

ORDINANCE 2026-005

An Ordinance regulating the use of public parks, recreational facilities, and certain public properties within the City of Ashford, Alabama

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Ordinance is to establish reasonable regulations governing the use of public parks, recreational facilities, and certain public properties, including the City's train depot, in order to promote public safety, cleanliness, accessibility, and the general welfare of the citizens of Ashford.

Section 2. Definitions

Public Property shall mean all real property owned, leased, managed, or controlled by the City, including but not limited to:

- Parks and recreational areas
- Buildings and facilities, including the train depot
- Public sidewalks
- Streets and public rights-of-way
- Alleyways
- Easements and public access ways
- Parking lots and public grounds

Camping shall mean the use of public property for living accommodation purposes, including but not limited to:

- Sleeping or making preparations to sleep
- Placing or using bedding materials
- Storing personal belongings for overnight use
- Erecting or maintaining temporary or permanent shelters

Section 3. Hours of Operation

A. Parks and Recreational Facilities

Public parks and recreational facilities shall be open for use daily between the hours of 6:00AM and 8:00PM, unless otherwise designated by the City.

No person shall enter or remain in such parks or recreational facilities outside of these hours without authorization.

B. Other Public Property (Sidewalks, Streets, Alleyways, Rights-of-Way)

Public sidewalks, streets, alleyways, and rights-of-way shall remain open for public use at all times, subject to the restrictions set forth in this Ordinance.

C. Authorized Events and Uses

The City may extend or modify hours of operation for parks and recreational facilities for approved events, rentals, or permitted uses.

Section 4. Prohibited Activities

A. Camping and Sleeping

It shall be unlawful for any person to camp on public property at any time.

It shall further be unlawful to sleep or lodge overnight on public property or to use public property for living accommodation purposes.

B. Storage of Personal Property

No person shall store, leave, or maintain personal property on public property in a manner that:

- Obstructs or impedes pedestrian or vehicular traffic
- Blocks access to public areas, buildings, or infrastructure
- Creates a safety or health hazard
- Interferes with the intended or customary use of the property

Unattended personal property may be subject to removal in accordance with City procedures.

C. Obstruction of Public Ways

No person shall obstruct or impede the free passage of pedestrians or vehicles on any public sidewalk, street, alleyway, or right-of-way.

No person shall sit, lie, or place objects in a manner that blocks or restricts access to:

- Sidewalks
- Alleyways
- Entrances or exits
- Public rights-of-way

D. Loitering

No person shall remain on public property in a manner that:

- Interferes with the reasonable use of the property by others
- Creates a public safety concern
- Disrupts the peace or order of the area

E. Smoking, Vaping, and Alcohol

The use of any tobacco product, electronic cigarette, vaping device, or similar product is prohibited on public property except where specifically authorized by the City for permitted events or designated areas. On duty city employees or contractors performing work for and under contract with the city may smoke or vape legal substances at reasonable times and places or as allowed by the employee handbook as long as the public is not directly exposed to the same during park operating hours.

The possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages on public property is prohibited except where specifically authorized by the City for permitted events or uses.

F. Sanitation

No person shall create, maintain, or permit unsanitary conditions on public property.

All trash and waste shall be properly disposed of in designated receptacles.

Section 5. Enforcement

A. Any person found in violation of this Ordinance may be subject to:

- Verbal warning
- Citation for loitering and/or continued trespassing, after warning, pursuant to and adopting Ala. Code Title 13A Chapter 7 and/or Title 13A Chapter 11.
- Removal from property

B. Repeated or continued violations may result in additional penalties as permitted under Alabama law.

City law enforcement officers and authorized personnel shall have the authority to enforce the provisions of this Ordinance and to remove individuals or property as necessary to ensure compliance.

Section 6. Signage

The City shall post signage at public properties providing notice of:

- Hours of operation
- Prohibited activities

- Applicable rules and regulations

Section 7. Severability

If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is held to be invalid or unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the remaining portions of this Ordinance.

Section 8. Effective Date

The Ordinance shall become effective upon its adoption and publication as required by law.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED THIS 3rd DAY OF August 2026.

Mayor Blake Rosenkoetter

Mayor Pro-Tem Gary Gibson

Councilmember Joel Waller

Councilmember Josh Johnson

Councilmember Brian McCraney

Councilmember James Smith

Attest:

Janet Rumley, City Clerk