



## **CITY OF MABLETON, GEORGIA**

Riverside EpiCenter  
135 Riverside Pkwy, Austell, GA 30168  
April 7, 2025 at 6:30 PM

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The Honorable Michael Owens, Mayor  
The Honorable Ron Davis, District 1 Councilmember  
The Honorable Dami Oladapo, District 2 Councilmember  
The Honorable Keisha Jeffcoat, Mayor Pro Tem/District 3 Councilmember  
The Honorable Patricia Auch, District 4 Councilmember  
The Honorable TJ Ferguson, District 5 Councilmember  
The Honorable Debora Herndon, District 6 Councilmember

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### **CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES**

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Owens called the meeting to order.

#### **2. ROLL CALL**

City Clerk Susan Hiott conducted the roll call. All of Mayor and Council were present.

#### **3. INVOCATION**

City Manager Tanks led the invocation.

#### **4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **5. AGENDA ITEMS AND DISCUSSION**

##### **a. Mableton Comprehensive Plan 2045 Update - John Funny of Grice Consulting**

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Mr. John Funny of Grice Consulting. Mr. Funny thanked Mayor and Council for allowing him to provide an update on the Mableton 2045 Comp Plan. The presentation is available in the agenda packet. Items addressed included 1. Work Tasks Underway; 2. Timeline/Schedule; 3. Upcoming Activities; and 4. Questions & Answers

Highlights of Mableton 2045 Comprehensive Plan Update:

- The <https://www.mableton2045.org/> website was up and running.
- The public hearing was held for the Planning Commission on April 1st.
- Community Engagement Plan -The proposed stakeholder and public meeting dates were distributed and all have been notified.
- Mr. Funny addressed why the City adopted the County's Comp Plan to have in place to be certified before adopting the City's own Comp Plan.
- Information will be on the [https://www.mableton2045.org/Mableton 2045](https://www.mableton2045.org/Mableton%2045) website.
- There have been 457 responses to date for the Community Survey.
- There were 132 participants at the first public meeting held in December 2024.

- The draft vision and goals were 30% complete. There are additional input from stakeholder groups and the Planning Commission and Steering Commission.
- Mr. Funny distributed a handout of the proposed meeting dates.
- Councilmember Ferguson asked if the meetings were included on the Council's calendar.
- He stayed away from scheduling meetings on Mondays and Wednesdays.
- Land use analysis, economic/market analysis, transportation analysis, and special areas analysis and planning were in progress.
- Councilmember Ferguson asked about the schedule, and Mr. Funny explained that there was a shift in the schedule by four months.

Mr. Funny addressed the revised five (5) designated special areas. When looking at the original areas, and looking at a half-mile radius, three of the areas touched, so they created that as one big area and added two additional areas. The three that were combined as one special area were Town Center, Veterans Memorial Pkwy/Historic Mableton. Therefore, two additional areas are Floyd Road at Nickajack Node and the Silver Comet Trailhead. The other two are Six Flags and Riverline/Discovery Blvd. Mr. Funny addressed how he came up with the areas that made sense for redevelopment with the framework of the area. The footprint will be based upon market study for the areas.

Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat asked why it looked like the redevelopment focus was on where there was redevelopment. She explained there were not a lot of areas that had not been considered for redevelopment. She asked if that could be revisited. Mr. Funny provided an additional explanation. He explained why a developer would not look at redevelopment if there are a lot of infrastructure needs. There are some pockets that have infrastructure needs. Discussion and explanation continued about identifying infrastructure needs and potential land use. She stated there would be some follow-up questions about her district and future land use and Grice's formula and process. Discussion ensued.

Councilmember Herndon asked why the Silver Comet Trail head was added. Mr. Funny said because of the use of the trail, it would give a destination. The area adjacent could receive development well. He stated he relies on his economists heavily. He asked him to give the areas that were ready for redevelopment. He tests the market and talks with developers. The market analyst does his homework. Councilmember Herndon opined how she was happy to see an area further north in the Comp Plan. Originally, District 6 was not included at all. Mr. Funny explained how the look was citywide of what area was prime right for redevelopment based on the character today.

Councilmember Auch asked what were the original five in the RFQ. Mr. Funny named Historic Mableton, Town Center, Veterans Memorial Parkway, and Riverline. Mayor Owens corrected that the RFQ originally had Riverview instead of Riverline and Six Flags to be consolidated into one. Town Center and Historic Mableton are consolidated into one. Riverline Discovery and Silver Comet Trail head were added. Mayor Owens commented about not having full grasp on some of parameters. Veterans Memorial Corridor is one of the longest stretch of highway in the City. It was a lot of space. and one of the oldest challenged commercial areas of the City. The two circles between Town Center and Veterans Memorial overlap 75%. With the two circles overlapping 75%, it seems like a lot of overlap. He was concerned that the effort put into Town Center, and the

historic Mableton would both get the deep dive that they needed. The same for Riverside and Six Flags. They are adjacent, but trying to make Riverside Corridor and Six Flags one in the same has been a problem because the economic driver of the two areas are different. The criteria for success are different for Riverside and Six Flags as well as Town Center and Historic area. If consolidated, they need attention as separate entities. Mr. Funny clarified they are working together, but all will have its own chapter. For example, there will be Town Center and subchapter for the Historic area. There will be separate chapters. Mr. Funny recommended a corridor study for Veterans Memorial Highway. For a special area, in the Comp Plan, there is a half-mile radius. If there was a corridor study, that would include the entire Veterans Memorial Highway.

Councilmember Ferguson asked if it would be advantageous to slide the bubble of the Veterans Memorial where it encompasses some of the other areas. The bubbles could be moved, but would lose an area. With the overlap, the City gets more bang for the buck. Discussion followed about looking far ahead to 2045. Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat asked if he could enlarge the half-mile area. Mr. Funny stated his firm tried to stay at half-mile based on planning principles. He explained that if they get too far away, the character area changes and trying to balance the needs changes.

Mayor Owens asked about applying for a LCI Study from ARC for Veterans Memorial. Mr. Funny explained the Comp Plan would identify future planning efforts and studies. It is best to have a planned document in place before applying. LCI's grants are very competitive. The grant is stronger if the City has a planning document.

Councilmember Auch asked if there would be pop-ups. He explained he would pop up at District 4 and 6 Town Hall and Taste of Mableton. He would pop up at Councilmember Davis' housing summit. Any opportunities to address Mableton 2045, he would like to be there. Councilmember Oladapo stated she had a town hall on April 24th.

Mr. Funny reviewed the schedule, noting the changes since the original timeline. The schedule is available in the agenda packet. Upcoming tasks were summarized, and also available in the agenda packet.

City Manager Tanks stated staff had met with DCA. DCA indicated the City should bring the adopted County Plan before ARC. Mr. Funny offered to prepare a document for the city's signature to send to ARC. Mayor Owens addressed how a Resolution Adopting the County Comp Plan as interim was approved at the last council meeting. It may be good to have a public hearing and readopt the resolution. Attorney Walker-Ashby recommends, out of caution, to have a public hearing on the item. Mr. Funny clarified there would be public comment at the Council Meeting as a public hearing.

Mayor Owens asked if Mr. Funny had found another location for the meeting. Discussion followed about potential locations and moving the meetings around. Mr. Funny stated they had in Grice's budget for meeting facilities.

Mayor Owens thanked Mr Funny for his presentation.

**b. City of Mableton Event Fee Schedule - Administrative Supervisor Lily Smith**

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Administrative Supervisor Lily Smith

and Events Coordinator Ashlee Houston who explained the event types and proposed fees for a City of Mableton event. Ms. Smith and Ms. Houston explained:

- City approved events are permitted and are events officially approved through a permit by the City. There is no city staff involvement.
- City supported events are where city staff are present in a limited capacity for oversight, safety, or minor logistical support, but do not help plan, co-host, or fund the event.
- City sponsored events are where the City of Mableton partners with organizers and provides staff support, branding, and/or resources.
- City events are fully created, planned, and executed by the City of Mableton.
- The proposed fees for the City event are: Food Truck Registration \$50; Retail Table/Booth Registration \$50; and nonprofit participation \$0.
- Item A will be in the regulatory schedule - fees are identical to county.

Questions and answers occurred. Mayor Owens asked if there would be no fees for a city-approved event. Discussion followed about having fees for permits at a later time. Attorney Walker-Ashby explained the first item was a special events that was regulated by Cobb County. That is a regulatory fee. That item will be in the regulatory ordinance coming before the City in a few weeks. The only money collected would be the permit fees. The City would have to have administrative personnel to issue those permits. Applicants have to contact zoning, police, and other departments for feedback. The permit requires a lot of administrative work. The City would adopt the County's fees for the residents, and they would not see a change in fee unless the City makes an adjustment. Mr. Tanks further explained there would be additional fees at a later time. The fees are to be determined. There will be fees associated with the other events, but not at this time.

Mayor Owens asked to remove N/A - Put TBD instead of N/A because later there will be fees. Councilmember Ferguson asked to explain what is classified as an event and what constitutes going through steps and having staff work on the events. What is the SOP? Ms. Houston named Food Truck Fridays, Taste of Mableton, and the Senior Brunch. Mr. Tanks explained there is often confusion about what an event is. Councilmember Auch stated the event was an organized activity. The events planned for Mableton's residents should align with the City's values. Councilmember Herndon asked if there were guidelines for permitted events. Mr. Tanks stated there would be a lot of guidelines. Discussion continued. Attorney Walker-Ashby pointed out that the first one is regulatory and guidelines would be in a regulatory ordinance. For the other three, the City was a participant and would have more control.

Ms. Smith briefed the Council on the budget of the upcoming city events. Example - Food Truck Fridays - \$3,680. This is estimated before any sponsorship. Councilmember Jeffcoat asked for an explanation of the process of registering for the Food Truck Fridays. Dr. Houston explained she had a Food Truck application. She had received six applications so far. She explained the approval process and the documents submitted, such as a food permit and other requirements, before approving the applicant to participate. City Attorney Walker-Ashby noted the Farmers Market would be a regulatory event. Councilmember Herndon asked what the difference was between Justin Barr's position and a photographer

in the budget. Ms. Smith stated this was just an estimate, and was noted in case Justin Barr could not be available. Mr. Barr was not a professional photographer. Mr. Tanks provided an additional explanation. Councilmember Auch asked how much was in the budget for events. Mr. Tanks estimated at approximately \$26,000. Ms. Smith announced: The Wild Wild West Senior Brunch Budget - end of May - \$4,000 - Mableton Day Festival Budget - \$13,900. 6116 Mableton Parkway Grand Opening Budget \$1030.

Mayor Owens asked if the City was giving priority to the City's local vendors in Mableton and Cobb County. Dr. Houston replied she was reaching out to her previous Cobb County vendors and those that were used last year. Councilmember Ferguson asked if there was a limit on the number of vendors for Food Trucks, and Dr. Houston replied ten. Councilmember Oladapo asked that if there were ever ten vendors, please make sure there is not any repetition of food type in the food trucks. Councilmember Ferguson asked if tables were allowed. Dr. Houston replied that food trucks, trailers, and carts were allowed at Food Truck Friday. However, tables will be allowed at the Mableton Day Festival.

**c. Fiscal Year 2024-2025 City Events Review - Administrative Supervisor Lily Smith**

This item was discussed in Item b.

**d. Discussion of the City's Green Communities Application and Upcoming Sustainability Initiatives - Sustainability, Waste and Beautification Director Emily Groth**

Mayor Owens announced the item and recognized Sustainability, Waste and Beautification Director Emily Groth. The presentation is available in the record. Ms. Groth provided an update on the upcoming sustainability projects and initiatives. She addressed:

1. A proposed Tree Preservation and Beautification Ordinance and fund
2. A proposed Night Sky Ordinance
3. A proposed resolution supporting electric vehicle usage within the community
5. A proposed resolution to support a statewide beverage container recycling program
6. A proposed resolution to apply for the aforementioned beverage container recycling program's grant

Questions and discussion followed:

- Councilmember Auch asked if the City would be hiring a City Arborist. Mr. Tanks explained the reason the City should take the hiring of an arborist into consideration and Ms. Groth commented additionally about the role of a City Arborist.
- Councilmember Ferguson inquired about the LEED is City facilities or that we have a number of LEED buildings in he City. She explained how it was in the city-owned building.
- Mayor Owens addressed the EV2035 and how it correlates with the City's support of EV Vehicles.
- Mayor Owens asked about the designation of the Tree Fund in the budget (\$2 per capita i.e. \$160,000 line item in the budget). Mr. Tanks and Ms. Groth agreed there should be a designation in the budget. Mr. Tanks will look into this further.
- Councilmember Auch and Council thanked Ms. Groth for her busy work.

**e. Website Service Needs, Timeline, and Criteria Discussion - City Manager Bill**

## **Tanks**

Mayor Owens announced the item and provided background. The City Clerk had provided information previously. The request to sign a contract was delayed. The task was to now go back and have a set of business and technical requirements. The City will go back to get additional quotes from companies. Mr. Tanks explained there were a lot of questions. Staff will go back and do this again. Mayor Pro Tem Jeffcoat explained the importance of having a business requirement document (BRD). Mayor Owens stated there should also be a technical requirements document. Councilmember added the importance of knowing who would manage the website. There was a discussion about the 2023 initial quote of one company that was much more because they quoted the premium package. The previous quote was for the standard version at a much lower price. Mr. Tanks thanked Councilmember Ferguson for improving the current website. An IT Director will be onboard to help with the BRD needs. A Communications Director will help with the management of the website.

## **6. PRE REGULAR MEETING AGENDA REVIEW**

Time did not permit discussion.

## **7. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **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))**

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Auch and seconded by Councilmember Ferguson to go into Executive Session for litigation, real estate, and personnel and exemptions (all items). The motion passed unanimously. Yeas: Davis, Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Auch, Ferguson, Herndon and Owens

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Ferguson and seconded by Councilmember Jeffcoat to close Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously. Yeas: Davis, Oladapo, Jeffcoat, Auch, Ferguson, Herndon and Owens

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion** was made by Councilmember Ferguson and seconded by Auch to adjourn. The motion passed 7-0. There being no further business, the Mayor adjourned the meeting at 11:26 p.m.