



# Mayor & Council Work Session

## January 20, 2026 at 3:30 P.M.



# Agenda

1. Fire Service Fee
2. West Main Streetscape Project
3. Annual Report Update
4. Website Update
5. Septic Tank Haulers
6. CDBG Application

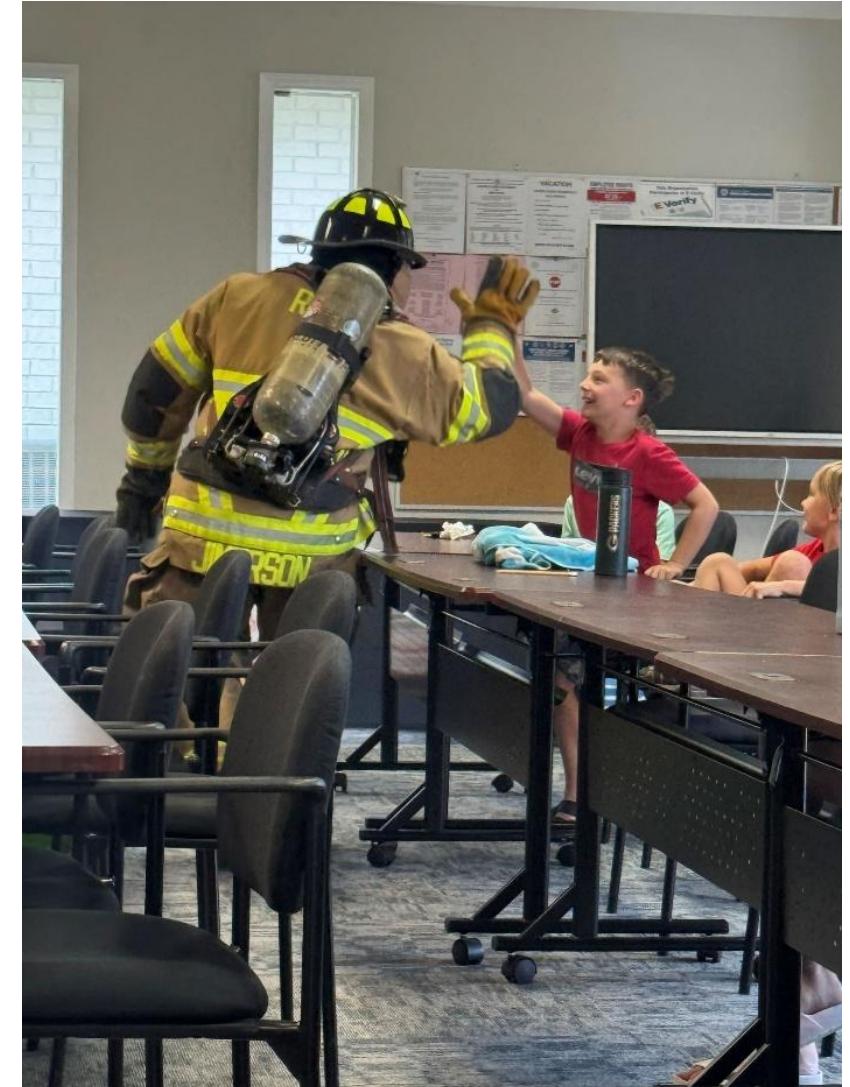


# City of Statesboro, GA Municipal Fire Services Fee



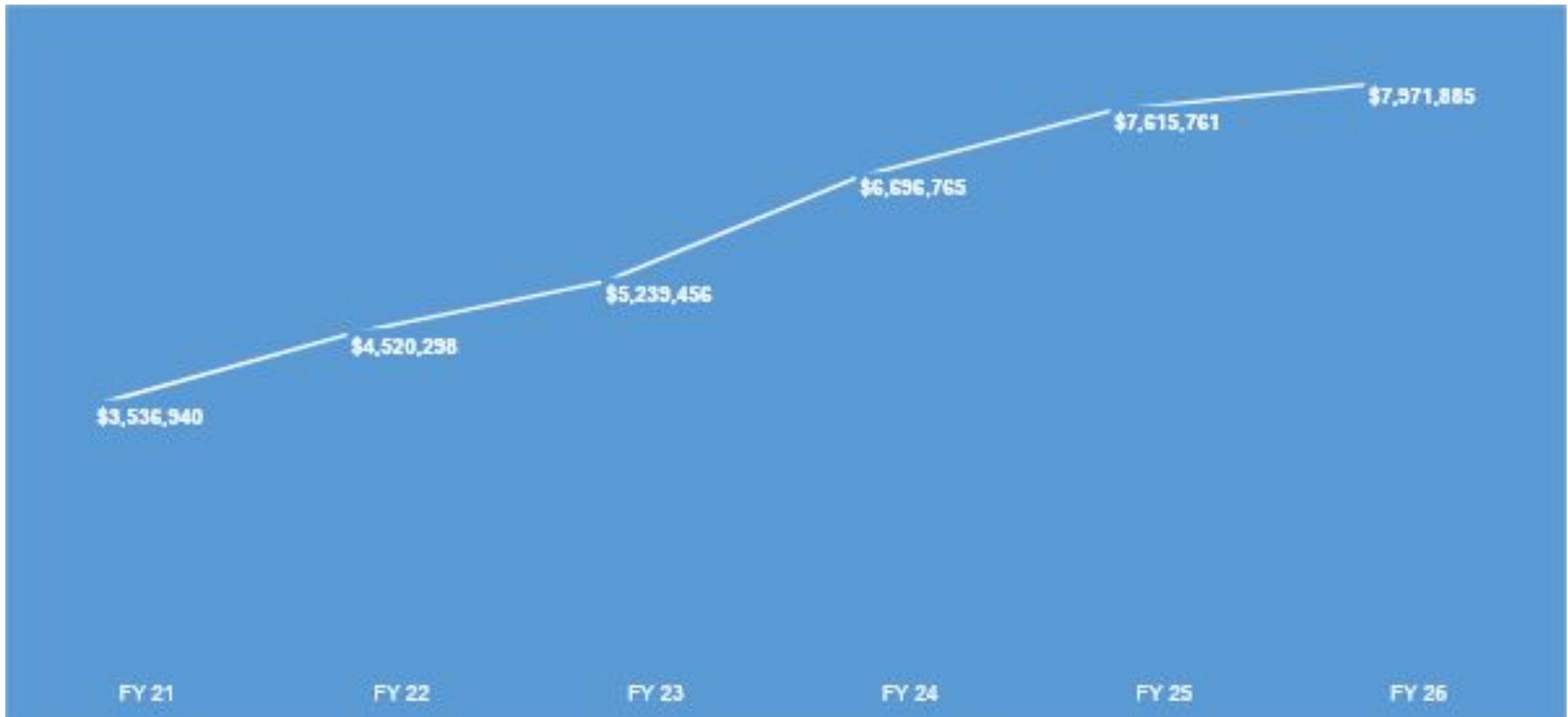
# Statesboro Fire Department

- Become more fiscally sustainable
- Alleviate burden on the General Fund
- Ensure sufficient revenue to sustain current level of service, address equipment needs, etc.



# Fire Department Budget

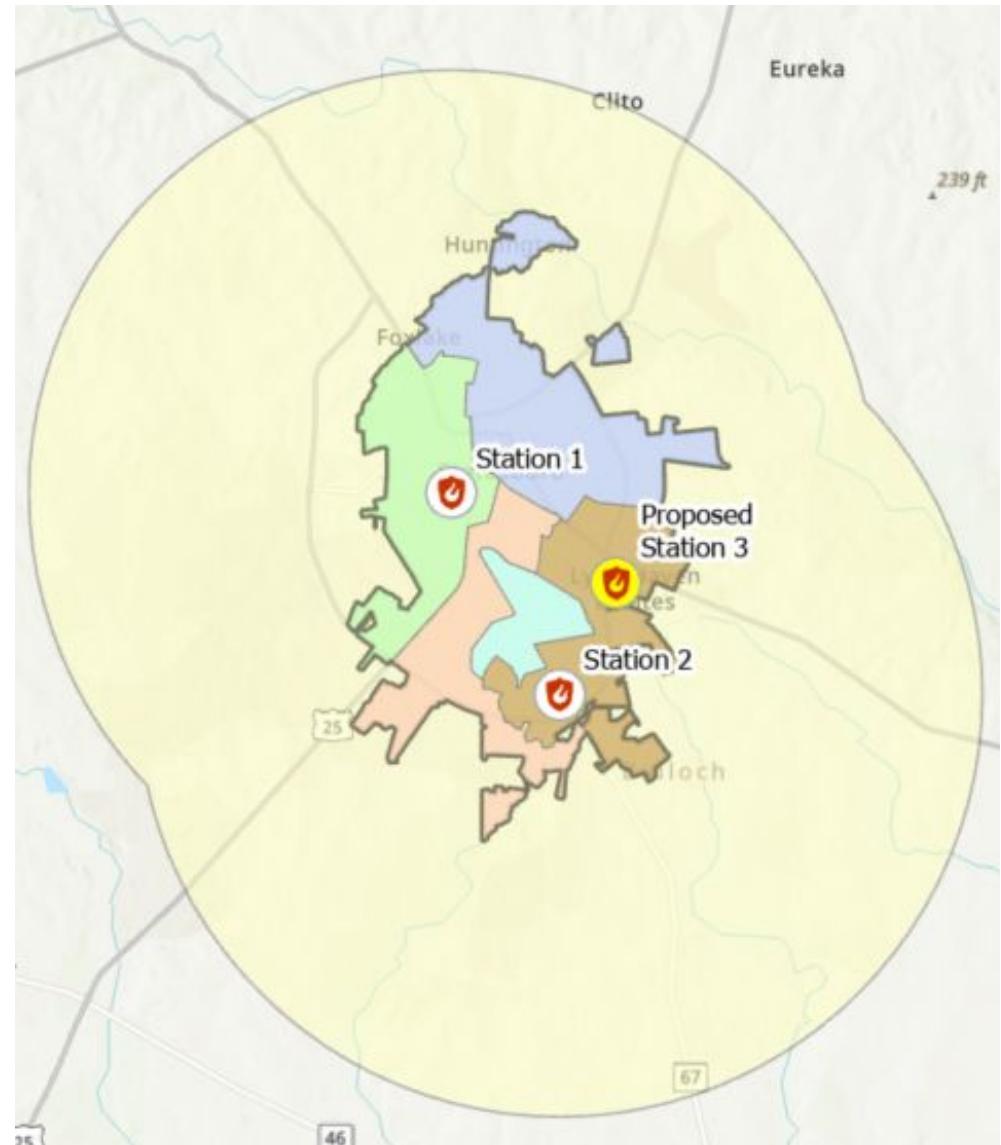
GMC



# Fire Department Budget

GMC

	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027
Total Budget Need	\$7,575,745	\$8,193,000	\$8,620,000
<b>Revenue Sources</b>			
General Fund	\$3,200,000	\$3,200,000	\$3,200,000
Water Sewer Fund	\$825,000	\$825,000	\$825,000
SAFER	\$703,000	\$703,000	n/a
Special Service District	\$2,552,745	n/a	n/a
Fire Line Fee	\$295,000	\$295,000	\$295,000
Loans	n/a	\$3,170,000	n/a
<b>Funding Gap</b>			<b>\$4,300,000</b>



## Fees

- For a particular service provided, i.e. water, sewer, stormwater and sanitation fees.
- Related to fee payer's contribution to the problem and/or benefits received.
- Can be reduced, if the fee payer reduces their contribution to the problem. If you conserve water, your water bill will be less.

## Taxes

- For raising general revenue
- Individual tax payers do not necessarily receive a specific benefit.

# How is the Fee Calculated?

GMC

Breaks down property by land use  
(residential, non-residential, undeveloped)

Fire Fee = (Building Area x Rate) + (Land Area x Rate)



# Fire Fees in Georgia

GMC

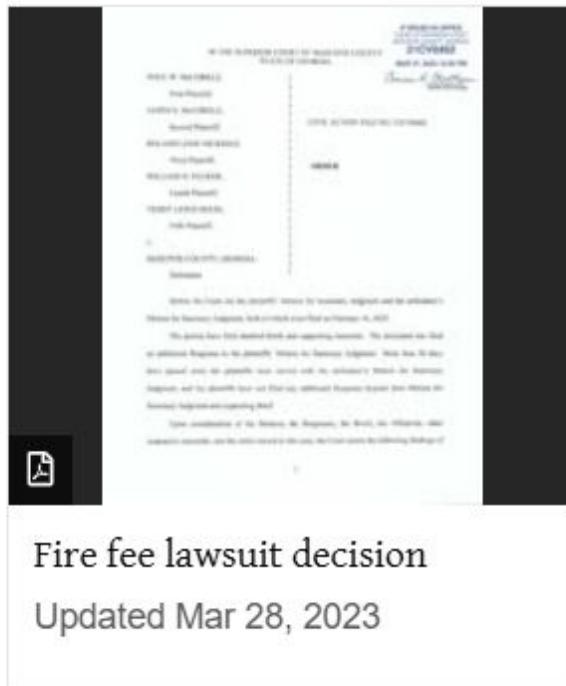
Local Government	Rate Methodology	Billing Mechanism	Annual Bill SFR
<b>Garden City</b>	<b>Per SqFt</b>	<b>Utility bill</b>	<b>\$180</b>
City of Bloomingdale	Tiered Rate/SqFt	Utility bill	\$240 (over 65 - \$168)
City of Port Wentworth	Per SqFt	Stand Alone	\$0 (Commercial Only)
McDuffie County	Per SqFt	Tax Bill	\$29.84 - \$554
<b>Chatham County</b>	<b>Per SqFt</b>	<b>Stand Alone Bill</b>	<b>\$100+ (\$0.14/sqft)</b>
City of Perry	ERU/SqFt w/risk	Utility bill	\$23.50/ERU + Risk
Screven County	Flat Rate Res/Com	Tax Bill	\$35
Walker County	Per SqFt	Tax Bill	\$125-\$600
Evans County	Flat Rate	Tax Bill	\$49

## **Lawsuit calls Chatham County fire fee ‘illegal tax,’ seeks refunds**

**Garden City to End Fire Protection Fee, Create \$1.4M Refund Fund After Class Action Settlement**

## County prevails in fire fee lawsuit

Karen Fioretti Mar 28, 2023 Updated Mar 28, 2023



After nearly 18 months of litigation, McDuffie County Superior Court Judge Thomas L. Hodges, III, has ruled in favor of the county after five property owners sued over the county's implementation of a fire fee. But that may not be the end of it.

Paul McCorkle, James McCorkle, Roland Hickman, William Fluker and Teddy Reese alleged that the county failed to provide proper notice of discussions to the public before adopting a fire fee and "that the fire fee imposed by the Ordinance and Resolution is an unconstitutional, illegal tax under Georgia Law."

# Recommended Rate Structure

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Hybrid Rate Structure (Structure Square Footage and Land Use) to Partially Fund the Fire Department

- Pros
  - Most equitable manner to allocate the cost of fire services
- Cons
  - Fire department will still receive some money from the general fund

Type	Rate	Minimum	Maximum
Residential (SqFt charge)	\$ 0.01	\$ 5.00	\$ 25.00
Non Residential (SqFt charge)	\$ 0.02	\$ 5.00	\$ 300.00
Undeveloped	\$ 5.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 200.00

The revenue target is to generate \$4,000,000

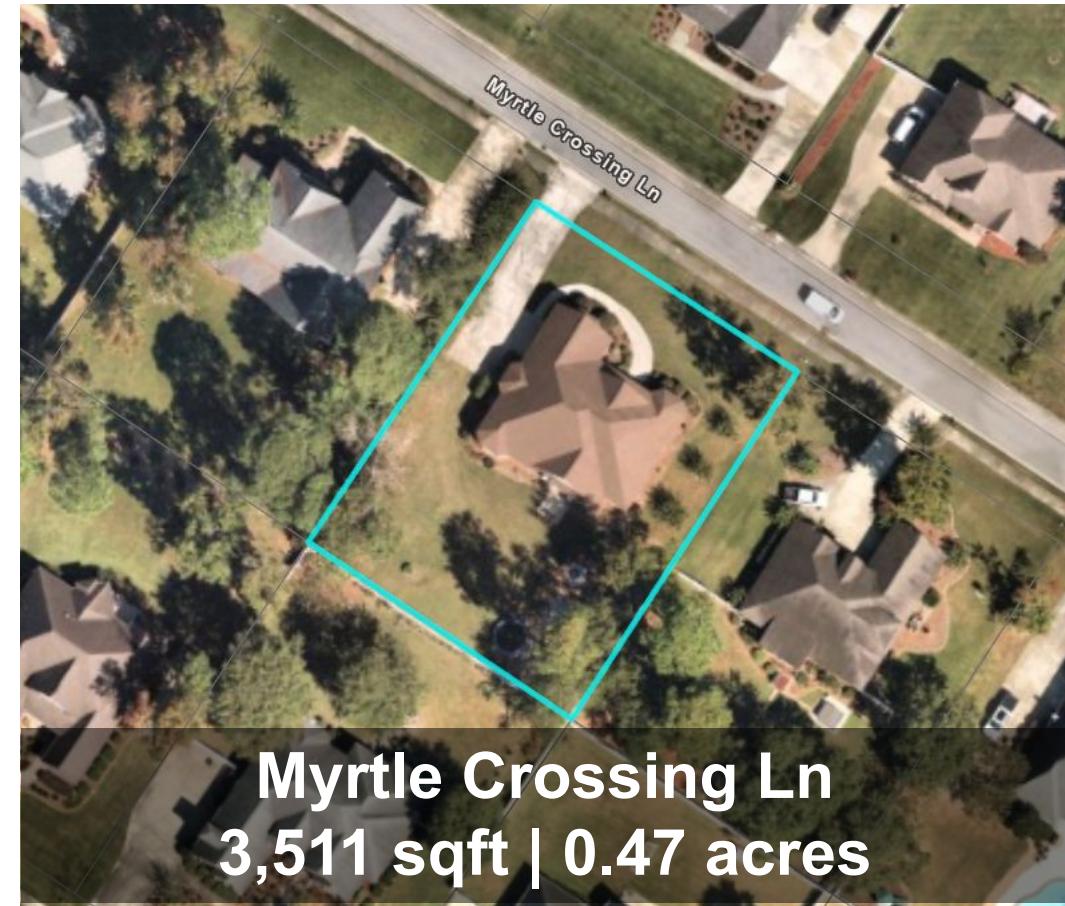
- Average Residential Fee would be \$279 annually (\$23.25/month)
- Average Commercial Fee would be \$1,687 annually (\$141.58/month)
- Millage rate would be 4
- $\$250,000 = \$400$  (\$33.33/month)
- $\$400,000 = \$640$  (\$53.33/month)
- $\$600,000 = \$960.00$  (\$80.00/month)

# Residential Examples

GMC



Fire Fee = \$30.00 / month  
Millage = \$36.24 / month



Fire Fee = \$30.00 / month  
Millage = \$60.98 / month

# Non Residential Examples

GMC



Wendys  
2,540 SQFT, 0.84 Acres  
Fire = \$55.80 | Millage = \$200.28



Core Credit Union  
11,624 SQFT, 1.06 Acres  
Fire = \$237.59 | Millage = \$268.52

# Discounts

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Discount	Discussion
<b>Sprinkler</b>	This discount will be available for buildings with an active sprinkler system that are up to date with annual NFPA inspection requirement and have a compliance tag.
<b>Fire “Devices”</b>	Discount is available for residential and small businesses (non-Title 25). For smoke alarms, CO detectors (if the building is served by gas), fire extinguishers, hood suppression systems, etc.
<b>Standing Fire Brigade</b>	This discount is for operating a standing Fire Brigade that meets NFPA standards and OSHA requirements.
<b>Emergency Operation Plan (EOPs)</b>	This discount is for EOPs that address fire safety, evacuation, and response. This is for non-single residential, non-industrial properties.
<b>Praise and Preparedness Program</b>	For churches that are approved and trained to participate in this program by the Statesboro Fire Rescue.
<b>Educational Training</b>	For schools only that provide or facilitate training of their students by Statesboro Fire Rescue.



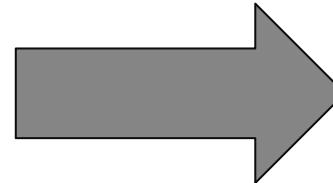
## Select Billing Methodology



## Public Involvement and Outreach



## Ordinance, Rate, Credit Policy, and Manual



## FAQs

## Public Open Houses

## Key Customer Meetings

## Informational Handouts

# Questions / Discussion

• Ed DiTommaso

✉ Ed.DiTommaso@gmcnetwork.com

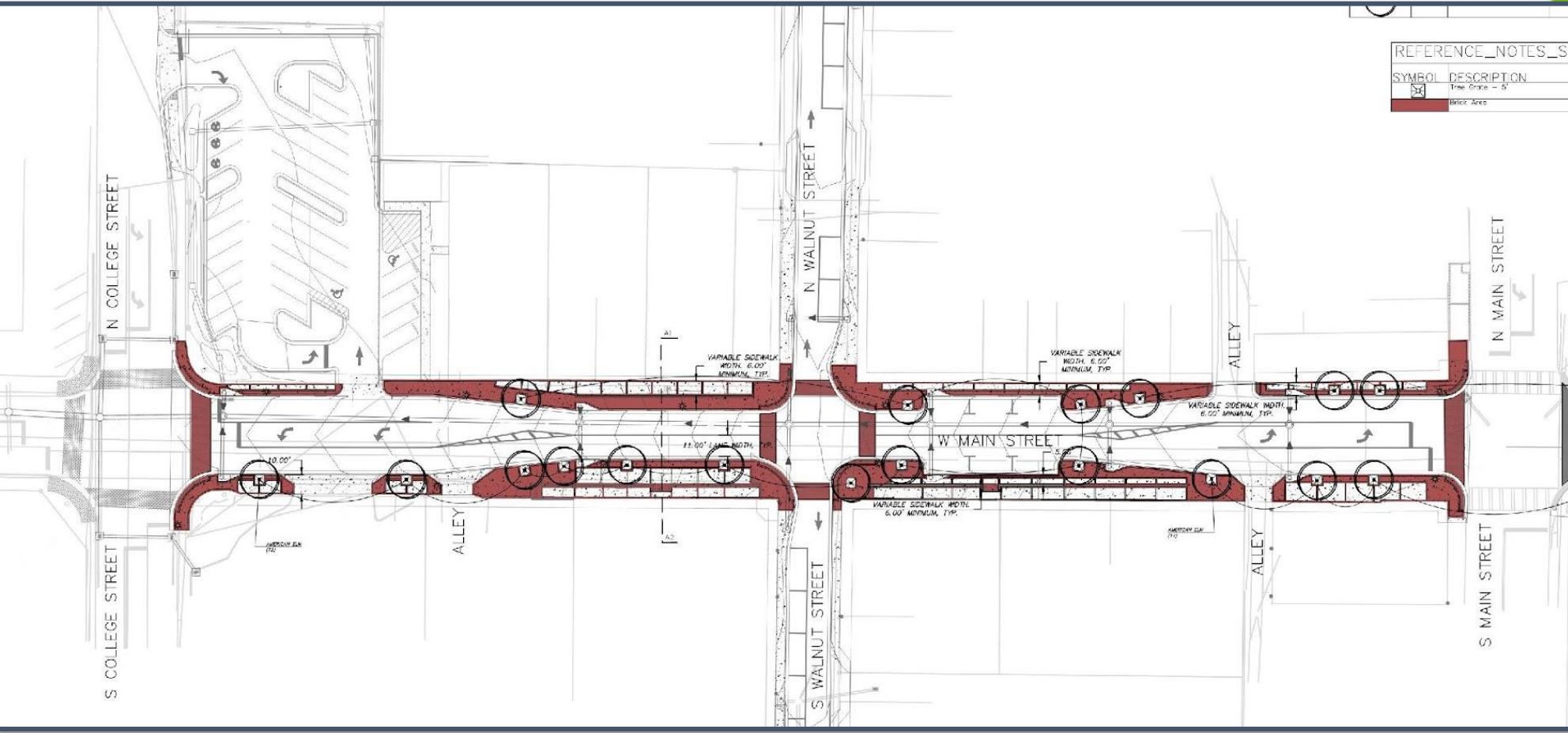


# **WEST MAIN AND EAST MAIN STREETSCAPE**

**City of Statesboro, Georgia  
January 20, 2026**



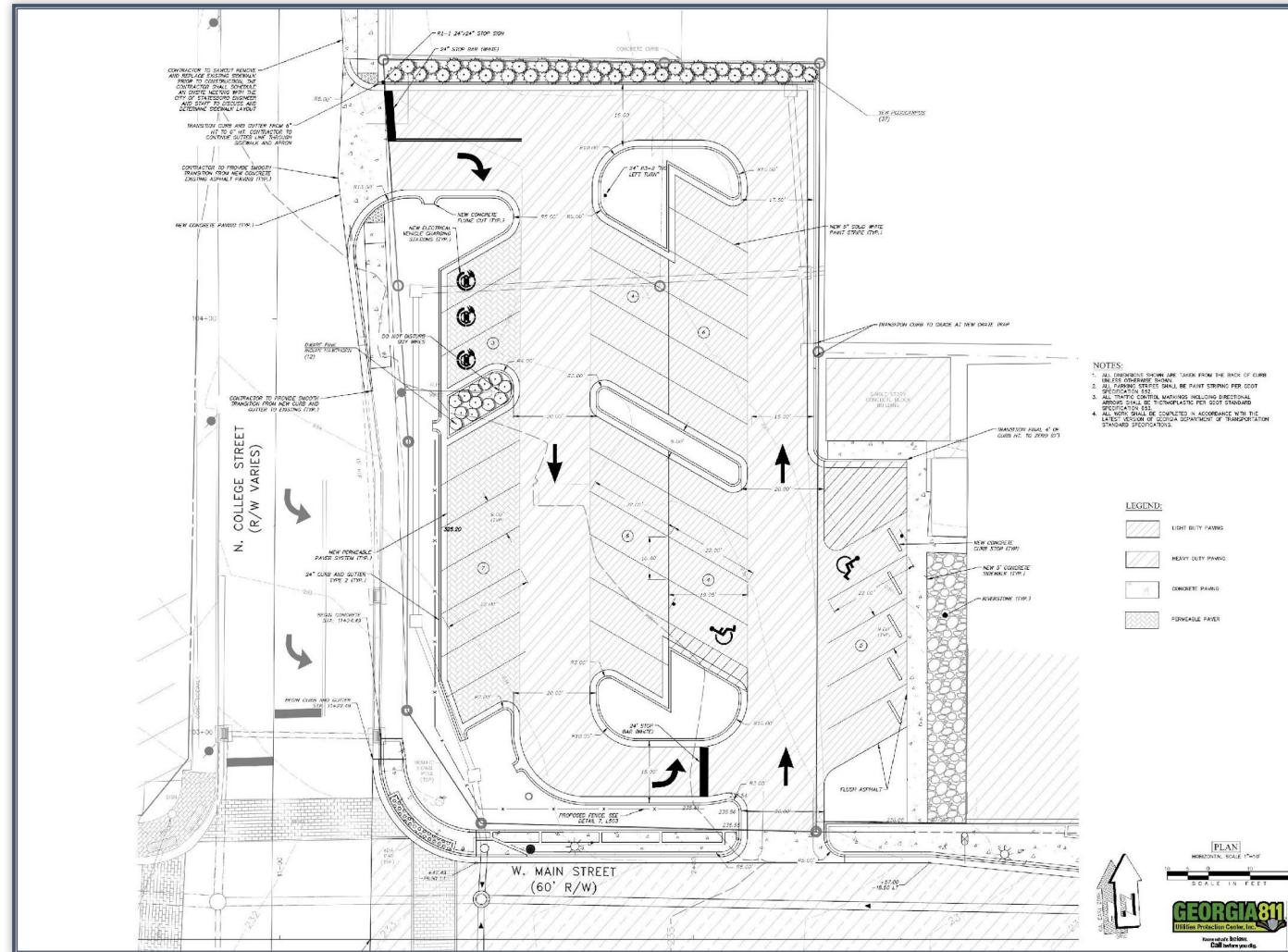
# LAYOUT – WEST MAIN



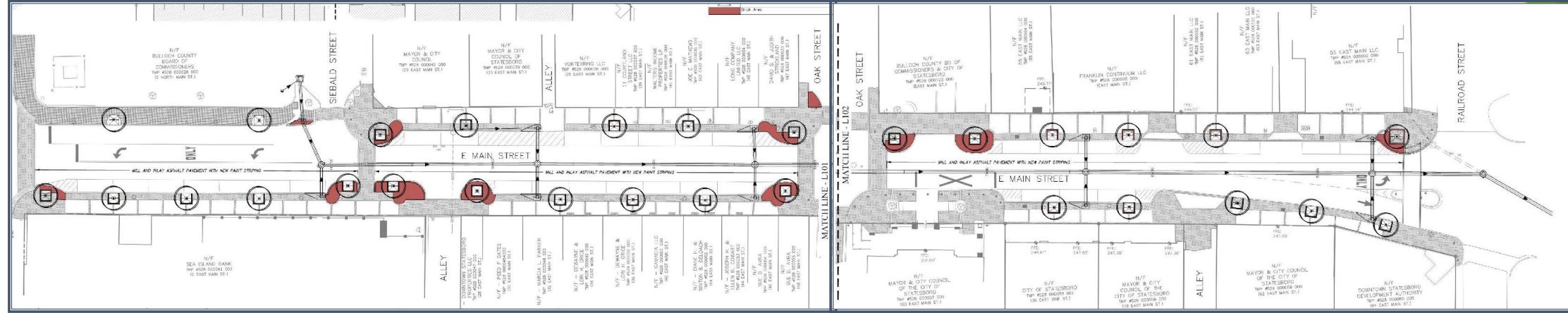
- Hardscape (New Sidewalk with Brick Accents)
- Street Lighting and Street Trees (American Elm with Tree Grade)
- Pedestrian Safety and Accessibility Improvements
- Walnut St. One-Way with On-Street Parking

# WEST MAIN PARKING LOT

- 35 Parking Spaces
  - 3 Electric Vehicle
  - 2 Accessible
- Permeable Pavers for Water Quality
- Trees
  - Scarlet Oak
  - Emerald Knight



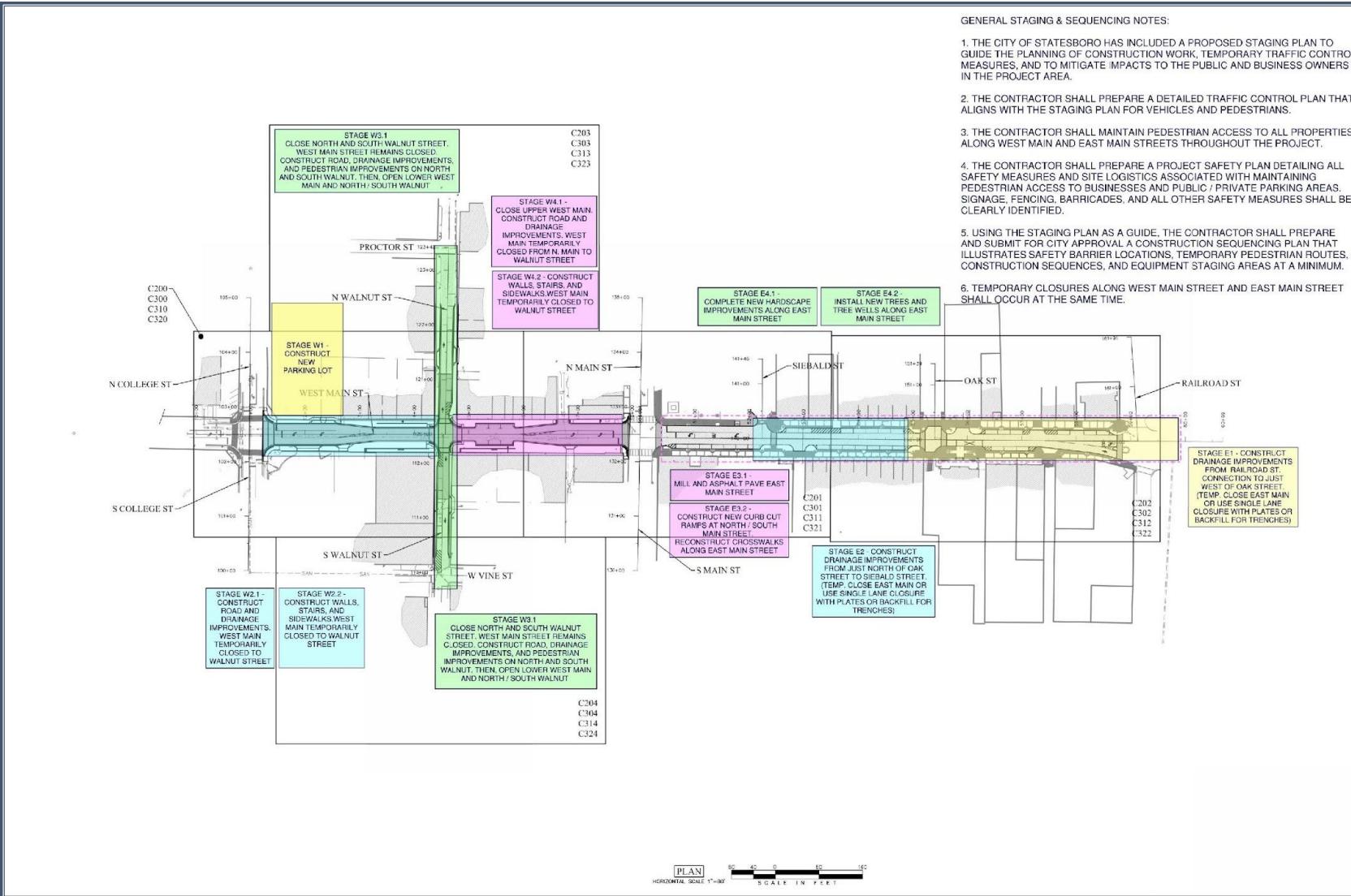
# LAYOUT – EAST MAIN



- New Paving and Striping
- Upgraded Stamped Crosswalks
- Street Trees (American Elm with Tree Grate)
- Drainage Improvements
- Hardscape Enhancements



# CONSTRUCTION SEQUENCING



# PROBABLE CONSTRUCTION COST

## WEST MAIN PARKING LOT:

- \$500,000

## WEST MAIN STREETSCAPE:

- \$1,750,000

## EAST MAIN STREETSCAPE:

- \$1,000,000

# SCHEDULE MILESTONES

- Final Drawings – January 27, 2026
- Advertise for Bid – February 23, 2026\*
- Bid Opening – March 30, 2026\*
- Construction Start – May 1, 2026\*

\*- Tentative Pending City Review

# DISCUSSION



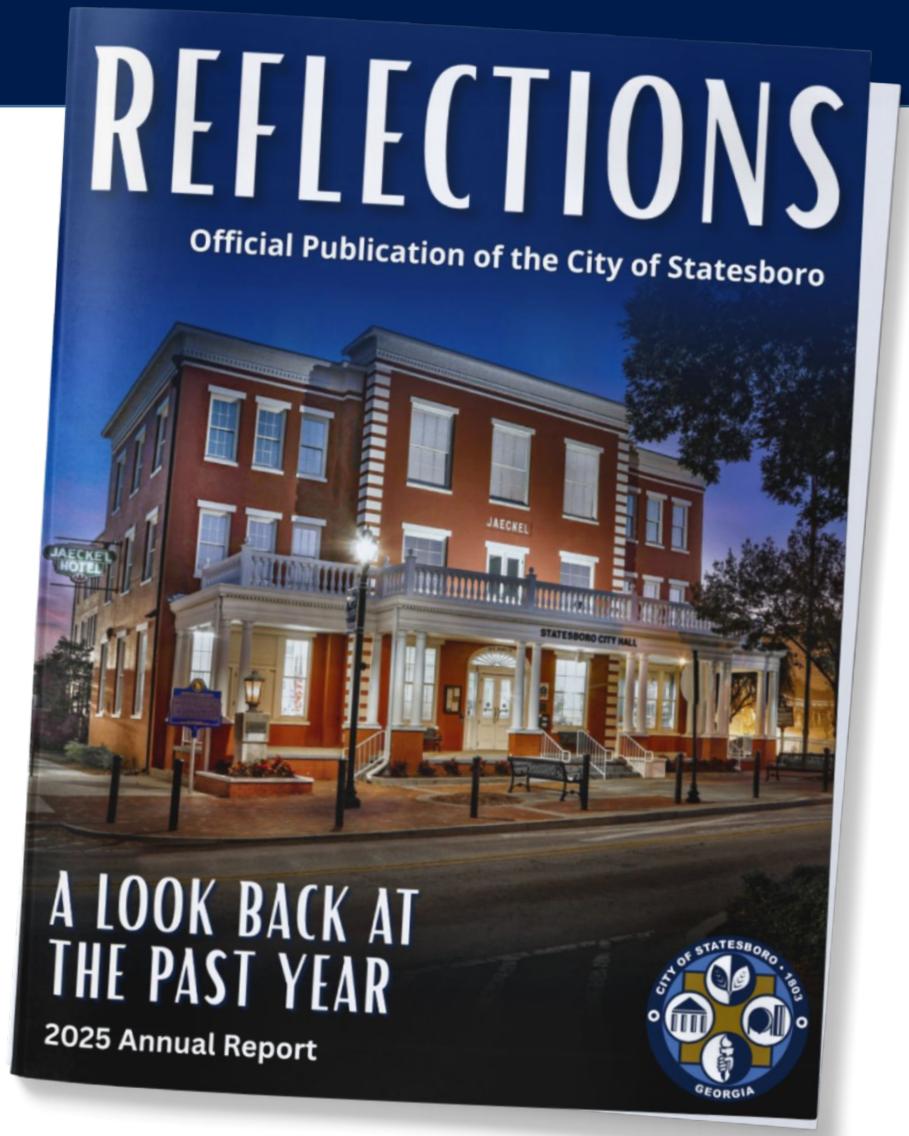
# 2025 Annual Report

Presented by Layne Phillips, Public Affairs Manager

# REFLECTIONS MAGAZINE- Statesboro's 2025 Annual Report

## Project Objectives

- Support FY2026 Budget priorities- This project supports Goal 5 of the budget message to “Improve External Communications”
- Expand communication with residents and business owners.
- Highlight City accomplishments
- Provide transparency and accountability
- Strengthen public trust and engagement



# A Chance To Tell Our Full Story

- 38-page publication
- Covers key City accomplishments and initiatives from 2025- Stories range from community recognition and departmental highlights to financial outlook and major projects.
- Includes resident resources- Utility discounts, City-sponsored rebates, and a City phone directory.

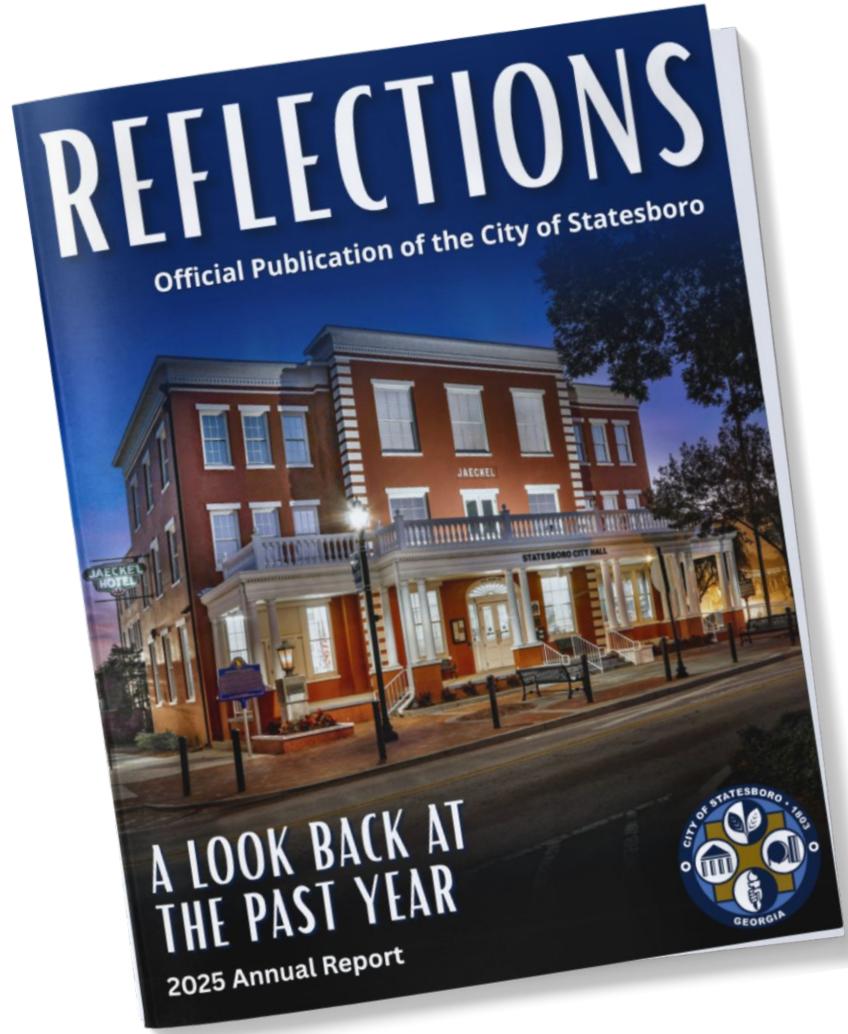


\*\*Computer-generated mockups. Text and images may appear distorted.

# Audience & Distribution

- Designed & printed locally
- Mailed to Statesboro residents, business owners, & city employees
- Expected to be delivered the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in February





# Questions?



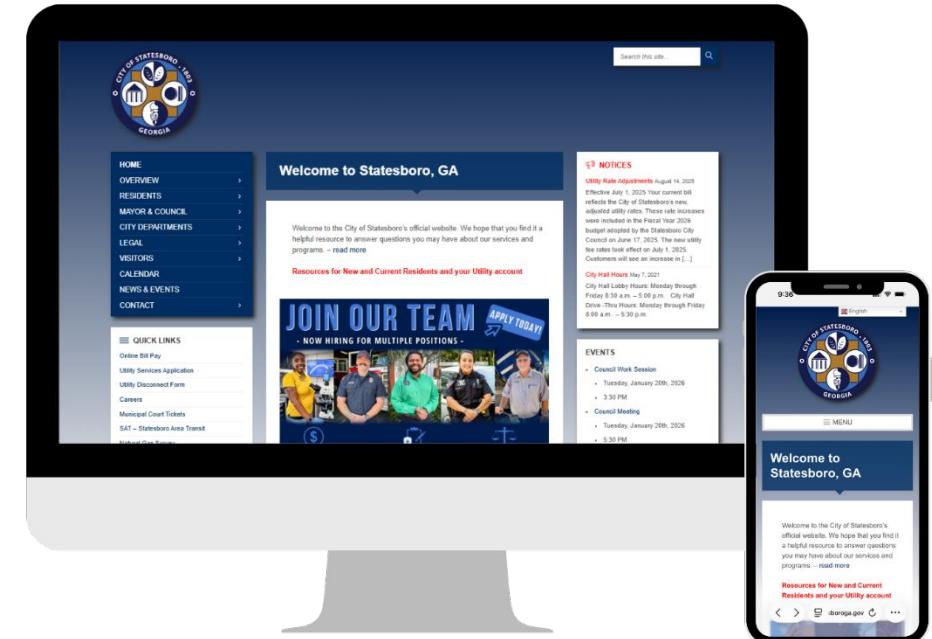


# Website Redesign

Presented by Layne Phillips, Public Affairs Manager

# Project Objectives

- Modernize the website's design to reflect the City's identity as a progressive and innovative organization
- Ensure a fully responsive, mobile-friendly experience across all devices
- Improve navigation and search so visitors can find information quickly and intuitively
- Enhance accessibility, including screen reader compatibility
- Implement a user-friendly content management system that allows departments to maintain their own content



A view of the current City of Statesboro website

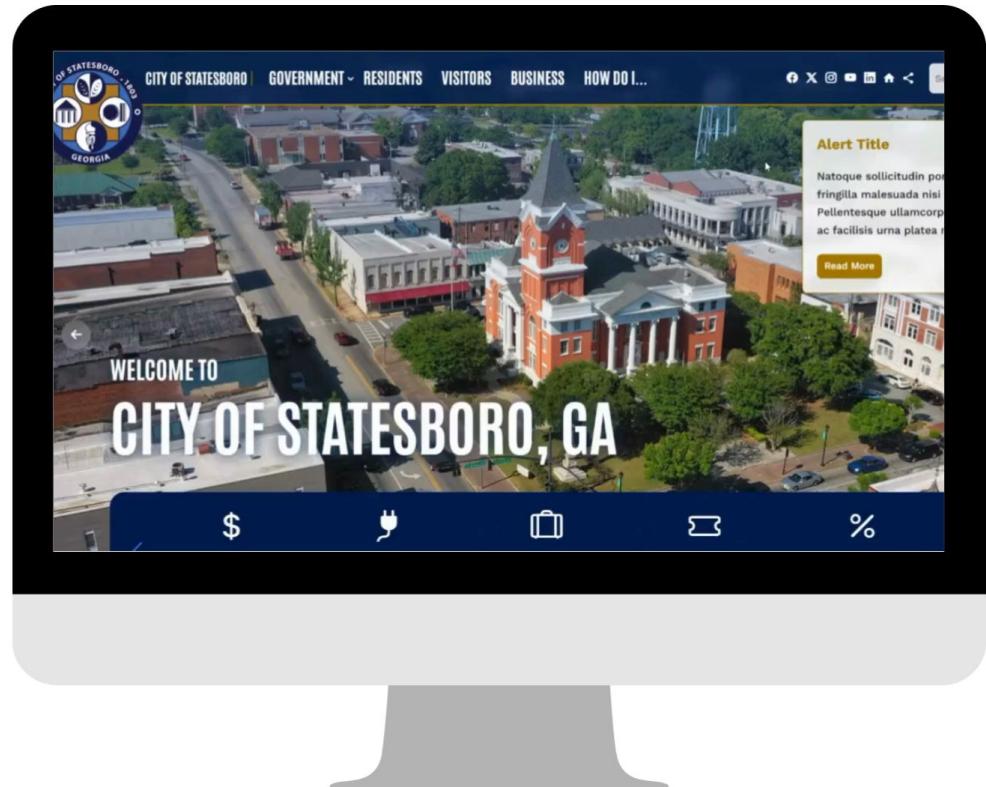
# Project Timeline

- June 2025- Began the redesign process with requests for proposals
- July 2025- A multidepartment committee reviewed submittals and interviewed the top 3 candidates
- Revize was selected as the top firm
- August 2025- Contracts signed and redesign begins
- The project is currently in the Site Map Navigation phase and will move to Content Migration in the next two weeks
- Targeting an April 2026 launch

**revize.**  
The Government Website Experts



# Website Preview



LET'S EXPLORE



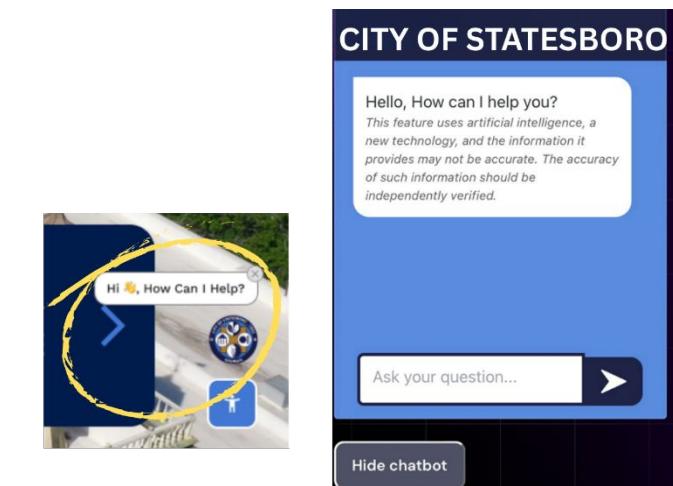
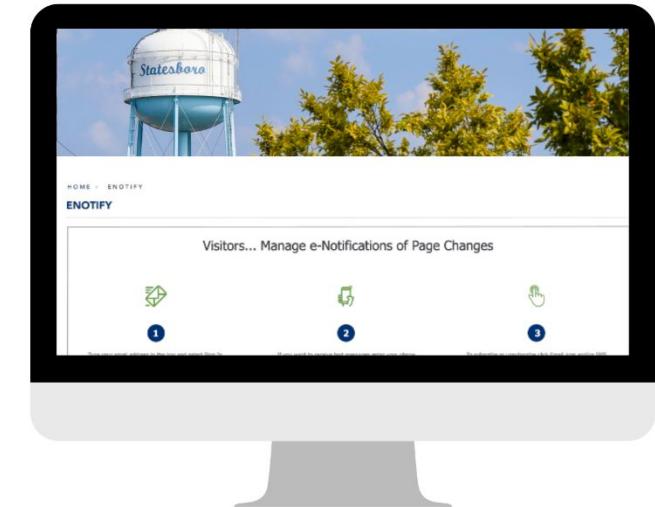
POLICE  
WEBPAGE

FIRE  
WEBPAGE

# Features & Tools

Contract with Revize includes access to a suite of integrations & apps designed to improve communication, access, and efficiency.

- **24/7 Support Center**- On-demand technical support when staff need assistance.
- **AI ChatBot**- Allows visitors to ask questions & quickly locate information on the site.
- **Document Center**- Centralized, searchable access to agendas, forms, and reports
- **E-notify**- Users can subscribe to receive notifications when pages are updated, including news, agendas, and announcements.
- **Bid Posting**- Automates purchasing workflows, including bid scheduling and public notifications.
- **Language Translation**- Supports multilingual access using Google Translate
- **Content Scheduler**- Ensures information stays current by automatically publishing and removing content on set dates.





# Questions?





# Septic Waste Haulers



# Septic Waste Truck





# Pumping of Domestic Septic Tank





# Timeline

- The City of Statesboro accepted waste from septic haulers for many years. This was a good revenue source with an average of 6-8 trucks discharging daily at the WWTP with a per load charge (~1,000 gallons each load).
- In 2013, the City stopped accepting septic waste due to operational issues experienced at the WWTP related to grease from septic hauler loads.
- 2025/2026 – The City recognizes the need for a local facility to discharge septic waste. Some of the local septic haulers are having to travel to Savannah to discharge local domestic waste, which increases the cost for disposal.
- After talks with the City Manager, we believe the City has a service to provide that can serve the broader community. The Statesboro WWTP can accept this waste with proper Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) set in place to reduce operational issues.
- Future – Short and Long Term solutions to provide service to the community.



# Plan for Accepting Domestic Sewer Waste

## **Short Term**

Accept domestic, septic waste at the WWTP (just as before) beginning **March 1, 2026** with proper SOP's in place to prohibit the discharge of grease from the septic haulers.

## **Long Term**

Construct a Septic Receiving Station at a more remote location on the Sanitary Sewer System for dilution of waste and better traffic control.

## **Sewer Fees to Hauler**

Hauler discharge fees will be added to the City's Schedule of Rates and Fees. These fees are yet to be determined but the amount will be fair and competitive.



# Septic Receiving Station





# Questions?

# 2026 Community Development Block Grant



# History

- The Community Development Block Grant was established by Congress as a response to slum and blight found in urban areas in the 1960's, under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.
- By 1982 under President Reagan, Congress amended the Act to allow for “non-entitlement” communities to receive funds under the management of their individual state.

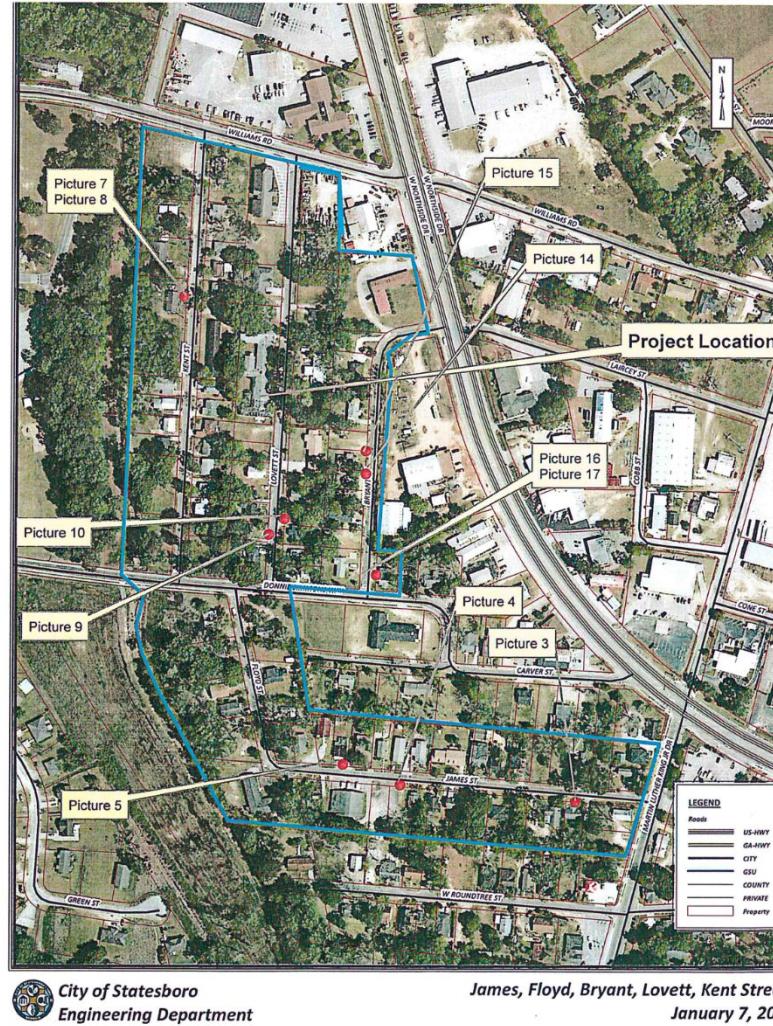


# Grant Specifications

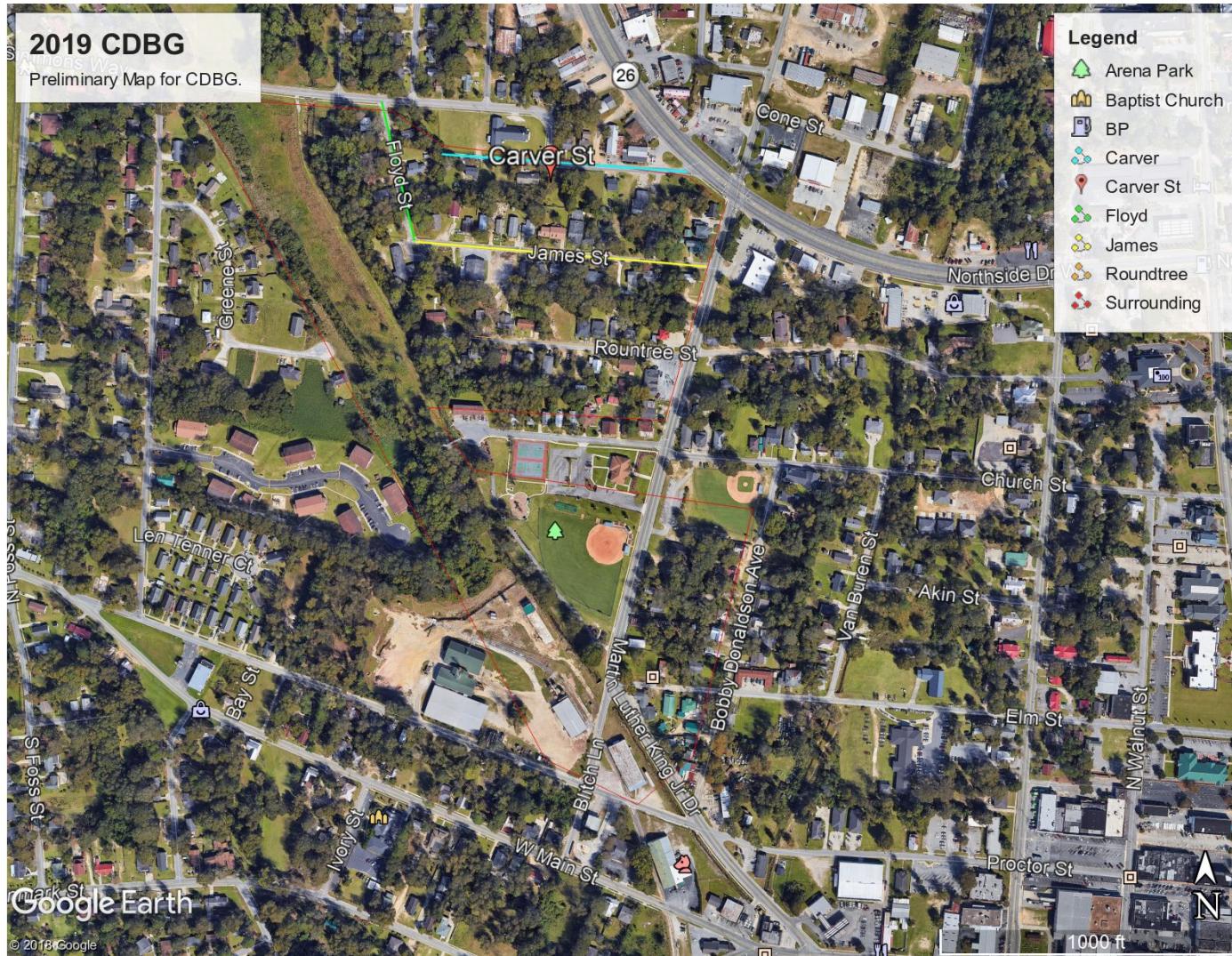
1. Deadline for Submission is April 10, 2026.
2. Maximum Grant Amount:
  1. Single Activity - \$ 1,000,000
  2. Multi-Activity - \$ 1,250,000
  3. Regional Cooperation Projects - \$2,000,000
3. Matching Requirements
  1. 0% match requirement for grant requests of \$300,000 and less
  2. 5% match requirement for grant requests of \$300,001 to \$750,000
  3. 10% match requirement for grant requests of \$750,001 to \$1,000,000
  4. 15% match requirement for grant requests of \$1,000,001 or more



# Past Projects



# Past Projects



# Shifting Focus

- New priorities set by the Mayor and City Council, and acceptance into the GICH program caused the CDBG focus shifted to housing.
- The City has been unsuccessful in getting housing CDBG funding as we continue to build capacity.



# Grant Intent

- This request is meant to extend the work already done in the area. This would allow a continuation of the improvements in the area adjacent to what has already been done.



# Project Support & Scope

- Stormwater funds from SPLOST are slated to serve as local match, in the amount of \$375,000.
- Water/Sewer funds from SPLOST are slated to serve as local match in the amount of \$500,000.



# Timeline

- Necessary Public Meetings are already planned in February, with a meeting in the community to discuss the project and a public hearing.
- Consultant bids are under review, and will be submitted for approval on February 3.
- Community surveying to establish area median income requirements have already begun.



# Questions?

