Pre-Agenda Session @ 5:30 p.m.

A G E N D A

City Council Meeting

Monday, November 2, 2026 – 6:00 p.m.

- **OPENING**
  - **Call to Order**
  - **Invocation**
  - **Pledge of Allegiance**
  - **Roll Call**
- **FORMAL PUBLIC COMMENT -** *No formal requests*

Formal Public Comment – City Council Agenda Protocol

The City of Garden City has identified this portion of the meeting to allow individuals an opportunity to formally address the City Council on issues of importance. Garden City requires that individuals who desire to formally address the City Council submit a written request form outlining the subject matter that they intend to discuss so that they can be placed on the meeting agenda. Members of the public desiring to be placed on the agenda to present or address matters to the City Council must submit a formal ***"REQUEST TO BE PLACED ON THE CITY COUNCIL AGENDA"*** form to the Office of the City Manager at least 10 days prior to the requested City Council meeting date that you wish to speak. City Council meetings are held on the first and third Monday of each month so the request must be submitted no later than 5:00 pm on the Friday which constitutes 10 days prior. The request can be done in person, regular mail, fax or e-mail and the speaker should obtain acknowledgement of the request from the City to demonstrate that the 10 day requirement has been met. The request form may be obtained from the Office of the City Manager and on the City's website www.gardencity-ga.gov. The request should state the name of the individual(s) desiring to be heard and the subject matter to be presented to City Council. Requests may be referred at the discretion of the City Manager, to appropriate staff for mediation prior to being placed on the public agenda. Please be advised the completion of a request form does not entitle the speaker to be added to the agenda.

➢ RECEIPT OF INFORMAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Procedure: To best manage this meeting section, any person who desires to address the City Council must sign up using the process outlined on the website where this meeting is advertised. Once recognized by the Mayor, the person will be allowed to speak in accordance with the Informal Public Comment–Speaker Protocols outlined below.

Informal Public Comment – Speaker Protocol

The City of Garden City believes that any member of the general public should be afforded the opportunity to address the City Council provided that designated rules are followed by the speaker. Any member of the public who wishes to address the City Council and offer public comment on items within the City Council's jurisdiction, may do so during the Informal Public Comment period of the meeting. However, no formal action will be taken on matters that are not part of the posted agenda. Informal Public Comments are scheduled for a total of fifteen (15) minutes and each person will be limited to three (3) minutes. In order to ensure the opportunity for all those desiring to speak before the Council, there is no yielding of time to another speaker. Speakers not heard during the limited fifteen (15) minute period will be first to present their comments at the next Council meeting. The opportunity to address City Council on a topic of his/her choice shall be used by an individual only one (1) time per month. It may not be used to continue discussion on an agenda item that has already been held as a public hearing. Matters under negotiation, litigation, or related to personnel will not be discussed. If a member of the general public would like to address the City Council during the Informal Public Comment portion of the meeting, please respectfully indicate your desire to address the City Council when the Mayor solicits members of the general public to come forward and speak. You will be recognized by the Mayor and asked to come forward to the podium so that you can address the City Council in accordance with the rules outlined herein. Once the speaker has been recognized to speak, he/she will be given three (3) minutes to address the City Council. The speaker should not attempt to engage the City Council and/or Staff in a discussion/dialogue and the speaker should not ask specific questions with the expectation that an immediate answer will be provided as part of the three (3) minute time frame since that is not the intent of the Informal Public Comment period. If the speaker poses a question or makes a request of the City, the Mayor may refer the issue or request to the City Manager for follow up. At the conclusion of the three (3) minute time period, the speaker will be notified that his/her time has elapsed and the next speaker will be recognized to come forward to the podium and address the City Council. The Mayor may rule out of order any Speaker who uses abusive or indecorous language, if the subject matter does not pertain to the City of Garden City, or if the Speaker(s) attempts to engage the City Council Members in a discussion or dialogue on issues. City Council shall not discuss non-agendized matters because it does not give the public adequate notice. Accordingly, City Council shall be limited to asking factual and clarifying questions of staff, and when appropriate, the Council may consider placing a matter on a future agenda. In addition, it is not reasonable to expect staff to respond to any of a variety of issues on which they may or may not be prepared to respond to on a moment's notice, so the City Manager may respond, or direct staff to respond at a later time.

➢ PUBLIC HEARINGS

- **FY2027 Budget:** Presentation of the FY2027 Budget for public comment.

Speaking to a Public Hearing Item Protocol

In the interests of time and to ensure fairness of all persons who appear before the City Council to speak for or against a public hearing item, speakers will be limited to three (3) minutes each to address City Council except as described herein. One speaker for the Petitioner may address the City Council for no more than 10 minutes, unless extended by the Mayor. In an effort help the City Council and the general public to better understand the issues, the Mayor may request that a City staff member address the City Council from the podium. Speakers from the general public may only speak when recognized by the Mayor during the public hearing. Speakers will be asked to come to the podium to address the City Council for three (3) minutes and they shall state their name and resident address for the record.

Speakers addressing City Council on a public hearing item should coordinate comments to respect City Council's time limits. Groups should select a spokesperson to present the major points that summarize their position and opinions. Speakers are urged to be brief and non-repetitive with their comments. Comments shall specifically address the public hearing item before the City Council, and the speaker shall maintain appropriate tone and decorum when addressing the City Council. City Council may ask questions of the applicant, speakers, or staff during these proceedings only for the purpose of clarifying information. The speaker shall not direct derogatory comments to any individual, organization, or business. At the conclusion of the three (3) minute time period, the speaker will be notified that his/her time has elapsed, and the next speaker will be recognized to come forward to the podium and address the City Council. Once the public hearing is closed on an item, there will be no further opportunity for formal or informal public input at a City Council meeting.

PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING PUBLIC HEARINGS ON PROPOSED ZONING DECISIONS BEFORE GARDEN CITY'S MAYOR AND COUNCIL AND STANDARDS GOVERNING THE EXERCISE OF CITY COUNCIL'S ZONING POWER

Procedures for Conducting Public Hearings on Proposed Zoning Decisions:

All public hearings conducted by the Mayor and Council on Garden City, Georgia, on proposed zoning decisions shall be conducted as follows:

(1) All public hearings by the Mayor and Council on zoning amendments shall be chaired by the Mayor.

(2) The Mayor shall open the hearing by stating the specific zoning amendment being considered at the public hearing and further stating that printed copies of the adopted standards governing the exercise of the Mayor and Council's zoning power and the procedures governing the hearing are available to the public.

(3) The Director of the City's Planning and Zoning Department shall advise the Mayor and Council of the recommendation of the Planning Commission when applicable.

(4) The Mayor shall determine the number of attendees who desire to testify or present evidence at the hearing.

(5) When there is a large number of individuals wishing to testify at a hearing, the Mayor may invoke time limits on individual speakers. In such cases, these time limits shall apply to all speakers. Proponents, including the petitioner or the petitioner's agent requesting the zoning decision, shall have no less than ten (10) minutes for the presentation of data, evidence, and expert opinions; opponents of the proposed decision shall have an equal minimum period of time. The Mayor may grant additional time; provided, however, an equal period of time shall be granted both sides.

(6) The petitioner requesting such zoning decision, or the applicant's agent, shall be recognized first and shall be permitted to present and explain the request for the zoning decision. Thereafter, all individuals who so desire shall be permitted to speak in favor of the zoning decision.

(7) After all individuals have had an opportunity to speak in accordance with subparagraph (6) above, those individuals present at the public hearing who wish to speak in opposition to the requested zoning decision shall have an opportunity to speak.

(8) The Mayor may limit repetitious comments in the interest of time and may call for a show of hands of those persons present in favor of or opposed to the proposed decision.

(9) It shall be the duty of the Mayor to maintain decorum and to assure the public hearing on the proposed decision is conducted in a fair and orderly manner.

(10) Once all parties have concluded their testimony, the Mayor shall adjourn the public hearing.

Standards Governing the Exercise of The Zoning Powers of Garden City's Mayor and Council:

Prior to making a zoning amendment, the Mayor and Council shall evaluate the merits of a proposed amendment according to the following criteria:

(1) Is this request a logical extension of a zoning boundary which would improve the pattern of uses in the general area?

(2) Is this spot zoning and generally unrelated to either existing zoning or the pattern of development of the area?

(3) Could traffic created by the proposed use or other uses permissible under the zoning sought traverse established single-family neighborhoods on minor streets, leading to congestion, noise, and traffic hazards?

(4) Will this request place irreversible limitations or cause material detriment on the area similarly zoned as it is or on future plans for it?

(5) Is there an imminent need for the rezoning and is the property likely to be used for the use requested?

(6) Would the proposed use precipitate similar requests which would generate or accelerate adverse land use changes in the zone or neighborhood?

- **Approval of City Council Minutes**
  - Consideration of the minutes from the October 19th Pre-Agenda Session and City Council meeting minutes, and October 26th Special Called meeting minutes.

- **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION –** *No items for consideration*

- **ADJOURN**

SYNOPSIS

Pre-Agenda Session
Monday, October 19, 2026 - 5:30 p.m.

Call to Order: Mayor Campbell called the pre-agenda session to order at approximately 5:30pm and offered the prayer.

Attendees:
Council Members: Mayor Bruce Campbell, Mayor Pro Tem Gwyn Hall, President of Council Natalyn Morris, Councilmember Michael Bruner, and Councilmember Chris Figiel, Councilmember Richard Lassiter, and Councilmember Debbie Ruiz.

Staff Members: Rhonda Ferrell-Bowles, City Manager; James P. Gerard, City Attorney; Gil Ballard, Police Chief; Katie Draeger, Finance Director; Cliff Ducey, Parks and Recreation Director; Veronica Enoch, Governmental Affairs & Strategic Initiatives Director; and Tonya Roper, Clerk of Council.

Mayor's Updates

Mayor Campbell reported that Councilmember Morris and he attended the Ports Address. They met with the Ports Authority representative and were introduced to the new official coming into leadership at the Port, as well as several other individuals. Mayor Campell noted that the new appointee is very driven and appears to be a strong advocate for the Georgia Ports.

Councilmember Morris added that she brought back several of the booklets that were handed out at the event. She said that for those who were unable to attend, the booklets provide a good overview of the material presented and highlight initiatives and future plans that were discussed. Councilmember Morris stated that the YES Program has started back, and she expressed that she is a strong advocate for youth. She was pleased to see the program resume this year after previously being put on hold, noting that the improvements presented that afternoon will make it even better moving forward. She added that the hope is to have Garden City students participate in the program.

City Council Updates

None

City Manager Updates

The City Manager provided an overview of the agenda.

1. Approval of City Council Minutes

Consideration of the minutes from the October 5th Pre-Agenda Session and City Council meeting minutes, and October 12th Workshop meeting minutes.

2. Items for Consideration

a. Mayor and Council will consider the updated schedule of fees for the new recreation facility.

a. Councilmember Morris stated that with the consideration of the fee schedule, the City could consider designating the two Garden City Community associations as complimentary users. This designation would allow them to utilize the facility once a month for one hour without being subject to the published fee schedule, and the department would manage their usage accordingly.

Councilmember Figiel noted that this approach would grant complimentary use only to the community associations within Garden City and would not extend to other nonprofit organizations. Councilmember Morris confirmed that this was the intent, emphasizing that the suggestion applies exclusively to the two community associations and not to nonprofits in general.

The City Attorney stated providing free use of the facility would constitute an unlawful gratuity. Councilmember Figiel noted that in the previous meeting, it was discussed that nonprofits may receive a discounted rate only when providing a direct and documented public benefit. Councilmember Figiel asked whether the criteria could be further defined so that the Garden City Community associations could qualify under that standard.

The City Attorney advised against granting free use or creating exceptions without clear policy definitions, noting that anyone could claim to be a neighborhood association, which would be difficult to regulate and could expand free use beyond what is permissible.

Councilmember Bruner stated that recent municipal law training emphasized caution regarding what jurisdictions may provide without a return. The City Attorney added that, in the case of CHSA, the organization provides a matching public benefit equivalent to the $60,000 received. Councilmember Bruner noted that this arrangement is also supported by a contract.

Councilmember Hall stated to Councilmember Morris that although there are currently only two community associations, nothing would prevent additional neighborhoods from forming their own associations, which could significantly increase the number of groups seeking complimentary use. Council discussed that the issue of gratuities is governed by constitutional law.

Councilmember Morris expressed concern that the community associations have historically played an important role in communicating with residents and may not be able to afford facility rentals, noting that they do not generate revenue. Staff clarified that these organizations did not previously use the gym but did use space at the Cooper Center. Councilmember Morris emphasized that her reference was to a room or meeting space similar to what they used at the Copper Center. Staff confirmed that the Cooper Center had been available to these community organizations at no cost.

Councilmember Figiel stated that during prior discussions, the Council addressed the idea of requiring a demonstrable public benefit and determining how to value that benefit in order to establish an appropriate discount rate.

The City Manager stated that while the decision rests with Council, residents already pay taxes and are still required to pay applicable facility fees. The City Attorney reiterated that offering complimentary use presents constitutional gratuity concerns and noted that any distinction between groups must be clearly defined to avoid unequal treatment. He cautioned that without a formal definition of "neighborhood association," numerous groups could claim eligibility, expanding requests for free use. The City Attorney agreed to further research the matter. He also informed Council that the Cooper Center is subject to a deed restriction requiring the property to revert to the Cooper family if the City were to sell it, and therefore it must continue to be used for community purposes. In response to the Mayor's inquiry, he confirmed that the building cannot be conveyed to another party without triggering reversion of title.

The City Manager asked whether relinquishing control of the Cooper Center was advisable and suggested that a lease agreement could allow the City to maintain oversight and ensure the facility continues to provide community-benefiting programs. In response to Councilmember Morris's questions regarding maintenance and operational costs, she explained that under a lease arrangement, the tenant would be responsible for overhead, upkeep, and utility expenses. Staff noted that similar arrangements had been attempted in the past with limited success; however, the Recreation Director confirmed that the current partner is paying all costs on their side, and the Finance Director added that they are covering a portion of the electrical and gas expenses. A broader discussion followed among Staff and Council regarding options for ownership, leasing, liability, deed reversion, and maintenance obligations.

Council agreed that staff should respond to parties inquiring about the status of the Cooper Center and that the item should be placed on the November workshop agenda.

b. The resolution for the debris staging agreement pertains to the designated location where debris is placed following a hurricane; the site for this agreement is 1342 Dean Forest Road. The rental fee for the property will not begin until the site is actually used.

c. The resolution to write off the 2020 utility accounts receivable deemed uncollectible is a procedural item.

a. Councilmember Bruner asked which utilities are included in the write-off and whether there is a threshold at which services are disconnected?

The Finance Director stated that the utilities included in the write-off are water, sewer, stormwater, and sanitation. She explained that these accounts represent services that

have already been disconnected and sent to collections, and that this resolution reflects their status after all required processes have been completed. A discussion followed regarding the necessity of removing uncollectible accounts from the books and the City's adoption of a policy in November 2016 based on the auditors' recommendations. Concerns were expressed about the thousands of dollars being written off and whether the uncollectible accounts originated from residents or business owners.

The Finance Director explained that the uncollectible accounts come from a combination of sources. She noted that water and sewer services are disconnected once an account is two months past due. For stormwater, if the account is in collections and the property is sold, the seller may encounter issues. She added that there are additional steps and complexities involved once an account enters the collections process.

Briefing

Tree Plantings

The City Attorney reported that the lot adjacent to the library, where the tree planting had been proposed, is subject to a conservation covenant requiring the property to remain green space and a public area. He noted that this restriction aligns with the City's intended use and confirmed that the covenant supports maintaining the site in its current condition.

Holiday Street Décor (Recreation Dept.)

Councilmember Ruiz asked the Recreation Director about plans for installing Christmas decorations along the streets this year. The Recreation Director reported that all 70 decorations previously approved by Council have been purchased. However, the City encountered significant delays with Georgia Power, which asserted control over all pole-mounted electrical access. Staff met with Georgia Power throughout the summer and documented each pole. The most recent update indicates Georgia Power will charge approximately $19,000 to disconnect power so City contracted electricians can repair the outlets, after which Georgia Power would return to reconnect service. The Recreation Director noted that this additional cost was unforeseen.

The Recreation Director stated that staff has been working to obtain clear guidance from Georgia Power. He noted that the City had not installed Christmas lights for approximately three years, and now that installations are resuming, Georgia Power is requiring additional steps and controls. He reported that neighboring jurisdictions such as Port Wentworth, Pooler, and Rincon are not subject to the same requirements. Georgia Power has indicated that these directives are part of a broader effort to centralize oversight through its Atlanta office.

The Recreation Director stated that the procedures required by Georgia Power are entirely new. Staff has had to accompany Georgia Power representatives on three separate site visits, during which each pole was documented and entered into their tracking system. He explained that some poles are light

poles and others are not, and the work involves different divisions within Georgia Power, which adds to the complexity. The Director reported that he has notified the City Manager and Finance Director of the situation and forwarded the associated invoice. He emphasized that the City cannot proceed until the $19,946 payment is made, as Georgia Power will not authorize further action until then. Once payment is submitted, electricians will be able to make the necessary repairs.

The Recreation Director stated that although preparations for the holiday decorations have been underway, the unexpected requirement from Georgia Power has created a significant delay. He confirmed the total amount of the invoice for Council and noted that Georgia Power also bills the City annually for electricity used by the decorations. He explained that while the City has always provided usage estimates for its LED lights, those assessments were handled locally in the past; however, the new pole-management system is now overseen through Georgia Power's Atlanta office. He reported that all light fixtures have been in stock for several months, with Gerbasi Sign Company scheduled for installation and Rushing Electric prepared to complete necessary repairs. Georgia Power, however, requires high-voltage certified electricians to perform all disconnects and reconnects due to the proximity of high-power lines. Although local electricians have performed this work in previous years, Georgia Power will no longer authorize it, requiring the City to proceed under the new process.

The Recreation Director responded to Councilmember Morri's inquiry, explaining that other municipalities have not faced similar requirements because they continued installing their decorations without interruption. He noted that the City's three-year break triggered Georgia Power's review and documentation process.

Community Room (Recreation Dept.)

Councilmember Ruiz returned to the topic of community room usage and asked which two community organizations would be eligible, adding that it would be beneficial for them to use the space once a month. The Recreation Director responded that, based on past experience, allowing groups to use space at no charge created scheduling conflicts when the gym was already booked. He expressed concern that offering free use could place the City in competition with other activities held at the facility and stated his preference that all groups contribute a fee to ensure fair and consistent use.

Councilmember Morris expressed concern that restricting complimentary use may diminish the "community" purpose of the community center. She noted that allowing community associations one hour per month is not a matter of profit or loss and stated her perception that limiting access could give the appearance that the City is prioritizing revenue over community benefit, which she did not believe was the original intent.

Special Called Meeting

The City Manager announced the need for a special called meeting on Monday, October 26th, to consider the Comprehensive Plan. She asked Council whether they could meet at 5:30 p.m. or 8:30 a.m., noting that the DCA review regarding the images had not yet been returned and the deadline is October

31st. Following discussion, Staff also suggested 5:00 p.m. as an option. Council agreed to advertise the special called meeting for 5:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26th.

Adjournment: Mayor and City Council adjourned the pre-agenda session at approximately 5:57pm.

Transcribed & submitted by: The Clerk of Council
Accepted & approved by: The City Council 11-02-26

M I N U T E S

City Council Meeting
Monday, October 19, 2026 – 6:00 p.m.

Call to Order: Mayor Campbell called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m.

Opening: Mayor ProTem Hall gave the invocation, and Mayor Campbell led the City Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call
City Council Members: Mayor Bruce Campbell, Mayor Pro Tem Gwyn Hall, President of Council Natalyn Morris, Councilmember Bruner, Councilmember Figiel, Councilmember Richard Lassiter and Councilmember Debbie Ruiz

Staff Members: Rhonda Ferrell-Bowles, City Manager; James P. Gerard, City Attorney; Gil Ballard, Police Chief; Cliff Ducey, Parks and Recreation Director; Tonya Roper, Clerk of Council; and Kyle Thomas, IT Tech.

Informal Public Comment: With no comments or questions, Mayor Campbell closed the section for informal public comment.

City Council Minutes: Councilmember Morris made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 5th Pre-Agenda Session and City Council meeting minutes, and October 12th Workshop meeting minutes. Councilmember Morris made a motion approving the minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hall and passed with all voting in favor of the motion.

Items for Consideration:

Fee Schedule (Parks & Recreation): The Clerk of Council read the title heading of consideration by the Mayor and City Council to approve the updated schedule of fees for the Parks & Recreation Department.

Councilmember Hall made a motion to approve the consideration. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Bruner and passed with Councilmember Bruner, Councilmember Figiel, Councilmember Hall, Councilmember Lassiter, Councilmember Ruiz, and Mayor Campbell voting in favor of the motion. Councilmember Morris voted in opposition of the motion.

Resolution – Debris Staging Site Agreement (1342 Dean Forest Road): The Clerk of Council read the heading of a resolution of the Mayor and Council authorizing the execution of a lease agreement with Katherine C. Ward, Jim Rabbon Ward III, and Melissa Albrecht for use of a 6.14 acre parcel located at 1342 Dean Forest Road for use as a temporary debris staging and reduction site to store, manage, and reduce storm debris generated by hurricanes, and for other purposes.

Councilmember Bruner made a motion approving the resolution. Councilmember Hall seconded the motion; the motion passes with all voting in favor of the motion.

Resolution – Write Off of 2020 Utility Accounts Receivables Deemed Uncollectible: The Clerk of Council read the heading of a resolution by the Mayor and City Council authorizing the write-off of the 2020 utility

accounts (bad debt) totaling $35,519.27 that staff has identified as outside of the statue of limitations of recovery (older than six years) and therefore deemed uncollectible.

Councilmember Lassiter made a motion to approve the motion. The motion is seconded by Councilmember Morris; the motion passes with all voting in favor of the motion.

Adjournment: Councilmember Morris made a motion to adjourn at approximately 6:05pm. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Ruiz and passed without opposition.

Transcribed & submitted by: The Clerk of Council
Accepted & approved by: The City Council on 11-02-26

M I N U T E S
Special Called Meeting
City Council Meeting
Monday, October 26, 2026 – 5:00 p.m.

Call to Order: Mayor Campbell called the meeting to order at approximately 5:00 p.m.

Opening: Mayor Campbell gave the invocation and led the City Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call
City Council Members: Mayor Bruce Campbell, Mayor Pro-Tem Gwyn Hall, Councilmember Michael Bruner, Councilmember Chris Figiel, and Councilmember Debbie Ruiz. Absent: President of Council, Natalyn Morris and Councilmember Richard Lassiter.

Staff Members: Rhonda Ferrell-Bowles, City Manager; James P. Gerard, City Attorney; Gil Ballard, Chief of Police; Carlos Navarez; Planning Director, Tonya Roper, Clerk of Council; and Kyle Thomas, IT Tech.

Items for Consideration:
Resolution –2040-2045 Comprehensive Plan Update: A resolution to adopt the Comprehensive Plan of Garden City for submission to the Coastal Georgia Regional Commission and the State of Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

Councilmember Ruiz made a motion to approve the resolution. Prior to a second on the motion Councilmember Hall stated he had an inquiry regarding the consideration. Mayor Campbell called for questions or comments regarding the consideration.

Councilmember Hall asked if the item was still a draft being considered for approval.

The City Attorney stated that this is not a draft. The draft was already previously approved, then sent for review. After that review, certain changes were made, and the updated version is now being presented for final approval. He stated Melanie Wilson with MPC is present for additional discussion.

Ms. Melanie Wilson, Executive Director and CEO of the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC), said thank you for allowing us to work on this plan for you. As indicated, you all approved a resolution enabling us to submit the draft. This year, DCA discovered AI, like the rest of the world, so any little tweak got kicked back and the document was sent back for revision.

One of the things we discovered was that, as part of our recommendations, we wanted to reemphasize the fact that the next part of this process is updating the land use plan. However, we received an email from DCA stating that the Comprehensive Plan has met all of the standards required, which is what you need in order for us to be here today regarding your consideration of approval.

I want to stress that this is a living document. It is also an update document. In 2040, we established the plan. Typically, every ten years, jurisdictions conduct a comprehensive update in conjunction with the Census. This is the fifth-year update. We updated it with new data, new information, and feedback we received from the community through surveys, public meetings, and pop-up events. We also streamlined the implementation tool. This will make it easier for your Planning Director to review the implementation section and align it with what you are proposing to do in the future.

We were able to make those updates based on feedback from you, the citizens, and through efforts to streamline the document. One of the practical differences is that where we previously had goals, we now have measurable actions. I am sure your City Manager and Council will appreciate being able to use those measures to evaluate success. Another change is the creation of character areas. I know several of you had questions regarding the land use plan. Character areas influence what is called the Future Land Use Map, or FLUM. We updated those areas. The second component of this process will be for you all to spend time considering what you want your Future Land Use Map to look like. Most jurisdictions submit their planning documents with character areas. These areas describe what you have said you want different parts of the community to look like. If you want to focus on housing, for example, we now have much more discussion regarding housing, where it can occur, and what it should look like.

We conducted a preliminary review of your existing land use plan, but some areas need additional attention, and that is okay. Again, this is a living document. It can be updated and submitted to DCA at a later date. It does not have to be completed today. The last piece is the land use plan itself, which is essentially a map. When you consider rezonings, your reports should include a section addressing whether the request is consistent with the Future Land Use Map and the Comprehensive Plan. If it is not consistent, an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan should be considered before you make a decision on the rezoning. You should have always been doing that, but I have spoken with your team and stressed the importance of maintaining consistency with the community's vision and the adopted plan.

The process would work as follows: if a rezoning request is not consistent with the Future Land Use Map, you would first consider the FLUM amendment or Comprehensive Plan amendment and then consider the rezoning. If you determine that the FLUM or Comprehensive Plan should not be amended, then the rezoning request effectively goes away. It is also something for which you may charge a fee. You can generate additional revenue through application fees because you do not want individuals arbitrarily requesting changes to the FLUM every month. You want those requests to be well thought out before they are submitted.

We also evaluated the estimated costs associated with implementation activities identified in the plan. Right now, that total is approximately $800,000. You will see information regarding that in the work program attached to this document. Those costs are not solely the responsibility of the City; some may be borne by partner organizations such as CEDA or shared with other jurisdictions.

Last but not least, after this document is submitted, the next step will be updating the Service Delivery Strategy. You do not do that independently. We complete that process with Chatham County. As part of that effort, we review any areas that have been annexed and ensure that the services associated

with those areas have been properly transferred so that you do not end up with unserved or 'orphan' areas. That will be the second phase of this process. One of the major changes made by DCA was requiring the Comprehensive Plan to be completed first and the Service Delivery Strategy afterward. We have a team working on that now.

The Service Delivery Strategy will be more intentional regarding service responsibilities and will include all jurisdictions, not just Garden City. We will review services across jurisdictions such as Pooler and Port Wentworth and evaluate how those services are integrated. There may be opportunities where we recommend that you consider consolidating services or leveraging resources more effectively so that you can get more value from the dollars being spent to provide those services.

In summary, this document has been accepted by the Department of Community Affairs. It must be approved by the end of this month in order for the City to maintain its status as a Qualified Local Government. That designation allows you to remain eligible for grant funding, including Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and other resources for infrastructure and public improvements.

Again, thank you for holding this meeting today and for moving this process forward. I will be glad to answer any questions. I may have taken a few extra minutes, but I wanted to be as thorough as possible.

With no additional questions or comments, Mayor Campbell called for a motion. Councilmember Ruiz made a motion approving the resolution. Councilmember Hall seconded the motion; the motion passes with all voting in favor of the motion.

Adjournment: Mayor Campbell called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Bruner motioned to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:10pm. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Hall and passes without opposition.

Transcribed & submitted by: The Clerk of Council
Accepted & approved by: The City Council on 11-02-26