



CITY OF MABLETON, GEORGIA
Riverside EpiCenter
135 Riverside Pkwy, Mableton, GA 30168
May 11, 2026 at 6:30 PM

The Honorable Michael Owens, Mayor
The Honorable Ron Davis, Mayor Pro Tem/District 1 Councilmember
The Honorable Michael McNeely, District 2 Councilmember
The Honorable Keisha Jeffcoat, District 3 Councilmember
The Honorable Cassandra Brown, District 4 Councilmember
The Honorable TJ Ferguson, District 5 Councilmember
The Honorable Debora Herndon, District 6 Councilmember

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Owens called the meeting to order at 6:43pm.

2. ROLL CALL

City Clerk Susan Hiott conducted the roll call. All were present and quorum present.

3. INVOCATION

City Manager Tanks led the invocation.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Owens led the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. AGENDA ITEMS AND DISCUSSION

a. Public Hearing for the transmittal of the 2045 Comprehensive Plan to the Atlanta Regional Commission and Department of Community Affairs - Community Development Director Michael Hughes

Mayor Owens announced the item and provided a brief overview. He recognized Community Development Director Michael Hughes, who explained that this was the first of two public hearings. The second public hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, May 13. Director Hughes then introduced John Funny of Grice Consulting, the project lead for the 2045 Comprehensive Plan process.

Mr. Funny expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to present the inaugural 2045 Comprehensive Plan to the Mayor and Council. He commended the Council for its active involvement throughout the process and noted that its engagement set a positive example for the community. He also remarked that his presentation was extensive, reflecting the significant amount of work invested in developing the Comprehensive Plan. A copy of the presentation is included in the record.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Mr. Funny acknowledged the elected leadership and thanked them for their

engagement throughout the process.

- He recognized the project team.
- The consultant team included Grice Consulting Group, TSW, and Atlas Engineering.
- Mr. Funny explained the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan and outlined the planning process.
- The Mableton 2045 project schedule was presented.
- He noted that the plan and meeting materials are available on the Mableton 2045 website under the Community Engagement section.
- He reported that public meetings were well attended throughout the process; more than 130 people attended the first public meeting.
- Field trips were conducted as part of the planning process.
- Vision statements and goals were developed for each of the five special areas.
- He noted that the Community Work Program includes 89 projects and initiatives.
- Elements of Mableton 2045 included:

- Land Use
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Transportation
- Environment and Sustainability
- Cultural Resources
- Historic Preservation

- Character Areas were identified as follows:

- Suburban Neighborhoods — Core
- Entertainment District
- River Line District
- Concord Bridge Historic Gateway
- Mixed-Use Villages
- Riverside Parkway
- Medical Center
- Historic Downtown
- New City Center
- Workplace District
- Colonia Pipeline & Oak Ridge
- Suburban Neighborhoods Transition

- The Next Steps:

- Public hearing on May 13th.
- If approved, submit the draft to the State for review.
- Address comments, if any, from the State.
- Finalize the document
- Adoption by City Council in June or July.

Mr. Funny's presentation was followed by questions and discussion from the Council.

Councilmember Jeffcoat inquired about several slides that were not included in the version of the presentation provided. Mr. Funny explained that he had an updated version of the presentation and loaded it onto a flash drive during the meeting, which he provided to the Deputy Clerk for the record.

Councilmember Ferguson asked about the vacant areas between certain character areas. In response, Mr. Funny explained the concepts of transitional land uses and buffering. He emphasized the importance of avoiding forced compatibility and discussed the role of transitional development in creating appropriate transitions between character areas. Questions and discussion continued.

Mayor Owens opened the public hearing. He asked if there was any opposition. There was none. Mayor Owens asked if there was anyone in favor. There was none. Mayor Owens closed the public hearing.

Mayor Owens thanked Mr. Funny and Director Hughes for the presentation.

b. Meet Mableton Presentation - Economic Development Director Artie Jones and Chief Executive Officer of Cobb Travel & Tourism

Mayor Owens skipped to Item 5C following Item 5A. He recognized Economic Development Director Artie Jones, who recognized Holly Quinlan, President and Chief Executive Officer of Cobb Travel & Tourism, to provide an update on the new Mableton Convention and Visitors Bureau, known as Meet Mableton.

Mayor Owens noted that the effort had been a long time in the making. He explained that Meet Mableton is organized as a 501(c)(6) entity and, while separate from the City, would work closely with it. He stated that the Council would ultimately determine whether to designate Meet Mableton as the City's official Destination Marketing Organization (DMO).

Mayor Owens further explained that the City currently partners with Cobb Travel & Tourism to ensure that tourism-related revenues are used to support tourism activities. He stated that the City had reached the point of moving forward with Meet Mableton as its own entity. He thanked Ms. Quinlan for attending and recognized her to make the presentation.

Mrs. Quinlan expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to work with the Mableton team and Economic Development Director Jones in determining the appropriate steps for establishing Mableton's own Destination Marketing Organization. She stated that the goal was to create Meet Mableton as an independent 501(c)(6) organization to support and promote the City's tourism efforts.

Highlights of Mrs. Quinlan's presentation included:

- Meet Mableton would be established as an independent 501(c)(6) organization.
- The purpose of the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) is to market the City of Mableton as a destination, increasing tourism and economic impact through branding,

marketing, and promotional efforts.

- The DMO would also focus on enhancing and promoting the visitor experience.
- The City's hotel/motel tax rate is 8 percent.
- Three cents are allocated to the General Fund and are unrestricted.
- Three and one-half cents are restricted for tourism-related purposes.
- One and one-half cents are restricted to tourism product development, including the creation and expansion of physical attractions.
- An "Authorized Use of Hotel/Motel Tax Collections" pie chart was presented.

To establish Meet Mableton, the following steps were outlined:

- Designate Meet Mableton as the City's official Destination Marketing Organization.
- Execute an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) to activate Meet Mableton as the City's DMO.
- Establish the Meet Mableton Board.
- Adopt bylaws in accordance with applicable requirements.
- Review the composition and objectives of the Board of Directors.

Short-term actions included:

- Applying for IRS recognition of Meet Mableton as a 501(c)(6) organization.
- Executing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Cobb Travel & Tourism (CT&T), which would serve as a springboard to an administrative services agreement upon receipt of Meet Mableton's IRS designation.

Long-term actions included:

- Obtaining IRS designation for Meet Mableton.
- Entering into an intergovernmental agreement between the City of Mableton and Meet Mableton.
- Having Meet Mableton enter into an administrative services agreement with Cobb Travel & Tourism.
- Providing for Cobb Travel & Tourism to administer Meet Mableton, including supporting its board and carrying out its activities.

Mrs. Quinlan expressed her enthusiasm for continuing the partnership between Cobb Travel & Tourism (CT&T) and the City of Mableton. She noted that CT&T has many valuable resources and dedicated team members who have contributed to the organization's success. Mrs. Quinlan also recognized Brittany Rasmussen for her efforts over the past several months, noting that she had worked diligently and had reached out to all prospective members of the Meet Mableton Board. She then asked if there were any questions from the Mayor and Council.

Mayor Owens expressed appreciation for the work Cobb Travel & Tourism has done in supporting the City. He noted that from the beginning, the City's goal was to distinguish between advertising for the broader area and marketing specifically for Mableton. He stated that the City is committed to establishing its own DMO to promote Mableton directly.

Mayor Owens acknowledged that Mableton remains part of the larger Cobb brand, which is why Cobb Travel & Tourism has played a key supporting role since the outset. He emphasized that, even as the City moves toward a long-term structure, there are significant benefits to continuing a relationship with Cobb Travel & Tourism due to their expertise,

established relationships, and technical capabilities. He added that the City will continue to rely on CT&T as the partnership develops.

He concluded by stating for the record that this effort reflects an ongoing and collaborative partnership that is continuing to take shape.

Councilmember Jeffcoat inquired about the selection process for individuals serving on the board. Mrs. Quinlan explained that she worked with the Mayor to develop a target list designed to represent each district within the City, as well as individuals and industries connected to hospitality and tourism. She noted that a set of criteria was used to identify relevant industries, and the team then matched potential candidates accordingly. Cobb Travel & Tourism conducted outreach to these individuals to confirm their interest and commitment to serving on the board. Councilmember Jeffcoat commented that it is also important for the Council to have additional input regarding who is selected to serve.

City Attorney Emilia Walker-Ashby explained that Meet Mableton is an external entity. She noted that while the Council does not directly appoint board members, it does have the ability to influence the board's composition. She stated that if the Council is not satisfied with the board structure, there is flexibility to negotiate changes, and that doing so should not present difficulty. She further explained that the board is prepared and eager to serve the City. However, because Meet Mableton is a 501(c)(6) organization rather than a City body, it must be established in accordance with standard nonprofit procedures. Once formed, the Council may condition funding on specific requirements related to board composition and governance.

c. Economic Development Presentation - Director Artie Jones

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Economic Development Director Artie Jones, who presented an update on the Economic Development Department.

Director Jones provided an overview of the Economic Development Department and detailed the following:

- Introduced the department team, including Economic Development Director Artie Jones, Program Manager Karey Davis, and Administrative Assistant Chelsea Sherron.
- Read the department's mission statement.
- Explained the purpose and role of economic development.
- Highlighted collateral organizations, including the Mableton Development Authority (MDA), Meet Mableton (pending approval), and the Mableton Downtown Development Authority (pending approval).
- Identified partner organizations, including Cobb Economic Development, the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Cobb Travel & Tourism, Georgia Power, GreyStone Power, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Cobb Work Source Georgia, SelectCobb, the Cobb Chamber, the South Cobb Business Association, 4P (Partners, Pastors, Public Safety, and Principals), and the Mableton Improvement Coalition (MIC).

- Reviewed current program initiatives and projects.
- Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) Visits
- Tax Allocation District (TAD) Establishment — Director Jones provided further details about a TAD and the allocation of tax funds.
- Small Business Connect
- Retail Strategies
- Urban Redevelopment Planning & Design Services
- DevelopMableton
- ONEMableton

Councilmember Brown asked how a TAD would operate when an entity does not have a millage rate. Director Jones explained that the County and Board of Education taxes would be frozen at current levels for 30 years, while any additional tax revenue generated within the district would be reinvested into the TAD. He added that policies and procedures would be established to guide the allocation of tax revenues.

Councilmember Brown asked whether Cobb County has a history of participating in TADs. Director Hughes, who authored Cobb County's TAD policy, noted concerns regarding cooperation from the County and the School Board. Director Jones added that discussions with those entities would begin shortly after the referendum. Councilmember Brown asked whether there was an educational strategy to explain TADs to the public. Director Jones confirmed that there was and further explained TADs as a financing tool. He noted that no specific areas have been predetermined for a TAD.

City Manager Tanks clarified that the presentation reflected the Council's request for greater departmental engagement. Councilmember Herndon asked how partner organizations are working with the City to advance economic development, and Director Jones provided an explanation.

In response to Councilmember Herndon's question regarding future objectives and timelines, Director Jones stated that Fall 2026 would be the earliest implementation timeframe following the June/July strategic meeting. He noted that the goal is to offer a year-round calendar of programs on the City website focused on business owners, particularly small businesses. He highlighted SCORE as a resource through which retired corporate executives volunteer their time and expertise to support businesses and noted that the City would need to establish a framework to facilitate SCORE's involvement.

Mayor Owens acknowledged MIC's role in supporting economic development in Mableton before incorporation and asked about expanding those efforts. Director Jones said the City supports the initiative but needs further research and collaboration. City Manager Tanks emphasized partnerships between City staff and community organizations to promote business growth, attraction, and retention.

Councilmember Ferguson asked how TADs would work with URA areas. Director Jones said there may be some overlap, but the boundaries have not yet been identified. He noted that a community can have multiple TADs and that there is flexibility in their location, though additional information and trend analysis are needed to determine appropriate boundaries. He also noted that TADs cannot encompass more than 2% of the City's tax

digest.

Mayor Owens emphasized that a TAD is one of several tools available to support different types of development. In response to Councilmember Ferguson's question about underperforming TADs, Director Jones explained that a TAD can be retired if the City has not incurred debt within the district. He noted that marketing will be part of the strategic plan and emphasized that, with the right data, the City can make informed decisions. He also reminded the Council that the process is a long-term effort.

Mayor Owens noted that the November referendum concerns redevelopment powers, not specific TADs the City may establish. He emphasized the need to educate the community on both the referendum and the TAD process ahead of the vote and asked about the Economic Development team's plans. Director Jones responded by outlining the team's planned public education efforts.

Councilmember Ferguson asked how BRE visits are initiated and about the process. Director Jones explained that visits are currently focused on larger businesses in the City, with plans to expand to smaller businesses once those are completed. Manager Kareay Davis added that the City's website includes a request button for BRE visits and provided additional details on how the process works.

Councilmember Jeffcoat asked how often BRE visits are conducted. Manager Davis responded that the team aims to complete 5–6 visits with larger businesses each quarter. Councilmember Jeffcoat expressed interest in participating in future visits. Director Jones provided additional details on the BRE visit process. Councilmember Ferguson asked whether the effort should also include nonprofit organizations. Director Jones noted that nonprofits would fall under a different category, as most are not directly tied to economic development.

Mayor Owens thanked Director Jones.

d. Ethics Board Update - Chairman Joel Cope

Mayor Owens introduced Joel Cope, Chair of the Ethics Board, who provided an overview of the Board's formation, the adoption of its bylaws, and the rules and procedures for handling ethics complaints. He noted that the bylaws and procedures are included in the agenda packet.

Mr. Cope recognized the current Ethics Board members: Tammi Daniel, Patricia Thomas, Ebony McCants, Karen Clarke, Brandon Mitchell, and Angela Weston. He also commended Attorney Earl Thomas for his assistance and noted that City Clerk Hiott has been a valuable resource.

Mr. Cope highlighted the following points:

- The Ethics Board is governed by the City's Charter and Code of Ordinances.
- The Board has developed an Ethics Complaint Form, which will be made available

on the City's website.

- He briefed the Council on the Board's investigation checklist, hearing procedures, and the form used by hearing panels to document written findings of fact and recommendations.

Mr. Cope stated that the City has established a credible, transparent process and emphasized a collaborative approach. He expressed hope that the Council is satisfied with the procedures in place to address potential issues and offered to answer any questions.

The following Council questions followed:

- Mayor Owens thanked Mr. Cope and reflected on the Council's efforts to prioritize ethics in the City of Mableton. He asked how many attorneys currently serve on the Board, and Mr. Cope responded that there are two.
- Mayor Owens asked how complaints are handled during election season. Mr. Cope explained that the Ethics Ordinance includes provisions governing ethics complaints filed during election periods.

Clerk's Note (from Ordinance Code): "To discourage the filing of ethics complaints solely for political purposes, complaints will not be accepted against a person seeking election as a city official—whether currently serving as a city official or not—from the date qualifying opens for the elected office at issue through the date the election results for that office are certified.

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- Councilmember Ferguson asked about the Ethics Board's meeting schedule, and Mr. Cope responded that the Board meets on an as-needed basis.
- Councilmember Ron Davis asked how the three-member panel that hears ethics cases is selected, and Mr. Cope explained the process for forming the panel.

Clerk's Note (from Ordinance Code, Section 1.2.6): "Upon receipt of a properly verified complaint and timely forwarding of that complaint to the city official charged in the complaint, the City Clerk shall, within thirty (30) days thereafter and with a witness present, randomly draw three names from among all duly appointed members of the Ethics Board to constitute the Board of Ethics hearing panel."

Mayor Owens thanked Mr. Cope and the Ethics Board members for their work and presentation.

- e. **First Read - An Ordinance Updating Chapter 12, Solid Waste Management, of the City of Mableton Code of Ordinances, Establishing a Keep Mableton Beautiful Commission and for Other Lawful Purposes - Emily Ryan,**

Sustainability, Greenspace, and Beautification Director

Mayor Owens introduced the item and recognized Sustainability, Greenspace, and Beautification Director Emily Ryan, who presented. The presentation is included in the record.

Director Ryan noted that this item is a first reading of an ordinance and bylaws establishing a Keep Mableton Beautiful Commission. She shared the results of the Community Appearance Litter Index, a tool used to assess an area's overall cleanliness and visual appearance. The index is rated on a scale of 1 to 5, where lower scores indicate better conditions and higher scores indicate greater levels of litter and visual blight. She reported that Mableton's citywide average score was 1.8. The assessment also identified notable issues, including right-of-way concerns and instances of illegal dumping.

The ordinances & bylaws overview included:

- **Core Mission & Structure:** The Commission prioritizes environmental education and beautification through four volunteer committees: Beautification, Litter Prevention, Waste Reduction, and Education.
- **Governance & Growth Roadmap:** A nine-member appointed board will be established, with a mandatory 12-month review to consider a future transition to 501(c)(3) status. The Mayor appoints one member, each Council member appoints one member, and the City Manager appoints two members.
- **Next Steps:**
 - **Ordinance Adoption & Board Appointments:** Establish the Commission and appoint a nine-member board representing all city districts and key community sectors.
 - **Community Research & Inventory:** Conduct the required Keep America Beautiful Focus Area Research to establish a baseline of local environmental practices and identify key stakeholders.
 - **Budget & Strategic Planning:** Finalize the first-year operating budget and adopt strategic goals to guide the Commission's work.

Councilmember Ferguson asked about the term limits. Director Ryan stated that City Manager appointees will serve two-year terms, while Mayor and Council appointees will serve terms concurrent with their respective elected officials. Councilmember Brown asked how soon members should be seated. Director Ryan responded that appointments are expected by mid-summer. Councilmember Ferguson asked about day-to-day interactions between the board and City staff. Director Ryan explained that the board will generally provide ideas, guidance, and community support that supplement what the City can directly offer constituents. She also noted that an education committee will be established in coordination with Code Enforcement to address Councilmember Ferguson's concerns regarding outreach, education, and enforcement of existing regulations.

City Manager Tanks noted that establishing this entity positions the City to have a non-council body capable of pursuing grants and other funding opportunities in support of the City's beautification goals. He also stated that it would help align the City with potential

partners, volunteers, and future initiatives. Councilmember Ferguson emphasized that appointed members should be selected based on relevant skill sets to advance the initiative, rather than solely on being the most vocal about litter issues in the City. Mayor Owens asked about the distinction between the Commission Board and the broader committee membership. Director Ryan provided clarification on the structure and roles of each.

Director Ryan provided additional updates from the SGB Department to include:

- *Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)*
 - Completed RFP process
 - Identified MXI as HHW Waste Collector
 - Event scheduled for Saturday, June 6th, from 8 AM – 12 PM
 - Will require registration and exclusive to Mableton residents

- *Southface Home Weatherization Educational Workshops*
 - Understanding Utility Bills: Helping residents decode rate structures and identify energy savings.
 - Home Weatherization Basics: Hands-on, low-cost DIY energy training for Mableton homeowners and renters.
 - Workshops scheduled for Saturday, July 11th & 18th, from 9 AM – 11 AM

Councilmember Brown asked whether there are opportunities for grants to support weatherization efforts for residents in need. City Manager Tanks responded that the City will need to establish an organized approach, through Code Enforcement, for individuals unable to comply with City codes due to physical or financial hardship. He noted that Code Enforcement would maintain a list of organizations for referrals. He emphasized that the issue must still be addressed. Director Ryan also noted that once Keep Mableton Beautiful is established as a nonprofit, it may be eligible to pursue grants to support related initiatives.

f. REZ 2026-002 - 640 South Gordon Rd - Parcel ID 18038500350 - Request to rezone subject property from R-20 to RD for duplex development - Community Development Director Michael Hughes

Mayor Owens stated that it was 9:04pm and he entertained a motion for a 10-minute recess.

Motion was made by Councilmember McNeely and seconded by Councilmember Davis to enter a 10-minute recess. The motion carried 7-0.

There was not a motion to exit the recess, so business continued at 9:33pm.

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Planning and Zoning Manager Chris Wheeler to present. The presentation is included in the record.

Mr. Wheeler noted that the application is a rezoning request from Single-Family Residential (R-20) to Residential Duplex (RD) to allow development of a duplex and a habitable accessory dwelling unit.

The following items were reviewed during the presentation:

- Aerial map
- Zoning map
- Future Land Use Map indicating Medium Density Residential (MDR)
- Site imagery
- Surrounding area context
- Site plan showing access along South Gordon Road
- Proposed elevations for the duplex and habitable accessory dwelling unit (HADU)
- Proposed interior plans
- Zoning criteria

Mr. Wheeler indicated that both Planning Commission and staff recommend approval with 10 stipulations. He reviewed updated stipulations #3, #5, and #8, noting that the full stipulations are included in the record under ORD2026-05-05.

The Mayor and Council raised additional questions and comments regarding specific details of the unit, and Mr. Wheeler responded. Councilmember Davis raised safety concerns regarding egress. City Manager Tanks noted that design standards must be met and indicated there is limited concern about egress for a residential property. Parking and garage requirements were discussed. City Manager Tanks advised the Council not to focus on design details, while Mr. Wheeler noted that design requirements can be added as stipulations by the Council.

City Manager Tanks asked the Mayor and Council whether they were clear on the application request and the direction of their decision. Councilmember Jeffcoat asked for the justification for denying the HADU. Deputy Director Garver responded that the HADU conflicts with the RD zoning district. She also noted that HADUs are allowed in single-family zoning categories and are not explicitly excluded from RD. She added that the definition is unclear and staff will seek Council clarification on intent. She provided Council with suggested options for approval or denial. Further discussion took place.

Mayor Owens noted that ADUs were approved as an initiative to support inclusive and affordable housing and emphasized the importance of maintaining that intent. Mr. Wheeler responded that staff's focus is to clearly define what is and is not allowed.

Councilmember Ferguson asked about the distinction between ADU and HADU. Deputy Garver clarified that while ADU is the common term, the City's Zoning Ordinance specifically uses the term HADU. Councilmember Herndon asked about the potential conflict in allowing an ADU for another duplex but not this one. Deputy Garver responded that broader policy issues need to be addressed and that the City will need to determine where it wants these uses located. She noted these issues will be addressed through the Unified Development Code (UDC) rewrite.

Councilmember Ferguson asked about the transition from the City's current approved comprehensive plan to the Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan and its impact on future land use. Deputy Garver stated that the new plan will replace the current plan upon adoption. Councilmember Ferguson asked additional questions, which Deputy Garver addressed, and there was no further discussion.

- g. TLUP 2025-004 - 245 Hunnicut Rd- Parcel ID 18039100080 - Request for temporary land use permit for a dog sitting business in the RA-4 (Single Family Residential) zoning district - Community Development Director Michael Hughes**
Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Manager Wheeler to present.

Manager Wheeler stated the item had an advertising issue and would not be heard that evening. He provided an overview of the application for a Temporary Land Use Permit (TLUP) to allow a dog kennel on the property, noting the case was initiated by Code Enforcement. The applicant has operated for approximately three years and currently keeps 6–10 dogs on a fully fenced property zoned RA-6 (Single-Family Residential) under Cobb County zoning. He also noted additional code violations on the property. Staff recommended denial, and the item will be returned to Council for future consideration.

Mayor Owens asked about the property's prior business use, and Manager Wheeler stated he found no verified business history beyond hearsay. He added that Code Enforcement will reassess the property's code violations and noted there is no business license or application on file. Councilmember Jeffcoat asked whether that was the basis for the denial. Manager Wheeler responded that the recommendation was based on land use compatibility, stating the dog kennel is not a suitable fit for the residential area. He noted that further details and TLUP criteria will be included in the staff report. Councilmember Ferguson asked the reason for the TLUP request. Manager Wheeler confirmed it was to provide the applicant with time to relocate the business. He noted the application is a first step toward obtaining a valid business license. Manager Wheeler noted that there are several developments occurring in Mableton without permits or approvals.

h. FY27 Budget Priorities Presentation - Finance Director Karen Ellis

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized City Manager Tanks to present.

City Manager Tanks noted the City is in budget season, emphasizing the budget as one of Council's most significant annual decisions, with adoption scheduled for June 10. He commended the Finance Department's work and highlighted that this is the City's third year operating without a general fund property tax. He explained the budget reflects full departmental operations and staffing. He noted the initial projection was \$25 million in expenditures versus \$18 million in revenue, resulting in budget adjustments based on staff priorities. He also stated the City's policy is to maintain a 30% fund balance as a rainy-day reserve, with current reserves at approximately 40%. He indicated that the budget has now been reduced to \$22 million, and noted that fund balance support will be used to meet the required budget. He noted that each department was asked to reduce its budget by 10% and outlined the process for evaluating cuts and funding one-time expenditures.

The presentation is included in the record. City Manager Tanks reviewed the following in detail:

- FY27 Budget Calendar
- Budget principles
- City Council priorities

- FY27 operating and capital assumptions
- General Fund revenues and expenditures (FY26 approved vs. FY27 proposed) by fund and department
- Proposed balanced budget by department
- Class and pay position summary
- FY27 budgets for each of the City's special revenue funds
- Summary of proposed FY27 expenditures

City Manager Tanks reiterated that this reflects the City's most accurate budget projection, including all revenue sources and expenditures. He added that additional funding sources are also being considered.

The Mayor, Council, and City Manager discussed a range of budget-related topics, including:

- Staff capacity to meet citizen needs and ensure proper tools and resources
- Staff efficiency and departmental performance metrics
- Technology, innovation, and cross-departmental software improvements
- Responsible development and consideration of new positions
- Gaps in operational tools and resources needed for success
- Budget assumptions and overall forecasting process
- Council input into the budget development process
- Requests for additional support roles, including a constituent services position or executive assistant
- Expanded town halls and citizen engagement opportunities
- Accuracy of revenue projections and assumptions
- Alignment of budget priorities, including Council priorities, staff support, and cost-of-living considerations
- Timing and prioritization of new positions within the budget
- Impact of the proposed budget on City priorities and service delivery expectations
- Revenue recovery through responsible development and identification of revenue-generating areas
- Full staffing capacity and performance measurement metrics
- Resident concerns regarding service delivery expectations
- Citizen education and communication efforts
- Administrative efficiency through technology and automation of routine tasks
- Land development and community growth considerations
- Staffing alignment and classification consistency
- Reductions in staff training and travel
- A 25% increase in insurance premiums
- Funding for a DOT project manager position
- Allocations of approximately \$1.75 million for land acquisition and \$1.2 million for fleet and IT infrastructure investments

When reviewing the Council budget specifically, Council discussed the following:

- Sources of input into the City Council budget
- Assumptions regarding full Council operational capacity
- Projected expenses and anticipated revenue assumptions
- Lack of tools to support Council efficiency

- Need for increased citizen engagement opportunities
- Consideration of a constituent services role or additional executive assistant
- Council expenditures and budget composition
- Desire for additional town halls and related requirements
- Citizen engagement software needs
- Reduction in Mayor's budget due to removal of the State of the City event
- Council budget increase of \$7,700, totaling approximately \$498,000, and its breakdown
- City Manager's budget increase of approximately 60%, including an Assistant City Manager position.
- Need for process improvement staff and potential contract support
- Discussion of Deputy City Manager versus Assistant City Manager roles
- Departmental budget increases, decreases, and related considerations
- Whether software enhancements should be centralized under IT or distributed by department
- Assumptions regarding departmental technology needs
- Centralizing IT management while decentralizing associated expenses
- Creation of a General Administration budget for citywide expenses
- Reduction in seasonal positions
- Upcoming operations of Municipal Court
- Establishment of a new Public Works department
- Use of Public Works/DOT contractors
- Services provided through County intergovernmental agreements (IGAs)
- Community Development staffing needs, including a land development manager and business license compliance manager to support revenue generation
- Role of the land development manager
- Law enforcement services and the agreement with Cobb County
- Additional revenue sources
- Consideration of FLOST versus SPLOST
- Projected hotel/motel tax revenues

City Manager Tanks noted that a public safety mileage item will be brought before Council soon. He stated that total funds across all accounts are approximately \$45 million and that police expenses have not yet been fully included in the current figures. He estimated General Fund revenues at \$18 million and expenses at \$22 million, with the budget balanced using approximately \$4.5 million from the fund balance. He noted the City would retain about \$7.6 million in fund balance, including a 40% rainy day reserve, and emphasized that the City's cash position remains strong. He added that the budget will have its first read on Wednesday the 13th and concluded that the City is in a solid financial position.

Mayor Owens requested the detailed budget be provided prior to the next meeting. He noted that the first public hearing is scheduled for May 27 and emphasized that Council will need time to review and provide input. Director Ellis confirmed the document will be distributed.

6. PRE REGULAR MEETING AGENDA REVIEW

Mayor Owens announced the item and reviewed the proposed agenda for the May 13 Regular Meeting.

The following items were discussed:

- City Manager Tanks noted the addition of a SPLOST IGA to the consent agenda.
- Councilmember Ferguson asked about monitoring compliance of waste haulers, and City Manager Tanks stated there are no current compliance issues.
- Review of approved floor levels for the REZ2026-003 application.
- Council consideration of appointments to the Historic Preservation Committee, Veterans Affairs Committee, and Keep Mableton Beautiful.
- Questions were raised regarding the Mayor's Committee item.

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION (IF NEEDED) FOR LITIGATION (O.C.G.A. 50-14-3(B)(1)(A)REAL ESTATE(O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (B)(1)) PERSONNEL (O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (B)(2)) AND MISC. EXEMPTIONS (O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (B)(4)&(5))

Council emphasized the need to eliminate last-minute agenda additions and ensure information is provided in advance. Council decided not to hold an executive session and will have one on Wednesday instead.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Councilmember Jeffcoat and seconded by Councilmember Brown to adjourn. The motion passed 7-0. There being no further business, Mayor Owens adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:30am.

Dr. Michael Owens, Mayor

Susan Hiott, City Clerk