

Baldwin County Georgia



OCONEE HEIGHTS MINI PARK SET TO OPEN AUGUST 14TH



Baldwin County Government

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Hours

8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
M-F except holidays



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Save the Date: Oconee Heights Mini Park Grand Opening Set for August 14th

Fun In the Heights

14
August

**5:30 PM -
7:00 PM**

JOIN US FOR THE RIBBON CUTTING OF THE OCONEE HEIGHTS MINI PARK AT 6 PM

The event will include: refreshments, bicycle lanes, helmets from Safe Kids, health education, games, the Tex James Morning Show with Power 107.1 & more! The park is located at 123 Coombs Ave. Please park at Wesley Chapel AME, 425 Bell Ave SE!

The grand opening of the Oconee Heights Mini Park is set for Thursday, August 14th at 5:30 p.m. The mini park was created from a special partnership between Baldwin County, Georgia College and State University, and and DPH Shine.

“In 2021 dozens of Oconee Heights residents came to a Board of Commissioners meeting requesting improvements in its neighborhood. The residents wanted safer streets and amenities. Thanks to a partnership with Georgia College & State University, monthly meetings began soon thereafter. Many of the ideas for improvements were birthed at these meetings.



As a result, Baldwin County has secured over \$5.6 million in grants so far to make improvements in the Oconee Heights neighborhood. The very first visible sign of that investment is the Oconee Heights Park,” shared Carlos Tobar, Baldwin County Manager.

“What began as a simple effort to understand community needs has blossomed into a lasting partnership,” said Dr. Damian Francis, Associate Professor and Director from Georgia College and State University’s Center for Health and Social Issues. “With the installation of this mini-park, Oconee Heights is blazing a trail on becoming a signature community in Middle Georgia—an example of what’s possible when we invest in people, place, and purpose. Through the power of play, GCSU is committed to building stronger, more connected neighborhoods.”

The Oconee Heights Mini Park originated through a collaboration between Georgia College & State University’s Center for Health and Social Issues (CHSI) and the Baldwin County Board of Commissioners, following feedback from residents who voiced the need for a safe space for children to play. North Central Health District (NCHD) received funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the second year in the five-year REACH cooperative agreement to start the Supporting Health Initiatives and Nurturing Equity (SHINE) Program in October 2023. One of the key goals of the SHINE program’s physical activity public health strategies is supporting walkable, active neighborhoods, which has played a role in the advancement of the mini park project.

SHINE helped identify and support funding opportunities, including connecting CHSI with the T-Mobile Hometown Grant program and Georgia Power. As a result, the Baldwin County Board of Commissioners applied for a T-Mobile hometown grant with support from CHSI and North Central Health District and was awarded a \$50,000 grant for the park’s development.

In February, SHINE also partnered with Professor Valerie Aranda and her students from Georgia College & State University’s Department of Art to engage with the Oconee Heights Collaborative. Together, they explored the community’s history, which inspired the design and painting of historical crosswalks near the mini park. Funded by the SHINE Program, these crosswalks not only reflect the rich history of Oconee Heights but also enhance pedestrian safety by providing marked pathways into the park.

Thank you to everyone who has worked tirelessly to make the vision for this park a reality!

Baldwin County Celebrates Pickleball Court Grand Opening



Baldwin County recently celebrated the ribbon cutting of the brand-new pickleball courts. The pickleball courts and baseball field lights were funded with \$2 million from the American Rescue Plan Act funds. Georgia Governor Brian Kemp's Office of Planning and Budget awarded and administered the grant for the federal government.

Baldwin County 12-U Softball Team Takes 2nd Place at All-Star World Series



Congratulations to the Baldwin County 12U All-Stars on an incredible season! These athletes are the Georgia State Champions and finished as Runner-Ups at the All American Youth Sports All-Star World Series.

They also showed out at the Skills Challenges: Lola, Sawyer, and Sawyer Grace took 1st place in Around the Horn. Sawyer snagged 1st place in the Catcher Throw Down with a super fast 2.0 seconds. We are so proud of this team!

GDOT Recognizes Baldwin County Regional Airport for Outstanding Promotions in Aviation



On July 30, 2025, the Georgia Department of Transportation recognized the Baldwin County Regional Airport for Outstanding Promotions in Aviation. Baldwin County was chosen from a group of 102 eligible airports. Many individuals made this recognition possible, and it all starts with Jim Wolfgang. The Airport Advisory Committee, chaired by Mr. Wolfgang, has been working tirelessly to promote the BCRA. Mr. Wolfgang's vision was for the airport to host community-wide regional events promoting aviation, host activities targeted at promoting aviation in the K-12 environment, establish camps for high school students, establish a presence at Baldwin County High School, and conduct

activities for underrepresented groups. That vision has become a reality! Baldwin County School District hired Roberto Hornung Filho as its high school Aviation Teacher in 2021, who started the Georgia Pathway Program for Drones. He and his students are frequent visitors at the airport. The Board of Education has taken notice of Roberto's dedication to his career and his students. He was awarded a Pursuit of Excellence Award in December 2024.

Kalina Milani, a retired Emirates Airlines pilot, who also has a Master's in Business Administration, learned to fly in her hometown of Recife, Brazil. She wishes she had had an aviation mentor, so she now wants to help women enter the aviation field. She established the Experimental Aircraft Association in Baldwin County in March 2023. The chapter meets every third Monday at 5:30 pm at the airport. The chapter provides VMC Club, Young Eagles and Eagle Flights.

Bruce Hood, the airport's fixed-based operator, supports aviation promotion by inviting schools to bring students to tour the airport and inform them of the Young Eagles efforts of the EAA Chapter and Baldwin County High School's Aviation Program. In addition, none of this would have been possible without all the pilots who gave of their time, talents and treasure to help the airport advisory committee and individuals promote the airport.

GCSU Rural Studies Institute Hosts Center for Sustainable Communities Research and Education

The Rural Studies Institute (RSI) at Georgia College & State University hosted the Center for Sustainable Communities Research and Education (SCORE) and the Brook Byers Institute for Sustainable Systems at Georgia Tech on a recent site visit to Milledgeville-Baldwin County.

This visit was part of an RSI initiative to support rural

communities and explore future opportunities for collaboration and partnership. With representation from both city and county officials, the visit underscored the strong local community support behind our shared goals. The group also highlighted the goal of RSI to provide high impact learning opportunities for students and included student interns from the Rural Studies Institute (RSI), Center for Sustainable Communities Research and Education (SCORE), the Mississippi Communities United for Prosperity (MCUP), and the Partnership for Inclusive Innovation (PIN).

We are grateful for the meaningful conversations and continued partnership that will help drive progress in our community.