5th Street
Tifton, GA 31794

or:

Phone: (470) 648-0506





DID YOU KNOW?

Gail, like many other City employees, is involved with multiple professional organizations outside of her role at the City that better equip her and staff to serve the people of Tifton.

- *15 year member, President Elect, and Board Member of GMCCC*
- *Serves as a mentor to Clerks in other municipalities*
- *Member of GCIC TAC*

June 2025- Mayor Julie Smith presented a proclamation to recognize June 9th through 13th as Municipal Court Clerks Week. Chief Clerk of Court Gail Drayton accepted the proclamation.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Information Technology Department oversees all technology utilized by the City, and provides the tools and support necessary for every department to perform their functions efficiently and effectively.

In 2024-2025, the IT department successfully completed many internally focused projects, as well as:

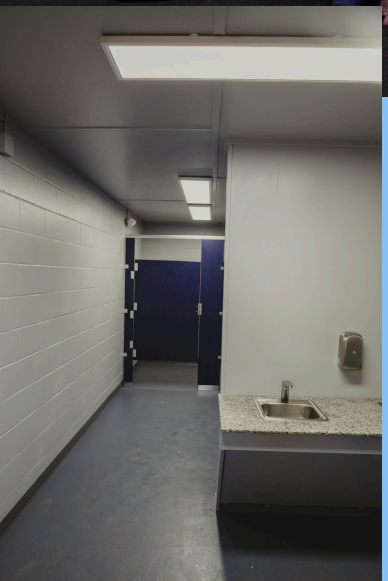
- **Implemented a New Cyber Security Training Program**
- **Updated a Number of Hardware Infrastructure** *at various locations to improve network operation and resiliency*



JONATHAN TAYLOR
Director of IT & Special Projects Manager
JTAYLOR@TIFTON.NET
(229) 382-6231

SPECIAL PROJECTS





FEBRUARY 2025-

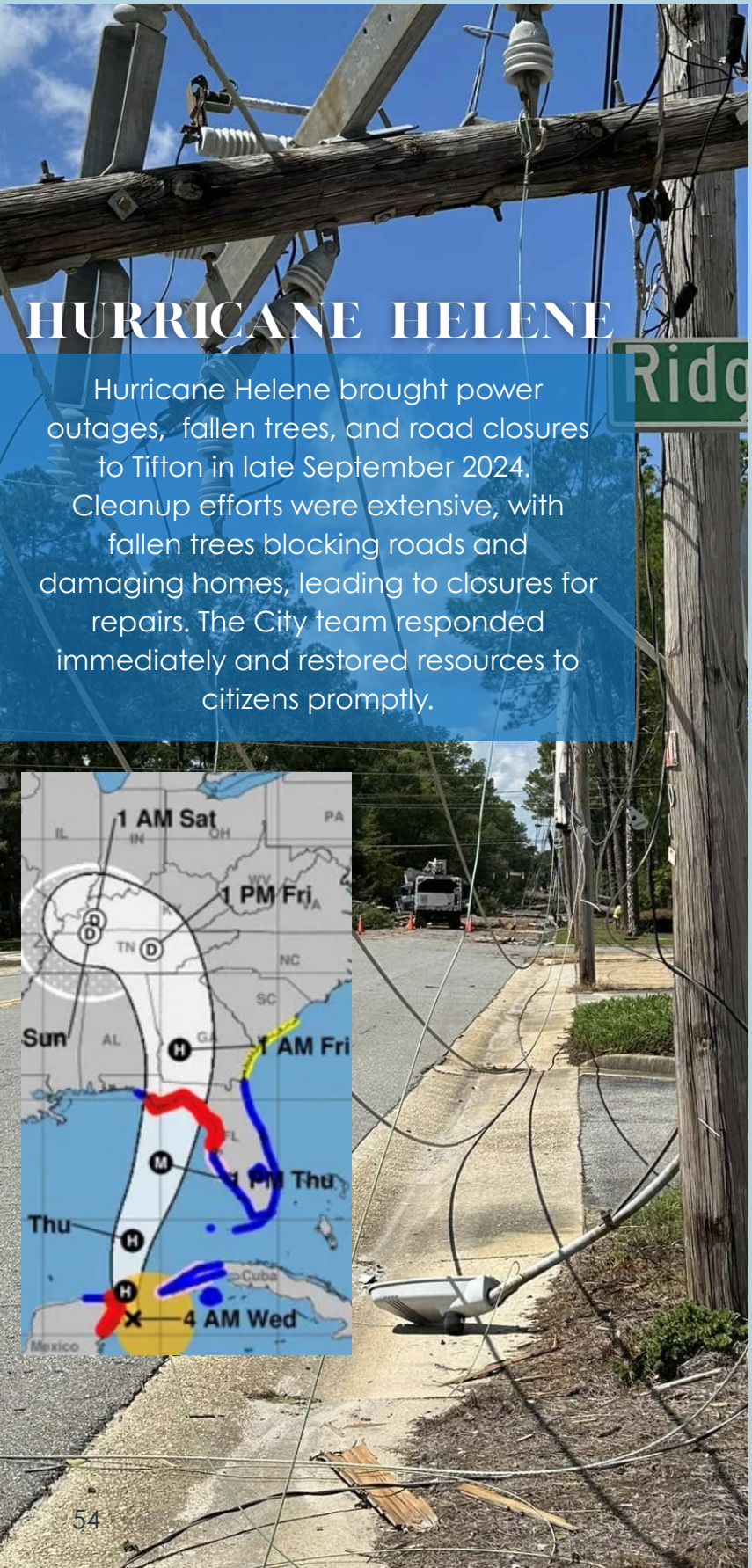
The City held a ribbon cutting in celebration of the new second playground at Fulwood Park and the completion of renovations of the Fulwood Park restrooms. Many community stakeholders and leaders attended this joyous event, and the ribbon was cut as children played on the new equipment in the background.



January 2025 - The City of Tifton completes the second playground in Fulwood Park

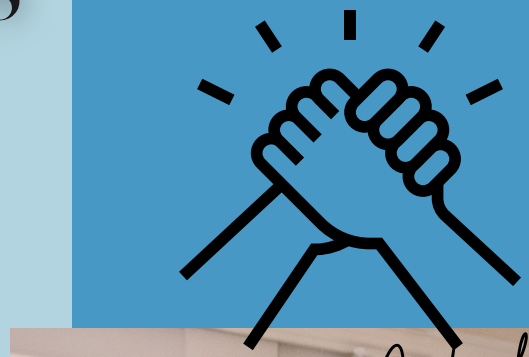
WEATHER EVENTS MAKE HISTORY

& the City Team Prevails



HURRICANE HELENE

Hurricane Helene brought power outages, fallen trees, and road closures to Tifton in late September 2024. Cleanup efforts were extensive, with fallen trees blocking roads and damaging homes, leading to closures for repairs. The City team responded immediately and restored resources to citizens promptly.



helping beyond City limits



Months following the storm, the City of Waycross awarded Mayor Julie Smith the Kennedy L. Sanders Outstanding Citizen Achievement Award for their appreciation of her outstanding efforts and assistance during the aftermath and recovery of Hurricane Helene.



JANUARY 2025

Pictured: Snowfall at ABAC



Tifton Fire Department celebrated the snowfall by building a snowman

Tifton experienced a rare and significant snowfall on January 21-22, 2025, which brought several inches of snow to the area. This was considered a healthy coat of snow for the region, which rarely sees such accumulation.

Our City team responded promptly to keep and restore resources for our citizens during the snowstorm.

RHYTHM AND RIBS
2025 • Fulwood Park

The 12th Annual Tifton Rhythm & Ribs BBQ Festival at Fulwood Park in Tifton, GA was nothing short of spectacular—truly a "Party in the Pines"! The weather was perfect, setting the stage for an unforgettable weekend filled with coast-to-coast music, mouthwatering food, incredible craft vendors, a thrilling dog show, engaging cooking demonstrations, a spirited kids' cook-off, multiple ancillary competitions, and some of the best BBQ action around!



The City of Tifton/Main Street Tifton hosted a Kids BBQ Cook Off for the first time in 2025. A great success, the City plans to host again in 2026.













RHYTHM AND RIBS THANK YOU LUNCH









Tifton Tourism/Spearman Agency, organizers of the Rhythm and Ribs festival, held a lunch following the festival to thank City employees who helped to make the event successful.

Present were most City departments, including Tifton Fire Department, Information Technology, Public Works, and more!



Small Cities CONFERENCE

BUILDING **STRONGER** COMMUNITIES

May 7-9, 2025 | Georgia Municipal Association



The conference kicked off with several pre-conference training classes and a welcome reception hosted by the Tifton Arts Council & City of Tifton. Attendees were greeted by Tifton Mayor Julie Smith and GMA CEO and Executive Director Larry Hanson, and other local leaders, setting the stage for an energetic and insightful few days.

The City of Tifton had the privilege of welcoming Georgia Municipal Association's Small Cities Conference to our Friendly City.

The conference was a great success, and Tifton's city leaders were able to be guides to attendees (many of whom were leaders themselves in their hometowns) visiting from all over Georgia.

TIFTON Georgia
The Friendly City

Small Cities CONFERENCE
BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Small but Mighty: 2025 Small Cities Conference Unites Georgia's Local Leaders in Tifton





Welcome Reception at City Hall





TIFTON Georgia
The Friendly City

Welcome Reception at the Syd Blackmarr Arts Center

"We love having people here in Tifton," said past GMA President and Tifton Mayor Julie Smith. "We are just thrilled to be part of GMA because it's such a benefit—not just for Tifton, but for all of Georgia's cities."

TIFTON-TAUGHT URBAN REDEVELOPMENT CLASS

"Pathways to Progress: Leading the Charge in Redevelopment," a session showcasing how Tifton transformed underutilized spaces into thriving community assets. Following the presentation, attendees boarded a bus for a mobile tour of the featured redevelopment sites.





The course was taught by Tifton Mayor Julie Smith and TURA Chairman Tyler Riddle. Together, the two leaders talked about valuable lessons learned from various revitalization projects in the past, visioning for the future, and the impact these projects have on the community.

Attendees were able to ask questions, compare notes from their own hometowns, and brainstorm ideas for the future possibilities of the towns they represent.

Following the classroom course, Mayor Smith and Chairman Riddle took the attendees on a driving tour of a few of Tifton's successful revitalization projects, like Nine Oaks Apartments and the Bateman Youth Center.

Small Cities CONFERENCE
BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES



2024 IMPACT AWARD



The City of Tifton was honored with the 2024 Community Impact Award from Georgia City Solutions and the Georgia Municipal Association. Tifton was recognized for its outstanding dedication and success in enhancing community well-being and fostering opportunities for all residents to flourish through innovation, collaboration and partnerships. This includes efforts in youth leadership, municipal workforce development, equity and inclusion and literacy improvement. The awards ceremony was held Oct. 10, 2024 in Atlanta.

Pictured are GCS Board Chair Kirby Thompson, Tifton Urban Redevelopment Agency Chair Tyler Riddle, Mayor Julie Smith, Former Director of Communications Stacey Green and Former URA Executive Director Dr. Tonja Tift.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

The Marketing & Communications Office is responsible for informing the public of City goals, plans, activities, services, programs and events through various media outlets. The office creates and manages all marketing materials including print items, graphics, photos, videos, press releases, website design and updates and social media postings.

The goal of the office is to create strong partnerships with the community by providing timely, accurate information that is understandable and engaging for residents, businesses and visitors, and creating more user-friendly processes for communication between the City and public.



CAROLINE ABBOTT
Director of Marketing & Communications
CABBOTT@TIFTON.NET
(229) 391-3996

Facebook.com/TiftonGa

X: CityofTifton

LinkedIn: city-of-tifton

Instagram: @cityoftifton

Youtube.com/CityofTiftonGa

www.Tifton.net



TIFTON Georgia
The Friendly City

approx. 40 PRESS RELEASES
since Jan 2025














TIFTON
Georgia
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PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES

The Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining City streets including signage, signals, asphalt repair, roadway markings and tree maintenance along with maintaining street lights in the downtown district. The department also manages Oak Ridge Cemetery, Fulwood Park and other small parks in the community. The City of Tifton contracts ESG Operations, Inc. to manage public works and utilities.

TIFTON Georgia The Friendly City

ESG Operations

An INFRAMARK Company



ADAM COBB
Division Manager
ADAM.COBB@INFRAMARK.COM
(229)391-3944

21+ MILES OF STREETS PAVED



11,483 ACTIVE WATER CUSTOMERS

2,216 NATURAL GAS CUSTOMERS

BE SURE TO FOLLOW CITY OF TIFTON TO LEARN ABOUT ROAD CLOSURES & OUTAGES

8,934 ACTIVE SEWER CUSTOMERS

5.80 MGD AVG WASTE WATER INFLUENT FLOW

19 LIFT STATIONS

4.83 MGD AVG. WATER TREATED

8 WELLS





543,379 NATURAL GAS MCFS USED

Utilities provided to the City and surrounding areas include water, sewer and natural gas.

The City is responsible for the maintenance and updates to these service systems. The City of Tifton water system is comprised of 280 miles of distribution mains and 8 production wells and can provide approximately 20 million gallons of water per day for domestic and fire protection needs. The City of Tifton operates one wastewater treatment facility, the Tifton Regional Wastewater Treatment Complex (TRWTC), that has a capacity of 8 million gallons per day. The City has developed an Industrial Pretreatment Program in concert with the EDP and works with industries in Tifton to control the discharge of metals and other harmful pollutants into the treatment plant.

See just some of the updates and maintenance projects from FY 2024-2025 below:





The Natural Gas Department made upgrades to the system. These upgrades included meter replacements, service line abandonment, Cathodic Protection repairs and main repairs. Pictures above are of an industrial gas meter that was not functioning. To resolve, we replaced the meter with a new one and installed a corrector on the meter set.



The Gas Department received an after-hours call for a gas leak at the USDA facility on Rainwater Road. The crew was out in below-freezing temperatures to repair this leak. The leaking gas service was cut off, repaired and rerouted to the generator.



At the intersection of Hall Avenue and 18th Street, the C&D Crew installed a new in-line 2" valve. This valve was needed to kill the existing water main in preparation for the installation of a new water main.



This large street saw was purchased in FYE 25. This saw makes repairs of subsurface utilities easier and provides a better finished product. This saw is capable of cutting depths up to 15 inches, which is vital when cutting into streets with multiple layers of paving. The saw also makes repairs in a much smaller footprint.



The C&D Department and Fire Department worked to remove trees from the roadway that fell during Hurricane Helene. This tree was in the 4th Street and Park Avenue area.





We received several calls about sewer back-ups from customers on Golden Way. Upon inspection, we found that the sewer piping was crushed due to another utility boring in another pipeline. The C&D Department removed the damaged pipe and made the necessary repairs.



Our traffic Department is responsible for the maintenance on the Interstate lights along I-75. Here they are working on replacing a ballast and bulb to get this light back in operation.





With the devastation of Hurricane Helene, crews worked tirelessly to clear and re-open streets for the motoring public of Tifton. Above are just a few examples of what they had to deal with during the aftermath.



Safety is paramount in our line of work. These safety showers were installed at every well site should any employee get sprayed with a chemical or get something in their eyes.



The wastewater maintenance crew worked together to replace a failed pump at one of our 19 lift stations. This required coordination within the work group to ensure the task was completed quickly and professionally. Keeping these stations in top-notch-working-order is vital to making sure the wastewater makes it to the treatment plant and avoids spills.

ESG Operations
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The Friendly City

PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES

TIFTON'S URBAN TREE CANOPY



Tifton Tree Board's 2025 Arbor Day Celebration

300+

TREES PLANTED IN TIFTON FYE 2025





TCHS Students help the Tifton Tree Board plant trees on the high school's campus in April 2025

Scan to learn more about Tifton's Urban Tree Canopy



May 2025 - TCHS Students help the Tifton Tree Board maintain recently planted trees around Tifton's Downtown



Trees planted at the Tifton Housing Authority - January 2025



Citizens may notice trees around Tifton are tagged with the above featured QR Code that links to more information about our Urban Tree Canopy

Save Money.
Live Better.

Tifton Natural Gas
Comfortable. Responsible.

Natural Gas Appliance Rebates & Financing Available

The Main Street On-Bill Finance Program provides homeowners with financing options for the installation of natural gas appliances.

QUESTIONS?
Contact the Customer Service Department at (229) 391-3957 during business hours or email customerservice@tifton.net.

SOLID WASTE

TIFTON Georgia The Friendly City

The Tifton-Tift County Landfill is a state-of-the-art facility for the disposal of municipal solid waste, burying the most garbage in the least amount of space, in the most efficient and safe manner.



CHAD MALLOW
Solid Waste Director
CMALLOW@TIFTON.NET
(229) 556-6222

62,971
SOLID WASTE COLLECTED

Ryland ENVIRONMENTAL

The City contracts Ryland Environmental for all residential and commercial solid waste collections.

29
METALS RECYCLED



COVER YOUR LOAD!

State law requires that all loads must be covered by a tarp and secured.

The Landfill will not accept uncovered loads.

581
TIRES RECYCLED

10,661
WOOD WASTE COLLECTED

6,469
WOOD WASTE RECYCLED

= tons



TIFTON-TIFT CO. LANDFILL
445 Mitchell Store Rd
229-556-6222
M-F 7am-5pm
Sat 8am-noon

INERT LANDFILL
601 Armor St
229-387-0559
M-F 8am-noon; 1pm-5pm
Sat 8am-noon


TIFTON
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BOARDS & COMMITTEES

TIFTON Georgia The Friendly City

Downtown Development Authority

The Tifton Downtown Development Authority is a private / public authority structured to focus on development within Downtown Tifton. The mission includes the revitalization and redevelopment of the central core business district of the City.



Tifton-Tift County Public Library Board

The Tifton-Tift County Library Board reviews and approves the local budget and assists in decision making regarding the building maintenance and landscaping of the library.





Historic Preservation Commission

The Tifton Historic Preservation Commission is responsible for reviewing Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) applications to protect historical, cultural and aesthetic interests of the community.

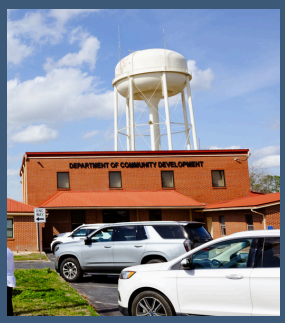
Tifton Housing Authority Board

THA TIFTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

The Tifton Housing Authority (THA) offers quality safe homes, senior activities and GED and educational programs for all ages. Its mission is to provide housing assistance for people with low and moderate incomes.

Planning & Zoning Commission

The Planning and Zoning Commission evaluates the Greater Tift County Comprehensive Plan and reviews, recommends or proposes amendments to the zoning ordinances and map.



Tifton Urban Redevelopment Agency

The Tifton Urban Redevelopment Agency (URA) is charged with the overall economic development of the area encompassing the original urban core of the City: from 12th Street to 17th Street and from Tift Avenue to Ridge Avenue.

TURA
TIFTON URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
Strength · Courage · Leadership



Tifton Tree Board

The Tifton Tree Board was created to protect and preserve trees in public spaces within the City. It oversees the protection, preservation and planting of trees in new construction areas as set forth in the Code of Ordinances.



Tifton-Tift County Tourism Association

The Tifton-Tift County Tourism Association promotes tourism and tourism related activities in Tifton and Tift County.

Interested in serving on a board or committee? For more information, contact 229-391-3970.

Keep Tift Beautiful

Keep Tift Beautiful is an affiliate group of Keep America Beautiful and Keep Georgia Beautiful. Efforts are focused on litter reduction, beautification and recycling.

KEEP TIFT BEAUTIFUL
KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE



think TIFTON

In South Georgia, there's a place where highways intersect and history runs deep. Where the routes bring you here, and the roots make you want to stay. Conveniently located at the crossroads of I-75, Highway 41, Highway 82, and Highway 319, Tifton is more than a pin on the map. It's a small town with a big heart and an even bigger story, one that stretches from our fields to our front porches, and from our festivals to our local shops.

ANNUAL EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

MARCH
RHYTHM & RIBS BBQ FESTIVAL
ABAC TRUCK & TRACTOR PULL

APRIL
STRAWBERRY JUBILEES AT RUTLAND FARMS
FOLK LIFE FESTIVAL
GEE HAW WHOA BACK RODEO

MAY
ARTS IN BLACK FESTIVAL

JUNE
JUNETEENTH CELEBRATIONS
ROCK THE BLOCK
GEORGIA FORESTRY PAGEANT

SEPTEMBER
LA FIESTA DEL PUEBLO
NATIONAL FORESTRY PAGEANT
GOIN' HOG WILD CAR/TRUCK SHOW

OCTOBER
ABAC TRUCK & TRACTOR PULL
FALL FESTIVALS AT RUTLAND FARMS
ESSENCE FESTIVAL
TRICK OR TREAT IN THE VILLAGE

NOVEMBER
ARTS AFFAIR
COASTAL PLAINS FAIR
ABAC PRO PCA RODEO
CANE GRINDING & SYRUP MAKING
FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

DECEMBER
HOMETOWN HOLIDAYS
THE GNAT DROP

ONGOING FUN:
U-PICK FARMS AT BERRY GOOD & RUTLAND FARMS

FIRST FRIDAYS WITH DOWNTOWN TIFTON

PLOUGH GALLERY EXHIBITS

TIFTON FARMERS MARKET (APRIL-JULY & OCTOBER -NOVEMBER)

CLASSES & EXHIBITS AT THE SYD

KRAKEN PRO-WRESTLING

SHOWS AT THE TIFT THEATRE

CRUISE INS WITH SOUTHERN GEARHEADS

THINKTIFTON.COM

@THINKTIFTONGA @THINKTIFTONGA @TIFTTOK

STAY IN THE KNOW WITH ALL THINGS #FRIENDLYCITY

Facebook.com/TiftonGa

Youtube.com/CityofTiftonGa

Instagram: @cityoftifton

LinkedIn: city-of-tifton

X: CityofTifton

www.Tifton.net

STAY IN THE LOOP

Text Your Keyword to Sign Up for Text Notifications

Keywords:

Theatre, Downtown and City Events ⇨ **Tift**

Emergency and General Notifications ⇨ **TiftonGA**

Leroy Rogers Senior Center Updates ⇨ **SeniorCenter**

Anthony G. Bateman Youth Center ⇨ **YouthCenter**







TIFTON Georgia
The Friendly City

How Do I Share Feedback?

The City of Tifton deeply values citizen feedback.

To ensure your voice is heard, please keep in mind some of the best channels of communication with City Leaders.

1 Report questions or concerns online.

SCAN TO SEND FEEDBACK

https://www.tifton.net/139/Report-a-Concern

2 Contact your Councilman or the Mayor directly.

SCAN TO CONTACT

Once on page, click on your councilman to see their contact information.

https://www.tifton.net/174/City-Council

3 Attend City Council meetings and share during public comment.

3rd Monday of each month

City Hall
130 1st St E

"We all need people who will give us feedback. That's how we improve." – Bill Gates



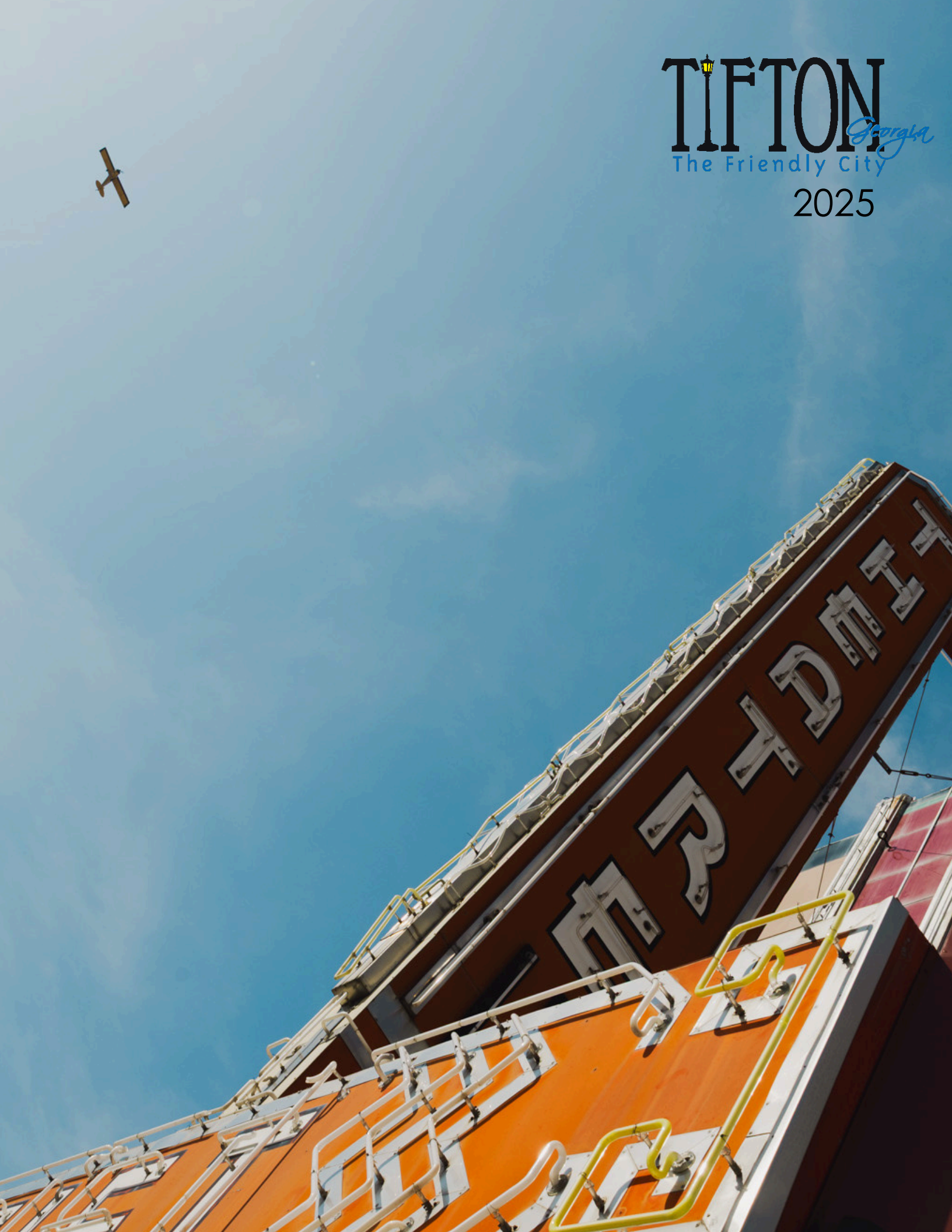


TIFTON Georgia
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Sign up for Downtown Tifton's Newsletter here:

Short & Paulk Renaissance Project Citizen Engagement Group

STAY IN THE KNOW WITH ALL THINGS #FRIENDLYCITY


TIFTON
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2025


Downtown
Tifton
SHOP DINE STAY
SUPPORT
LOCAL
GMC
TIFTON
Georgia
The Friendly City