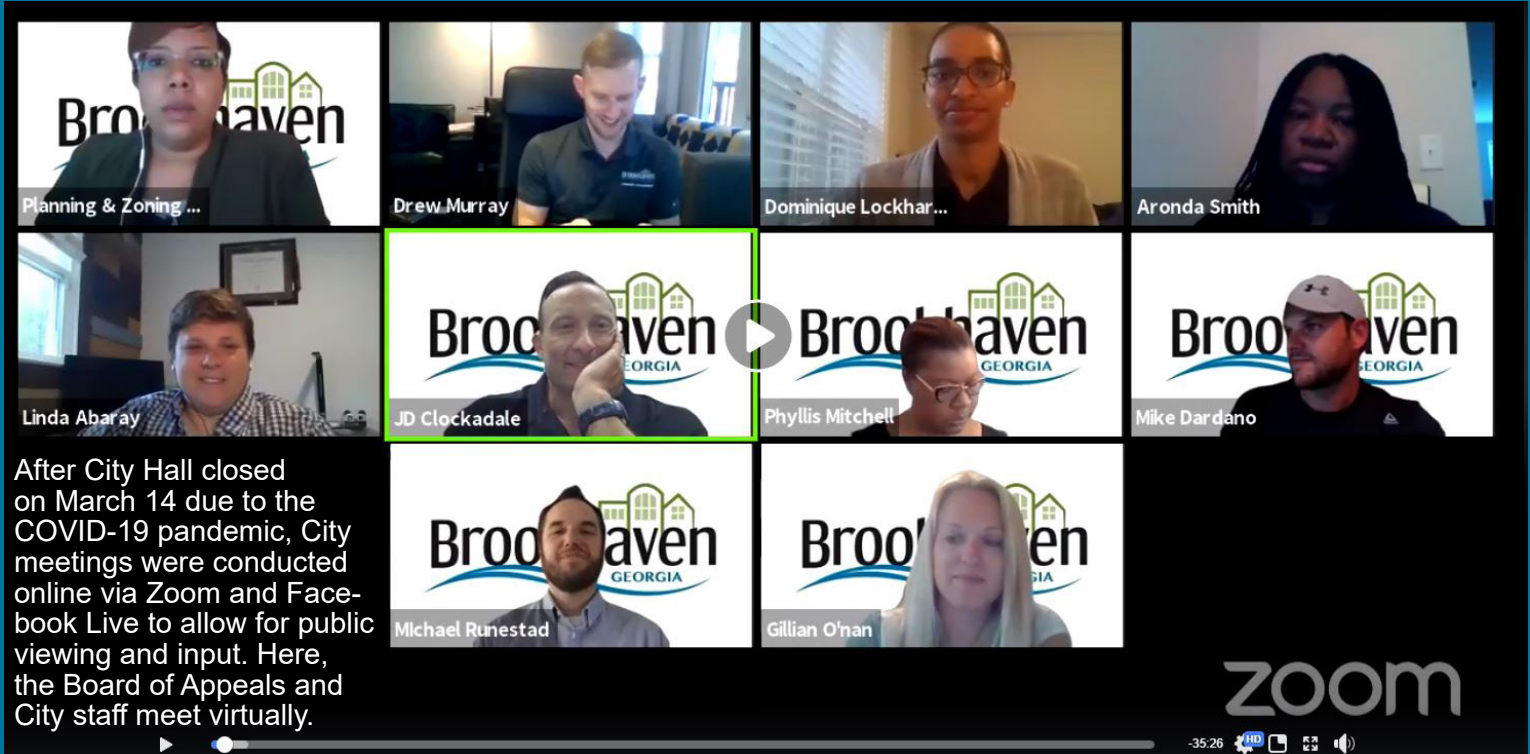




City adapts to 'new normal'



Brookhaven Mayor John Ernst, right, and Atlanta artist Alison Hamil, left, keep their social distance as they pose before Hamil's finished #BrookhavenStrong mural installed in April along Peachtree Road on a section of the MARTA Gold Line retaining wall. Conceived by Ernst, the mural is meant to signify unity and hope for Brookhaven residents during the pandemic.



After City Hall closed on March 14 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, City meetings were conducted online via Zoom and Facebook Live to allow for public viewing and input. Here, the Board of Appeals and City staff meet virtually.

From the Desk of the Mayor

Thank you, Brookhaven

As I sit down to write this letter, City Hall is in the stages of gradually reopening to our staff and visitors.

As you know, our City offices had to abruptly close on March 14 once we were notified that one of our employees was diagnosed with COVID-19. I am happy to say our employee has now recovered. In the days and weeks that followed, a number of actions were taken, such as the closure of park structures and non-essential businesses, as well as shelter-in-place orders.

I am grateful to say that our City operations didn't miss a beat the entire time. City meetings continued to operate in public via platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Facebook Live (pictured below). Our Public Works Department continued its aggressive paving plan and is on track to complete Brookhaven's five-year paving plan a year ahead of schedule. Community Development continued inspections with "no contact" protocols. We continued to hire police officers. Progress was made

on Parks Bond projects. We completed the dredging of Murphey Candler Lake and the shoreline restoration of the lake's east banks.

By the time this newsletter is printed and has reached your homes, I hope that City operations and reopenings are still safely progressing, but I ask you to continue to be patient with this fluid, unprecedented situation. One thing that isn't fluid, though, is my appreciation of you. I am humbled and awed at how our residents stepped up and helped Brookhaven lead the way in early social distancing measures.

Don't hesitate to contact me at John. Ernst@BrookhavenGA.gov or at 404-637-0710 with any questions or concerns. I hope to get to see you at a City event or

Council meeting soon.

Thank you for all you do to make Brookhaven better!

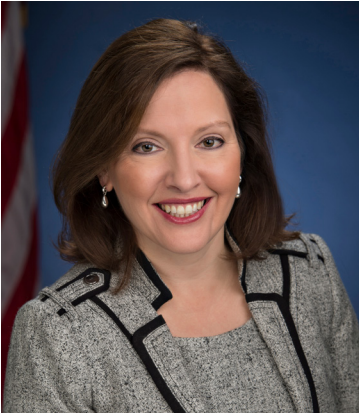
Yours truly,



John Ernst, Mayor
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City Council



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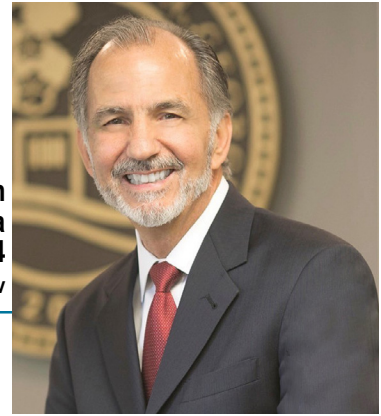


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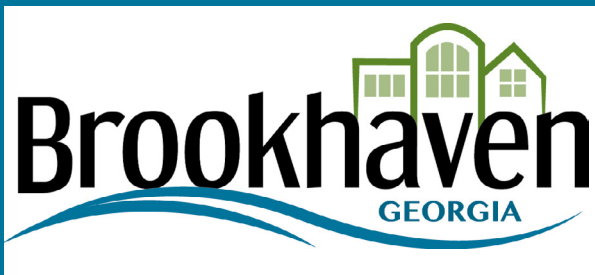


Mayor Pro Tem
Joe Gebbia
District 4
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The Brookhaven City Council generally meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 3:30 and 7 p.m. at 4362 Peachtree Road. Visit www.BrookhavenGA.gov for schedule changes.

City meetings are streamed online and archived at www.BrookhavenGA.gov. To access meetings and videos, go to the Meetings & Agendas tab near the bottom of the homepage.



City Vision and Mission

The following are vision and mission statements of the City of Brookhaven.

Vision

Brookhaven will be nationally recognized as a beautiful community where multiple generations can live in safety, flourish in business and succeed in a historic, sustainable environment with exceptional education and transportation options.

Mission

In support of the Brookhaven vision, the City government shall: encourage and maintain a beautiful community, meet public safety needs, develop an environment for business success, promote sustainable projects and activities, identify and preserve historic and neighborhood resources, facilitate educational opportunities, and improve transportation conditions, connectivity, and options while listening to and communicating with the public.

During the virus pandemic, Brookhaven remains calm and carries on

Life is full of those “where were you when ...” moments that become milestones in our personal and professional memories. These bookmarks to history often revolve around lifechanging events, i.e. natural disasters (Hurricane Katrina); national catastrophes (911 attacks); or loss of a prominent personality or leader (John Kennedy, MLK, Jr.). No doubt the spring and ensuing months of 2020 will leave a similar indelible footprint on our lives.

Residents, businesses and civic leaders in Brookhaven should take immense pride in how well the coronavirus crisis was handled in our community. When called upon, everyone rose to the #BrookhavenStrong challenge, lending a hand whether helping a neighbor, looking out for the elderly, or finding something to occupy idle young hands suddenly stranded along with parents at home.

At City Hall, bills were paid, permits were granted, virtual council meetings were held, all while Public Works projects continued and park programs and special events were adapted to follow official health guidelines. The Brookhaven Police Department (BPD) helped deliver meals, coordinate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) distribution, and made sure timely health updates were shared with all. Like the mural commissioned by the City for the MARTA wall on Peachtree Street, everyone rallied around the fact that

we were truly “all in this together” when it came to dealing with the crisis. Numerous other departments and groups featured in this newsletter were at the forefront in helping plan events or activities.

As we all work our way back to some degree of traditional commonality, there is still a long way to go. In this issue of Brookhaven News, an effort has been made to document some of the exceptional efforts by many people and the activities created to confront the crisis as it has lingered on. There is a story to be told here, a good and positive story, and while space limits the amount of information to share, readers should at least get an idea of all the great things that have been done as the City, as our British friends say, “keeps calm and carries on.”

“Our biggest challenge continues to be we must all remain flexible in responding to the needs of our fellow citizens and the community,” noted Brookhaven Mayor John Ernst. “I want to thank each Brookhaven resident and business for working with us as we continue to make our way through this crisis. Together, we’ve all discovered that we are up to the task and willing to work as one, as #BrookhavenStrong, to get past this emergency. The compassion shown by everyone reflects the willingness of every individual to unite in a tremendous display of solidarity to make it past the crisis. A heartfelt ‘thank you’ is extended to everyone.”



While the majority of City employees began teleworking on March 14, City offices partially reopened to employees on May 26, utilizing a combination of staggered shifts and teleworking. In preparation of opening to the public on June 1, the City Hall lobby was equipped with splash guards, social distancing signage, floor markers, hand sanitizer and masks. Furniture in the waiting area was also removed.

Pandemic challenges City to meet multitude of needs

In January, as we all welcomed a new year, few realized the enormous challenges that lay just a few months ahead, not just for the Brookhaven community, but for the world. The coronavirus dramatically changed day-to-day lives, popularizing phrases such as “stay at home restrictions,” “social distancing,” “community spread,” and “quarantine.”



Brookhaven completed the shoreline restoration of the east banks of Murphey Candler Lake during the pandemic shutdown.

From day one, Brookhaven had been at the forefront of the coronavirus response. Ironically, and thankfully, City officials had been preparing for a situation of this kind for some time. The Brookhaven Emergency Management team had developed a plan about three weeks before the pandemic occurred. So, when a City employee tested positive for COVID-19, City Hall had already been going through deep cleanings three times a week on top of the usual daily cleaning procedures. Once notified of the test results, City Hall was closed and employees started working from home. Thankfully, the affected employee eventually recovered.

Brookhaven was the first city in Georgia to put a state of emergency order in place and advised residents that they should stay home. Thanks to City staff who teleworked from home for 10 weeks, many services to our residents did not stop. As City Hall released consistent updates on the virus and related restrictions, several primary City departments such as the BPD, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Permits, Information Technology, Code Enforcement, etc., kept City operations in motion.

 Brookhaven Coronavirus Response

[Find a COVID-19 testing site](#)

[City of Brookhaven GA Coronavirus Response](#)

[En Español](#)

[Resources for individuals, families and businesses impacted by COVID-19](#)

[En Español](#)



The City's IT/GIS and Communications departments developed a website devoted to COVID-19 updates.

A prime example of the ongoing work is Public Works projects such as paving streets, dredging Murphey Candler Park and construction of the Briarwood pool complex went on as planned. Open records requests were fulfilled, hardware and software systems supported and various council meetings, town halls and community activities were funneled through various City social media and virtual meeting platforms.

City officials and emergency planners received daily updates on the virus and changes in guidelines and restrictions. These were constantly being circulated to employees and posted on the City website and through public vehicles such as Brookhaven Blast to share with all residents and businesses. The City's IT and Communications departments developed a website specifically for coronavirus updates - www.BrookhavenGa.gov/covid19.

The pandemic caused the cancellation of the Brookhaven Cherry Blossom Festival that would seriously cut into the livelihood of the popular festival's 100+ vendors. In late March, shoppers who wait each spring to browse the many unique art finds and great products at the festival, had the opportunity to see their favorite artists and vendors in a new, state-of-the-art virtual setting – on their computers in the comfort and safety of their own home.

Artists and sponsors, who likely needed the continued support from buyers to survive during this health crisis, welcomed the chance to share their wonderful goods and services with home-bound customers.

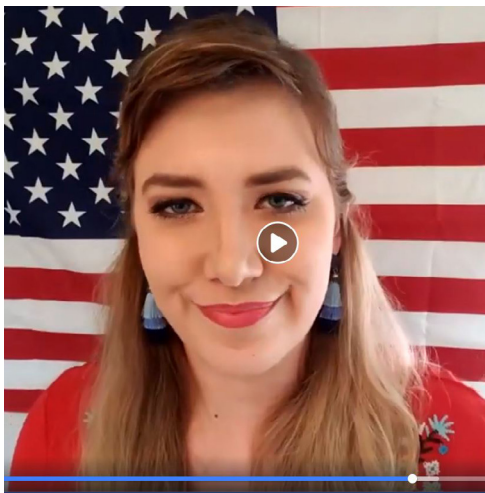
Splash Festivals, producers of the Artist Market for the City of Brookhaven, in conjunction with Eventeny, an innovative technology company from Atlanta, created the virtual market for over a week that was easily accessible online. The event was a creative solution that helped vendors recover some monies that potentially could have been lost due to the festival's cancellation.

Residents encouraged to lift up their voice for #BrookhavenStrong

As the gravity of the pandemic began to emerge in mid-March, City leaders recognized a need to enlist resident support through various community events, branding the entire campaign for solidarity as #BrookhavenStrong. This unofficial “call to arms” began with a city-wide patriotic salute stressing that everyone was in this health crisis together. Taking a cue from cities around the world, residents were encouraged to step outside and publicly sing along with noted local opera singer Kelsey Fredricksen who led renditions of God Bless America, The Star-Spangled Banner and This Land is My Land.

Prior to the event, American flags had been placed along sidewalks, in right of ways and at City parks to enliven the mood. BPD officers were parked in strategic spots throughout Brookhaven to broadcast the Facebook Live event from cruiser loudspeakers. Throughout the City, people stepped out on their porches, balconies and in their front yards to share the moment.

The event provided a much-needed moment of patriotism and a lift to Brookhaven spirit as residents realized they had to make the most of a difficult situation. It gave everyone a chance to demonstrate a sense of community early on in the pandemic in a meaningful and inspiring way.



Opera singer Kelsey Fredricksen led renditions of patriotic songs during the #BrookhavenStrong virtual event.

To keep spirits high, a variety of kid-friendly events are held

Several Brookhaven departments collaborated over the past few months to provide fun activities for the youngsters who suddenly found themselves being home-schooled and isolated from playmates.

Due to the timing of the crisis, popular youth activities such as the Eggstra-ordinary Easter Egg Hunt, Easter Egg Scramble and the Dog Gone Easter Egg



The first-place winner in the 19+ age category in the #BrookhavenStrong art contest, by Terry Combahee.

Hunt all had to be cancelled.

In April, through the #BrookhavenStrong Art Contest, both youngsters and adults were provided a way to honor first responders and at the same time record a dynamic moment in history.

Prizes for the contest were gift cards for use at local restaurants, courtesy of Explore Brookhaven, the City's convention and tourism entity. Judged by local art professionals, 115 entries were received.

Also during April, the BPD added to the youngsters' fun when they issued an “all-points bulletin” seeking the beloved police department mascot, Barry Bear. Sponsored in coordination with the Parks and Recreation Department, children were tasked with spotting as many stuffed animals as they could find. Residents were asked to put a stuffed teddy bear or any other critter in home windows, on porches or somewhere visible in their front yards. Then, from a safe distance, parents could help the kids search for the stuffed animals via car rides, walks, biking or any number of ways.

With children out of school and so many families practicing social distancing, the “hunt” provided a perfect diversion for Brookhaven residents with cabin fever. It was modeled after similar “bear hunts” held in communities around the world. Photos of bear sightings were submitted and placed on the City and BPD's social media platforms.

In the same vein, both the BPD and Explore Brookhaven offered coloring book pages on their Facebook sites that kids could print out and color that featured Barry Bear or the Explore Brookhaven logo.

New mural captured the core essence of #BrookhavenStrong

A splash of stained-glass brilliance graced the Brookhaven landscape in April on a grey stretch of the MARTA retaining wall on Peachtree Road near City Hall. The unique 200-square foot mural sent a message signifying the unity and hope that had evolved as the essence of the ongoing #BrookhavenStrong initiative.

Conceived by Mayor John Ernst, the mural was inspired from his observation of chalk art by quarantined youngsters on Facebook, drawn on residential driveways and sidewalks. Wording on the mural was derived from the overall challenges faced by all during the COVID-19 crisis. The four-word message, “We are all together” speaks volumes about the resilience and fortitude of Brookhaven residents and businesses. Atlanta artist Alison Hamil was recruited to bring the mural from concept to reality. The stained-glass look seemed the perfect metaphor for how multiple Brookhaven components such as the residents, businesses, schools, police, first responders, healthcare specialists, etc., have come together as separate entities like a multicolored mosaic.

Some of the colors used in the mural included a pink tone to represent the City’s official flower, the cherry blossom, and the blue was taken from the City logo where it represents Brookhaven’s lakes, pools, ponds and other water features.

At BPD, increased pandemic-related activities give new impetus to ‘I’ve got your six’

While the coronavirus has turned everyone’s everyday world upside down, the Brookhaven Police Department (BPD) continued to do its job smoothly and protect the community. A familiar law enforcement catch phrase, “I’ve got your six,” refers to having someone’s back when they cannot cover for themselves or are so overwhelmed they lack the resources to get the job done. Alongside other first responders such as health providers, EMTs, etc., the BPD has certainly “had their six” and demonstrated incredible flexibility and commitment to residents of Brookhaven.

In addition to their normal law enforcement duties, BPD officers and staff have had to give special attention to encouraging social distancing, urging people to shelter in place and educating the public as to the special health guidelines needed to navigate the viral storm. On multiple occasions, BPD staff have gone that extra mile by bringing joy to youngsters with drive-by birthday salutations, delivering donated meals to other essential workers such as the DeKalb Fire and Rescue group and Publix employees, and worked hard to keep



Mayor Ernst signs the wall next to the mural.

residents informed on social media and to respond to numerous inquiries and requests.

In mid-March, the Brookhaven Police Emergency Management Agency (EMA) team sprang into action and began working with their DeKalb County counterparts daily by monitoring DeKalb’s Emergency Operations Center remotely during the day and keeping it monitored at night. This monitoring is still occurring daily to ensure the most up-to-date and accurate information is being disseminated. The EMA team fields calls day and night about incidents that the public never hears about. To help with officer and staff safety, a number of measures have been taken including doing daily roll call from police cruisers and installing a donated hand sanitation unit for officer use.

Not only is the BPD staff working to make sure PPE supply needs are still being addressed, the department received an invitation-only grant through the U.S. Department of Justice that can be used to equip officers with top of the line PPE and supplies. With the grant, they will be ordering thousands of N95 and other style masks and enough to not only get through the current crisis but future outbreaks as well. Grant funds will also be used to stock an incident response trailer that can be brought to a multitude of scenes to assist officers for mass casualty or infectious incidents.

A BPD team is also working with FEMA to ensure reimbursement of local expenditures related to the pandemic. This FEMA assistance disaster money will help keep the department financially secure and ready in the coming months and years.

Brookhaven AT WORK



From mid-March to late May, City facilities were closed to the public and most employees due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, operations across all departments rapidly adjusted to working via teleworking or with new safety protocols. Here's a snapshot of some of the work in progress in this general timeframe.

Police



18,029 Calls for Service

6 Department Hires

3 Kids' Activities

29 Brookhaven Alert Notifications

Public Works

Briarwood Multiuse Path Completed



2020 Paving: 10 of 15 Roads Paved



5-Year Paving Plan Ahead of Schedule



Murphey Candler Shoreline Restoration & Lake Dredging



Ashford Dunwoody/Johnson Ferry Intersection Improvement



Community Development

605 Building Permits 2,511 Building & Fire Marshal Inspections

City Hall

196 Website Updates

34 Press Releases

3 Virtual Town Halls

10 Virtual Public Meetings



13 Resolutions Passed

9 Ordinances Adopted

533 IT Help Desk Tickets

60 Open Records Requests

\$80,000 In Grants & Funds Acquired

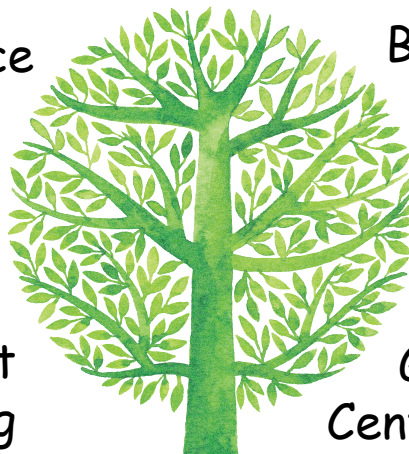
Parks & Recreation



Daily Park Maintenance

Invasive Plant Removal

Out to Bid:
Blackburn Tennis Court
Renovation & Relighting



Briarwood Pool
Construction Continued

Blackburn Park Parking
Lot Project Awarded

Gathered Briarwood Rec
Center Improvement Quotes

455 Plans Reviewed

3,213 Code Enforcement Inspections

CENSUS 2020: ITS IMPACT ON BROOKHAVEN

The City of Brookhaven believes it is critical for all residents to be counted on the 2020 census. To ensure a complete count, Brookhaven staff, local leaders, and community members have been working behind the scenes to learn about the changes to the census and spread the word of the importance of a complete count. Here are some of the essential facts about the census you need to know.

WHY IT MATTERS?

Census data isn't collected just to have a count of the number of people living in the country; the impact the census has on our local community is massive. According to The U.S. Census Bureau, more than \$675 billion in federal funds and grants given to communities —like Brookhaven— will be decided based on census data.

Resources

Healthcare, education, and public transit make up some of the public resources that could receive funding based on census data. A complete count is necessary so everyday resources our communities depend on can receive proper funding.

Business

When a business looks into which communities to offer their products and services, open a new store, or expand, they use census data to make their decisions.

Representation

Congressional redistricting is based on census data. That means that depending on census data, districts could gain or lose a seat(s) in 2021. To ensure our community is properly represented in Congress, a complete count is essential.

ADAPTING TO DIGITAL

The census will make its debut in the digital age. Instead of the traditional paper form mailed to every household, this year residents will receive a postcard with a unique code that will allow them to complete the census online. For anyone who still prefers to use pen and paper, don't worry! Residents can still request a paper form or complete the census by phone.

PRIVACY ENSURED

Privacy is top of mind during the census. Title 13 is a federal code that prohibits The Census Bureau from sharing any identifiable information of you, your home, or your business with any government agency or court. Your answers are confidential and anonymous.

Did you know?

The Constitution mandates a census every 10 years. The first U.S. census was in 1790.

OPERATIONAL CHANGES

Census enumerators

Due to the coronavirus pandemic field operations have been delayed. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, it will evaluate on a week by week basis when and where to resume operations. Census enumerators will be provided PPE and measures will be adopted to ensure the safety of workers and residents.

Timeline changes

The census has been extended from July 31 to October 31 to accommodate an unprecedented time. However, don't wait to the last minute to complete the census!

Ways to respond

Online: [My2020Census.gov](https://my2020census.gov)
Phone: Everyday from 7 a.m. to 2 a.m. 884-330-2020
Mail: Forms will be mailed to households who have not responded.

For more information visit:
BrookhavenGa.gov/Census2020





The 2020 Census is here, and You Count! A few minutes can help shape your family's future.

HOME AND COMMUNITY

Roads, Sidewalks, Sewer

MARTA trains and buses

Parks, Trails, Programs

Local business support

SOCIAL SERVICES

Healthcare

Schools and Education

School Nutrition & WIC

Senior Services

When: In March, households will receive a census invitation by mail.

How: You can respond on-line, by mail, or by phone in 52 different languages!

Where: In your home, in community centers like libraries, parks and more.

Visit BrookhavenGA.gov/Census2020 for locations



Census 2020 • Brookhaven Counts

Remember, the government is not allowed to use your census response for any other purpose.