



Where Community Connects

**HOMETOWN CONNECTION LEGISLATIVE MEETING
SUMMARY MINUTES
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2025 9:00 A.M.**

Mayor & City Council

Mayor Anthony S. Ford
Mayor Pro Tem LaKeisha Gantt – Dist. 1
Councilmember Alphonso Thomas – Dist. 2
Councilmember Kyle D. Berry, Sr. – Dist. 3
Councilmember Yolanda Barber – Dist. 4
Councilmember Elton Alexander – Dist. 5

Administration

Shawn Edmondson, City Manager
Frank Milazi, City Treasurer/CFO
Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk
Quinton Washington, Attorney (NP)

Mission: Is to provide visionary leadership and superior municipal services that enhance the quality of life for citizens while creating a welcoming business atmosphere focused on sustainability and expansion of tourism and cultural events.

Staff Present: Ryan Anderson, Community Development Director, Demeatrius Ivey, Information Technology Director, Rosalynd Rawls, Executive Assistant to Mayor & Council, Brenden Reilly, GIS Technician, and Shana Thornton, Public Information Officer

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ford at 9:00 a.m.

Invocation by: Councilmember Berry

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

City Clerk, Vanessa Holiday was asked to proceed with a verbal roll call. All members were present except Mayor Pro Tem Gantt and Councilmember Thomas.

Motion to adopt the Agenda was made by Councilmember Alexander; seconded by Councilmember Berry. The motion passed unanimously 3-0.

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Mayor Ford welcomed everyone and thanked everybody for participating in the Hometown Connection Legislative meeting; and asked everyone to introduce themselves. Mayor Elect Williams, and Councilman Elect Cloud were in attendance.

HENRY COUNTY LOCAL DELEGATION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Gail Davenport, Representative Demetrius Douglas, Representative Regina Lewis-Ward, and Representative Robert Flournoy.

Senator Davenport noted her district was redrawn to include Stockbridge and thanked the city for the warm welcome. Representative Lewis-Ward thanked the city for the invitation and looks forward to a great discussion.

GEORGIA MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Government Relations Team, Michael McPherson, Leona Rittenhouse and DJ Waller, who thanked the city for hosting a Hometown Connection meeting, noting not all cities do, and that having good relationships between the cities and their delegation legislators helps to advance legislative priorities for their municipalities, and that GMA is ready to help where they can.

Mr. Waller noted items currently being discussed are property tax, income tax, insurance premium tax and invited everyone to attend the 2026 Cities United Summit Conference in January.

DISCUSSION OF LOCAL PRIORITIES:

City Council District 4 - Annexation - Hwy. 138/Hwy. 42 East
City Council District 4 - Annexation - Hwy. 42 North to Clayton County
City Council District 5 - Annexation - Jodeco Rd. East to Peach Dr.
City Council District 5 - Annexation - Jodeco Rd. West to Mt. Olive
Municipal Redistricting - Reapportionment Discussion

Councilmember Barber began the discussion noting she initiated a drive around of City Council District 4 with the City Manager, Shawn Edmondson, where she noted District 4 has the largest land mass, and the majority of the newly annexed residents; noted she only represents half of subdivision, with the other half being represented by City Council District 5, and noted that with her being a resident of the subdivision, she prefers to represent the subdivision (Lakeside) in its entirety.

Councilmember Barber referenced the area for potential annexation along Hwy. 138 East to Hwy. 42 near the skating rink; and the area along 42 North going toward I-675 to the Clayton County line.

Councilmember Barber noted that looking at the city's future growth, there needs to be consideration for adding (2) At-Large City Council Seats for adequate representation of its constituents; noting that the City has stated the focus is to revitalize the downtown area, and that density is a requirement based on a marketing study, however, in City Council District 4 there have been nine (9) developments approved by the City Council and are outside of the downtown area.

Mayor Ford noted it is his understanding that District representation is approximately 3% of the population.

Representative Douglas noted the Henry County Delegation did not draw the map, and was done so by Appropriations, and approved by the House and the Senate; noting the city may have to wait until the next census in 2030, however, adjustments can be made.

Councilmember Alexander noted the current majority at the Capitol is Republican, and agrees with the 10-year census plan; noted City Council District 5 has 33% of the housing in the city, and recommended annexation of the unincorporated area along I-75 to Peach Drive where there has been multiple annexation; noted the city projections have the city approaching 40,000.

Senator Davenport noted her history around redistricting, noting areas that she once represented, and currently represents, and stated, you don't always get what you want. Councilmember Alexander noted he is okay with 10-year redistricting model; and noted 90% of Jodeco would be commercial with the proposed annexation; noted I-75 has 140,000 daily visitors and needs assistance with the exits with litter pickup, overgrown grass, and lighting; noting the Hwy. 138 exit ramp along I-75 has no lighting.

Representative Douglas noted that this is where the city should seek a CID (Community Improvement District), and suggested reaching out to the GDOT Representative, Dana Lemon for assistance.

Councilmember Alexander noted he has made the request approximately eighteen months ago and was told the funding was not in the budget and looks at the issue with the no lights as a hazard, noting he damaged his personal vehicle due to the lack of lighting along the exit ramp.

Mr. Waller suggested the delegation legislators would carry more weight with GDOT speaking on behalf of the municipalities.

Councilmember Alexander noted the Georgia Power estimate for post lamps is approximately \$1.3 million dollars.

State Funding of Multi-Generational Recreation Center

Mayor Ford noted the city has sought federal funding for the recreational component.

Councilmember Alexander noted the city has \$10 million dollars currently in SPLOST, and \$14 million dollars of Bond funding for a facility that has been designed by TSW, and is similar to the Welcome All Park facility, and estimated to cost around \$30 million dollars; noted the first proposed locations was Tye Street and second proposed location is off Burke Street in the old multi-plex facility location; and noted that he serves as the Council Representative on the Downtown Development Authority where a study was conducted to show the housing stock was built in 1966, and that the community center would attract younger families, and is why the city needs density in the downtown area.

Senator Davenport asked if the second location is large enough and asked what the city is doing in the way of affordable housing.

Councilmember Alexander referenced the Habitat for Humanity project where two homes will be built.

Mayor Ford noted the first location on Tye Street could be used to develop affordable housing.

Mr. Anderson noted the city can require a percentage of the units to be affordable housing as a condition of zoning.

Mr. Wall noted that in order for developers to receive Tax Abatements, certain criteria must be met.

Representative Lewis-Ward asked if the second location is where bank formerly housed their processing center.

Councilmember Alexander noted the request to the State is to assist with closing the funding gap needed to build the facility.

Mr. Wall noted there is \$14 million dollars in the bank, and there is a \$10 million SPLOST allocation.

Proposed Name Change for North Henry Blvd.

Representative Douglas asked about the homeless population in the city, noting that with all of the growth, asked what the city is doing with old buildings to address the needs of the less fortunate.

Mr. Edmondson referenced a presentation by Henry County during the last council meeting where there is a Division who is addressing the housing and food insecurities and making an immediate impact, and also has a mobile medical unit that will go out to communities and provide care, noting Henry County is taking the lead.

Councilmember Alexander noted there is not a homeless shelter in Henry County, and the Division referenced will pay for hotel stays.

Councilmember Barber asked Mr. Edmondson if the city has included funding for partnerships with Henry County Agencies in the city's upcoming FY2026 Budget.

Mr. Edmondson confirmed.

Councilmember Alexander referenced a non-profit agency that he runs and stated the dollars are tight right now, especially during the government shutdown and federal cuts to programs.

Mr. Wall stated there is \$14 million dollars in the bank for the Center, noting SPLOST funding could take six years, and suggested the request to the State to be \$8 million dollars to close the funding gap.

There was consensus of the Council to request \$8 million dollars in funding from the State to be allocated toward the city's recreation facility.

Councilmember Baber stated there needs to be an overall comprehensive plan for the revitalization of the downtown area, noting the city is currently selling its city-owned properties to developers.

Councilmember Alexander noted the city sold the building that is owned by Crown Pizza to a developer, and that there are public-private partnerships, including a \$22.5 million dollar investment coming to the downtown, and the city sold property to the Warrick Dunn Foundation.

Senator Davenport stated she favors the idea of rebranding Hwy. 138.

Councilmember Alexander noted that it could be an Overlay similar to Lake Spivey Pkwy.

Representative Douglas insisted that all stakeholders, residents, and business owners be brought to the table with multiple meetings and offer suggestions to get their buy in as it relates to changing the name that would impact hundreds and not just a few.

Representative Lewis-Ward asked for the area along Hwy. 138 that is being proposed.

Councilmember Alexander noted N. Henry to Rock Quarry Rd. and to the Wal-Mart intersection.

Mayor Pro Tem Gantt joined the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Councilmember Barber stated the revitalization priority needs to be the area that houses the city's "legacy" residents.

Representative Douglas asked the city to produce a plan, and noted the delegation is here to support what the body approves.

Senator Davenport noted her concern with the development along Hwy.138, and there being too much traffic, and the developer backing out; and asked that the city develop a cohesive vision.

FLOST UPDATE

Mr. Edmondson noted there were discussions in August where the County proposed using the 2020 census numbers as their model, and includes the 6,700 residents who were annexed into the City of Stockbridge in 2023; noted all four municipalities were in agreement to split FLOST proceeds based upon LOST (Local Option Sales Tax), noting there must be an IGA in place to move forward.

Mr. Edmondson noted there was no IGA executed to meet the deadline for the November ballot, and the County wants to resume talks, with the same split as presented in August and look at the March or May ballot:

Entity	FLOST Share
Henry County	62.77%
Hampton	5.5%
Locust Grove	5.5%
McDonough	11.5%
Stockbridge	14.73%

Mr. Edmondson noted that during the last meeting with the other cities, there remained a conflict between the cities/county distribution percentages.

Mayor Pro Tem Gantt noted there are rental neighborhood challenges and there needs to be regulation put in place.

Representative Douglas noted the General Assembly believes in local control.

Representative Flournoy noted he is working with a group on affordability and sustainability.

Mr. Waller noted GMA opposes pre-emption bills, and noted GMA is working with ACCG.

Councilmember Alexander noted corporations are purchasing homes and noted 50% of his subdivision is owned by corporate entities, and that first-time homebuyers cannot compete to purchase homes.

Representative Lewis-Ward referenced HB305 that is being proposed that would only allow corporations to own twenty-five (25) homes in the county.

Representative Douglas encouraged the city to work out the FLOST percentages with the County, and they will be more than happy to support.

Ms. Rittenhouse noted GMA wants to see more FLOST Referendums, noting there were 36 Referendums on the ballot, and 32 passed, with one of the failures being Paulding County; and that there is time for the May ballot to let the voters decide.

Councilmember Barber asked if the city had a housing authority, and if not, requested that it be re-established.

Ms. Holiday noted the question came up several years ago and that former City Manager, Mr. Ted Strickland specifically stated the apartment complex across from city hall on Harrell Street met the criteria for the City of Stockbridge.

Representative Douglas noted it is good to have that kind of institutional knowledge.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 a.m. was made by Councilmember Berry; seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gantt. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

Respectfully submitted by:

Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk

Anthony S. Ford, Mayor