

THE TOWNE HALL NEWS



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Better Woodstock



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2020 CENSUS RESPONSE

Census Deadline Extended

Assistant City Manager Coty Thigpen is heading up Woodstock’s participation in the Georgia Municipal Association’s (GMA) 2020 Census Challenge to increase response rates within the city. The challenge began on July 13 and concludes on September 30. As of September 14, Woodstock’s self-response rate is 62.1%.

“It is absolutely vital for the City of Woodstock to get the most accurate count possible, Thigpen said. “It will guide and shape everything we are able to do for the next decade. An accurate count will ensure we have access to the proper allocation of federal funding to help drive Woodstock’s future success.”

GMA provided each participating city with resources to help improve residents’ Census response rates. Cities will be recognized for their achievement by GMA’s 12 districts based on the percentage increase of their response rate. The cities with the highest increase will be featured in Georgia’s Cities magazine and on GMA’s digital media platforms.

“The importance of obtaining an accurate count for the 2020 Census cannot be overstated, as it will determine your city’s federal funding for the next 10 years,” said Holger Loewendorf, GMA research manager, “Do your part to make sure Every. One. Counts.”

SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH

City of Woodstock urges all citizens and businesses to make or update a disaster plan during the month of September. As we continue to respond to COVID-19, there's no better time than the present to update your plan. You can find resources to help at [ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov). The Department of Homeland Security suggests weekly activities to do to be ready for whatever comes.



During week 1, September 1-5, make a plan for your household by discussing how you will receive emergency alerts, what you will do to shelter in place and evacuate if necessary, how you will communicate with loved ones, and what you need for an emergency preparedness kit. There is a link to a thorough template on [ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov)'s National Preparedness Month page. You can complete the document and make copies to keep in cars, purses, or backpacks so each member of your household can refer to it in the event of an emergency.

During week 2, September 6-12, take time to build your kit. Gather what you will need to stay at home or evacuate to a safer location in the event of an emergency. [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) lists recommended items for a basic emergency supply kit. You need one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days for drinking and hygiene as well as a three-day supply of food. Don't forget pets' need for food and water. Other items recommended include first aid kits, dust masks, plastic sheeting and duct tape. It's suggested that you keep important family documents like insurance policies, identification, and bank records saved electronically or in a waterproof, portable container.

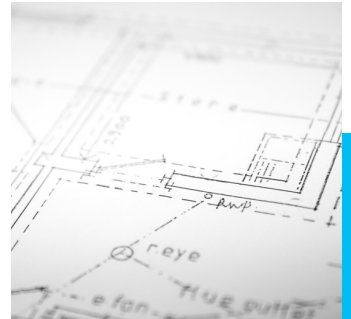
During week 3, September 13-19, limit the impacts a disaster may have on your household. Think about the potential for major storm damage. Check to ensure your homeowners or renters insurance policy covers all of your needs. Be sure you are signed up to receive emergency alerts. If you click CONNECT on [woodstockga.gov](https://www.woodstockga.gov) you will find a link to sign up for Cherokee Sheriff's Office updates through CodeRED.

During week 4, September 20-26, teach your children about preparedness. There are resources for kids, teens, families, and even educators on [ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) including information on coping when disaster strikes and financial preparedness. There are also resources available in Spanish. Additionally, Woodstock Fire & Rescue recommends that you take time during the month of September to check the batteries in your smoke detectors. Having multiple smoke detectors in your home may reduce the time it takes for smoke to activate the alarm. WFD also recommends you inspect your fire extinguishers. Be sure they are visible, unobstructed, and have no signs of damage, corrosion, or leakage.

Learn more from the American Red Cross at [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org). Sign up to receive preparedness emails and there's an online store with emergency preparedness gear and first aid kits.

PLANNING FOR A BETTER WOODSTOCK

Change is constant and affects all cities and rural areas. City planners help manage this change in a way that provides better choices for how people work, live, and play. Community planning provides an opportunity for residents to be involved in making choices that determine the shared vision of their neighborhoods. The benefits of planning require public officials and citizens who understand, support, and demand excellence in planning and plan implementation. October is National Community Planning Month. The American Planning Association and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, endorse National Community Planning Month as an opportunity to highlight the contributions sound planning and plan implementation make to the quality of our neighborhoods and environment. The celebration gives us the opportunity to recognize the dedication of the members of the Woodstock Planning Commission and our city planners who have contributed their time and expertise to the improvement of our community.



Planning can be summed up as comprehensive, community-focused choices that enhance the spaces where people live, work, and play. While many people may not realize it, planning has a significant impact on their day-to-day life. From where they live, to how they commute, to the type of home they live in, planning plays a vital role in a person's life and well-being. Planning helps create access and opportunity for all. Through planning, strategic investments in innovation and infrastructure can boost the economy and strengthen communities. Planning helps leverage public and private funds that lead to business growth, job creation, robust infrastructure, and economically resilient communities. Planners are skilled at balancing the varied interests and viewpoints that emerge as a community plans its future. Planners consider what is best for the entire community – senior citizens, workers, children, people living with disabilities, business owners, and elected officials. How do they arrive at these community-wide decisions? Through conversations with residents and thoughtful, inclusive outreach to community stakeholders.

Planning does not stop at a geographic border. Communities are served best when planners take a broader viewpoint, encompassing regional and statewide perspectives. This is especially critical for infrastructure projects, which are most successful when planned at a regional scale. Taking a regional focus ensures the infrastructure system will benefit those well beyond the immediate location of the project. Planners have the unique expertise to comprehensively address the impacts of today's actions on tomorrow's communities with a comprehensive big-picture perspective, planners are uniquely positioned to evaluate how decisions about the built environment, including transportation networks, building location and scale, and parks and green space, impact communities. When guided and informed by good planning, these decisions make communities safer, more resilient, healthier, more prosperous, and more equitable.

Upcoming Events

september

- Sept 1 Scarecrow Invasion Registration Begins
- Sept 3 Brown Bag Concert Series 12 pm
- Sept 3 Planning Commission Meeting 7 pm
- Sept 7 City Offices Closed for Labor Day
- Sept 10 Brown Bag Concert Series 12 pm
- Sept 14 Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council 7 pm
- Sept 28 Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council 7 pm
- Sept 24 Brown Bag Concert Series 12 pm

- Oct 1-31 Scarecrow Invasion
- Oct 1 Brown Bag Concert Series 12 pm
- Oct 1 Planning Commission 7 pm
- Oct 2 IN WDSTK Morning INfluence 8 am
- Oct 3 AMPED in the Park 9 am
- Oct 12 Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council 7 pm
- Oct 13 Public Safety Golf Tournament
- Oct 19 Work Session of the Mayor and Council 7 pm
- Oct 26 Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council 7 pm

october

november

- Nov 5 Planning Commission 7 pm
 - Nov 7 Recycle Event 9 am
 - Nov 9 Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council 7 pm
 - Nov 11 City Offices Closed for Veterans Day
 - Nov 16 Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Council 7 pm
 - Nov 26-27 City Offices Closed for Thanksgiving
- (Waste Management trash collection will be delayed one day for the remainder of the week following Thanksgiving Day)

Georgia Cities Week is Oct 4-10


Due to the coronavirus outbreak, Georgia Cities Week has been moved from April to October. This year's theme is "Georgia's Cities: Building the 2020 Vision". Follow us on social media where we will share info about valuable services we provide, highlight successful community projects and infrastructure enhancements, and connect with residents and other stakeholders.

9/11 Display

Remember those lost on 9/11 and honor our first responders with an exhibit on display from September 8th to September 27th at the Woodstock Visitors Center at Historic Dean's Store located at 8588 Main Street and open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 am to 5 pm. Photos by Darleen Prem Photography. Visitors will receive a commemorative "Always In Our Memory" Lapel Pin while supplies last.

brownbag

Concert Series

Every Thursday in September at Noon at the Park at City Center 

9/17 - David Keenum

Rescheduled to 10/1

9/24 - Mr. Jason

(specializing in children's music)

10/1 - David Keenum

This event will be in accordance with health guidelines from the office of the governor and the CDC. Thank you for accommodating our requests.

October 3, 2020

9 am

AMPED IN THE PARK

Hosted by



**Free Fitness Workout at the
Northside Hospital-Cherokee Amphitheater!**

REMAINING CONCERTS POSTPONED TO 2021



The City of Woodstock has announced that the two remaining events in the 2020 Woodstock Summer Concert Series must be postponed to the 2021 season due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The September 12th Black Jacket Symphony concert and the October 30th Rumours will not take place as scheduled.

"We feel these changes are warranted due to the continuance of coronavirus cases in the area," said Woodstock City Manager Jeff Moon. "It would be extremely difficult to ensure adequate social distancing in the Northside Hospital-Cherokee Amphitheater. Postponing these events to the 2021 season is necessary in order to comply with the limitations imposed on cities by the Governor's current Executive Order."

City staff is working to reschedule all five artists from the 2020 season to dates in the 2021 season. So far, Christopher Cross is confirmed for the opening concert in the 2021 season on May 8th and The Ultimate Queen Celebration is scheduled to take the stage at the Northside Hospital-Cherokee Amphitheater on June 12th.

5TH ANNUAL

CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

OCT 13, 2020

The Golf Club at
Bradshaw Farm

3030 Bradshaw Club Drive
Woodstock, GA 30188

Register at wdstk.ga/tournament

QUESTIONS?

bpage@woodstockga.gov



**Woodstock
Public Safety Foundation**
serving those who serve our community™



'Tis the Season to be Green!



Recycling & Paper Shredding Event

Saturday, November 7th

9 am – 1 pm

Woodstock Elementary School Parking Lot
230 Rope Mill Road

Please join us as Woodstock continues its journey to "Go Green"!

Clean house the environmental way! Recycle, Reuse, Reduce, Repurpose, and Rethink!

The City of Woodstock, Premier Surplus, Waste Management, and A1 Shredding & Recycling bring you a day of recycling! Check website for acceptable items. **Drive through, we'll unload for you!**

Electronics - Cell Phones - Batteries

All equipment will be broken down by Premier Surplus and processed so it can be re-used, thus lessening demands on local landfills and keeping toxins from leaking into our soil and waterways! **All collections will be done free of charge, except for TV's which require a fee of \$25. Projection TV's \$40. CRT Monitors \$10 and LCD Monitors with a Broken Screen \$5.** Cash Only Please. Cell phones will be collected for the *Georgia Lions Lighthouse*. **Please place a piece of clear tape over the terminals of the batteries prior to drop off.**

Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs - Hearing Aids - Eyeglasses - Magazine/Newspaper

Light bulbs must be in a clear plastic, sealed bag. We can **no longer** accept the long tubular style of fluorescent light bulbs. Home Depot stores will accept compact fluorescent light bulbs all year long!

Document Destruction

A1 Shredding & Recycling will be on site to shred your residential, confidential documents. **There will be a limit of 8 boxes per car.** For business shredding service, please call A1 Shredding at 770-795-9744 ext. 109.

Sorry, No Textile Recycling at this Event



105 East Main Street, Suite 142 • Woodstock, GA • 30188 • 770-592-6000 ext. 1952

mstockdale@woodstockga.gov

www.WoodstockParksandRec.com

City Sponsored Event

www.WoodstockConcertSeries.com

ADOPT-A-TRAIL PROGRAM APPROVED

Woodstock Parks and Recreation is introducing an Adopt-A-Trail program to help maintain Woodstock's twenty plus miles of trails. "We're looking for nature-minded individuals and groups such as scouting organizations, civic associations, school and church groups, families, nature clubs, and businesses seeking community service opportunities," said Michael Huffstetler, Director of Woodstock Parks and Recreation.

Cleanups will be held quarterly with the first being on October 1st. Noonday Creek Trail, Towne Lake Pass, Rubes Creek Trail, and Trestle Rock Trail are available to adopt. Volunteer groups will be recognized on signs designating sections of adopted trail. To sign up, email adopt-a-trail@woodstockga.gov.



RIVER CLEAN UP

Seventy-seven volunteers participated in the 2020 Little River Clean Up.

Roadside litter makes its way to our waterway along with litter from boaters and park users. Nearly one ton of trash and debris was collected along the banks of Little River at this year's event.

The event takes place each fall at Olde Rope Mill Park. It is organized by Cherokee County Water and Sewer Authority and Woodstock Public Works.

VETERANS DAY CEREMONY

Veterans Day is Wednesday, November 11th. Citizens and officials normally gather in The Park at City Center to honor all of those who have served our country in war or peace.

This year, due to restrictions on large gatherings due to the coronavirus pandemic, the City of Woodstock will produce a virtual ceremony. Follow City of Woodstock, GA on Facebook for more information.

HALLOWEEN KIDSFEST

Woodstock Parks and Recreation staff are working with the City Manager's Office to revise plans for our annual Halloween KidsFest and organize an event that follows CDC recommendations regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.

As they are decided, details will be released via Woodstock Parks and Recreation's Facebook page.



NEW SENIOR CENTER COORDINATOR

Parks and Rec Department Welcomes Barry Martin

The William G. Long Senior Center has a new coordinator. Barry Martin joined the City of Woodstock's Parks and Recreation department in August to serve in the role.

Barry has a diverse non-profit background having served in leadership roles with organizations including YMCA, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, and the South Fork Conservancy as well as for-profit sports, recreation, and health companies.

Barry is a native of Kentucky and is a graduate of Northern Kentucky University with a Bachelors of Science in Mathematics and Secondary Education. Barry and his wife Susan met while he was serving as the CEO of the state-level YMCA organization in Pennsylvania. The couple moved to Georgia for Susan to pursue a career in textile design following the completion of her Masters Degree in the field.

Barry is excited to develop strategies to lead the William G. Long Senior Center out of the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic and position the center for future growth.



ACTIVITIES FOR PEOPLE OVER 50

WALKING CLUB

Friends, Fitness, Fun!
Shake off the cabin fever with a brisk walk through Dupree Park with your friends!

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays
at 8 am

LINE DANCING

Join us to learn to line dance twice weekly during September and October. Meet at the Northside Hospital Cherokee Amphitheater.

Mondays and Thursdays at 9 am

DISC GOLF

Dupree Park. Discs provided or bring your own. Call 678-445-6518 or email bmartin@woodstockga.gov to register.

Tuesdays and Fridays at 9 am

Did you know?

Woodstock Parks and Recreation operates seven parks and maintains over 20 miles of trails inside the City of Woodstock.

THE SCARECROWS ARE INVADING DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK THIS YEAR

Woodstock is being invaded - by scarecrows, that is. The Woodstock Visitors Center is happy to announce the Woodstock Scarecrow Invasion will take place this year.

As you drive down Main Street during the month of October, you will be welcomed by dozens of scarecrows lining the way. Just in time for Halloween, bring the family to Downtown Woodstock to see the scarecrows and stop into the Woodstock Visitors Center to participate in the scarecrow scavenger hunt. Those who find all of the clues get a Scarecrow Invasion decal.

This year, there will be over 175 scarecrow displays in the event. The proceeds from the Scarecrow Invasion will enable INSeason, the design committee for IN WDSTK, to imagine and implement more great design initiatives in Downtown Woodstock like their seasonal planters and annual holiday decor. Individuals, businesses and organizations are going to line our city streets with whimsy, fun, and a little scary of course.

This is a great outdoor event that residents and visitors can enjoy safely. We are incorporating signage this year to encourage participants and spectators to follow CDC guidelines and maintain adequate social distance.

For more info on the event call the Woodstock Visitors Center at 770-924-0406 or email kbennett@woodstockga.gov.



Don't Miss the
**SCARECROW
IIII INVASION**
WOODSTOCK GA

OCTOBER 1 - 31

A CITY UNEXPECTED



CHEROKEE LMI SMALL BUSINESS GRANT

Cherokee Office of Economic Development has partnered with Cherokee County to launch the Cherokee LMI Small Business Grant. Your business may be eligible to apply for up to \$10,000 in grants to help alleviate the financial hardships caused by COVID-19.

Some of the key eligibility criterion include:

- Businesses must have experienced a negative economic impact due to the Coronavirus pandemic.
- Businesses should employ 50 or fewer W2 positions.
- Businesses should be retaining, rehiring, or creating jobs meeting the LMI salary threshold from HUD's published income limits of no more than \$46,350 annually for full-time employees; salaries for FTE employees will be scaled accordingly.
- 70 percent of retained, rehired, or created jobs submitted for consideration must meet the \$46,350 salary requirement.
- Businesses cannot be awarded these funds if still in receipt of other federal benefits, including PPP and EIDL.

The application portal is open September 10 - September 30, 2020. If COVID-19 has affected your business, don't miss this opportunity to get much-needed relief. For full program information and to find out whether your business is eligible, visit <https://www.cherokeega.org/grants>.



CHEROKEE CAREER EXPO WILL BE VIRTUAL

Job seekers, mark your calendars for Cherokee Office of Economic Development's 2020 Virtual Cherokee Career Expo on Wednesday, September 30th! This FREE one-hour webinar will feature some of Cherokee's top employers. REGISTER NOW: <https://bit.ly/2YXvSL5>. Stay tuned for an announcement on who's hiring!

IN W DSTK HOSTS COED'S 'BE PRO BE PROUD' INITIATIVE AT SEPTEMBER MORNING INFLUENCE

Join IN W DSTK OUTSIDE at the Northside Hospital - Cherokee Amphitheater at 8 am on October 2nd as we welcome Misti Martin, President of the Cherokee Office of Economic Development, and her team as they share information about Be Pro Be Proud Georgia - the awareness campaign for the skilled professions. Their impressive 40-foot rig mobile workshop features simulations of Georgia's most in-demand skilled professions - all powered by the latest industry-driven technology.

Morning Influence is a networking event which includes a brief presentation that focuses on updates given by Greater Woodstock on important issues or services offered that affect the community as a whole.

**RSVP to this event is required because of limited seating due to social distancing measures. Register at inwdstk.org/events.



Did you know?

Woodstock Office of Economic Development recently completed a total redesign of our city government's website. The new site design is focused on user experience and improved searchability. Go to woodstockga.gov to see your city government in an all new way!

CITY OFFERS ASSISTANCE TO BUSINESSES IN 2021

The City of Woodstock is implementing measures to provide financial assistance to businesses for 2021. While temporary measures were implemented to assist businesses during the COVID-19 response in the short term, this broader plan will help businesses meeting certain criteria through a longer recovery period.

Assistant City Manager Coty Thigpen presented the plan to Woodstock City Council at their June 8th meeting. Thigpen worked with CFO Ron Shelby, Community Development Director Brantley Day, Development Services Supervisor Delana Price, and Economic Development Director Brian Stockton to identify businesses including restaurants, hotels and small businesses that have helped to make the City of Woodstock a regional destination.

The City of Woodstock collects business license fees based on gross revenues. Business license fees will be waived in 2021 for small businesses with gross revenues of \$1 million and under. The \$30 administrative fee will also be waived. An exception to this threshold will be made to include Woodstock's seven hotels because of the major impact these businesses have on tourism and economic development and due to the significant impact they experienced as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The annual regulatory fee of \$250 for hotels will also be waived.

Restaurants in the City of Woodstock were also heavily impacted. Direct assistance will be provided through a \$750 renewal discount to the 63 on-premise consumption alcohol licensees. Many will also receive assistance on their business license renewal. Additionally, the City will make permanent the temporary retail package license offered during the pandemic and will extend it at no cost to the restaurants.

Under the assistance plan:

- Based on 2020 License renewals, the City estimates that over 60% of all businesses will pay \$0 for their 2021 business license
- An average of \$869 will be provided in assistance to each hotel
- The total amount of fees to be waived under the program providing financial assistance to Woodstock businesses in 2021 is estimated at \$162,392.

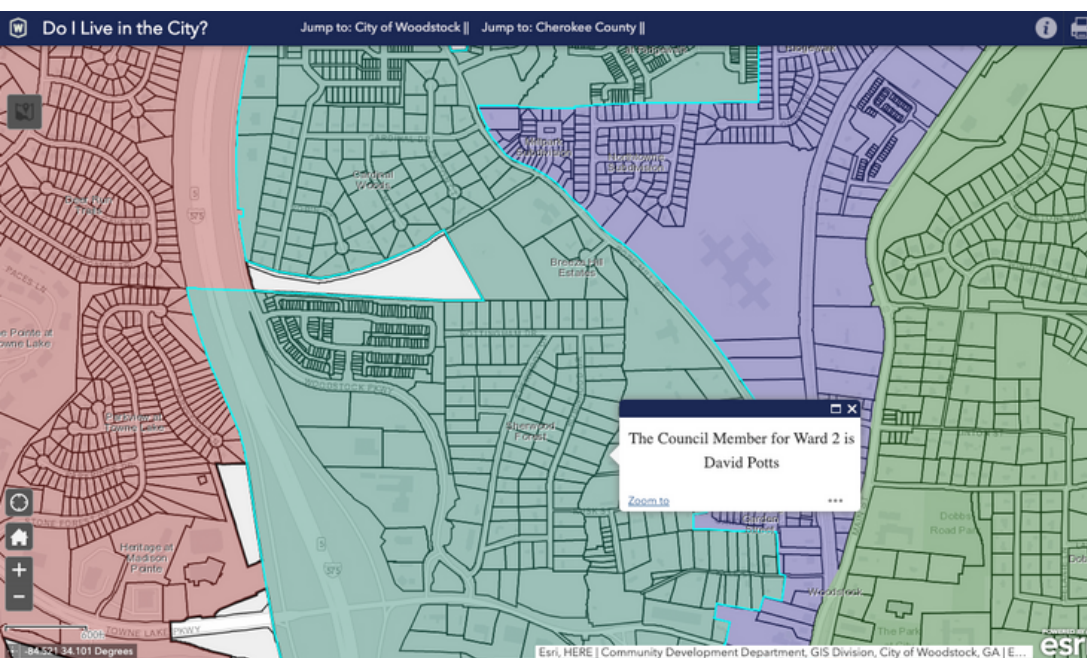
"It was important to our Mayor and Council to develop a mechanism to provide direct assistance to the businesses throughout our city that were most heavily impacted by Covid-19," said Assistant City Manager Coty Thigpen. Mayor Donnie Henriques echoed, "When you think of Woodstock, there are many distinctive draws that bring people here including our network of parks and trails and our wonderful events, but our retailers and restaurants are part of that system as well, and so it was important to ensure we support the vibrancy that has become our identity as a city."

CITY OF WOODSTOCK CELEBRATES GIS DAY

Woodstock Recognizes How Our Geographic Information Technology Team Makes an Impact

GIS Day is celebrated worldwide on Wednesday, November 13th. The City of Woodstock is fortunate to have three full-time mapping and GIS professionals on staff. GIS Manager Katy Legett, Analyst II Palmer Rogers, and Analyst I Zachary Knudsen implement an innovative application of geographic information system technology in analysis, visualization, and gained insights into geospatial data.

The division's work affects everything from emergency response to environmental conservation. City of Woodstock Tourism Manager expressed his gratitude for the division's contributions to the annual Scarecrow Invasion organized by the Woodstock Visitors Center and IN Season. "The map they've created with all of the spaces around Downtown Woodstock for scarecrow displays has helped bring the event to the next level," said Bennett. "We have one of the biggest and most organized scarecrow events in the Southeast and it's in no small part due to our GIS team's involvement."



GIS Day was first observed in 1999. The explosion of geospatial technology since then has allowed GIS applications to make exponentially larger impacts on the communities that utilize it.

Woodstock's GIS division is enthusiastic and passionate about supporting the delivery of services in the City of Woodstock. To learn more about how the City of Woodstock is innovating through the application of GIS, visit wdstk.ga/gis.

The Do I Live in the City? map is a popular tool created by our GIS team to help area residents know whether to contact the City or the County regarding service issues



Towne Hall News is a quarterly publication. The next issue will be in December 2020.

MAYOR DONNIE HENRIQUES
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DAVID POTTS
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