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CITY OF STATESBORO  
WORK SESSION MINUTES  
JUNE 15, 2021

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Mayor & Council Work Session

50 East Main Street

3:00 PM

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A Work Session of the Statesboro City Council was held on June 15, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. in City Hall Council Chambers, 50 East Main Street. Present was Mayor Jonathan McCollar; Council Members: Paulette Chavers, Venus Mack, John Riggs and Shari Barr. Also present was City Clerk Leah Harden, City Attorney Cain Smith, City Manager Charles Penny, and Public Information Officer Layne Phillips. Absent was Councilmember Phil Boyum.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar called the meeting to order.

### **Housing Market Rate Study**

Jonathan Gebler and Alex Steinberg with KB Advisory Group presented to Mayor and City Council the results to the Housing Study & Need Analysis for the City of Statesboro. The study includes demographic trends, peer city assessment, GSU's impact, housing supply assessment, housing demand analysis, opportunity gap analysis, and key finding and strategic recommendations. The City of Statesboro's population is growing faster than that of the State and college students dominate the population. The median income of Statesboro is lower than the county and the state and is attributable to the large student population. Renter occupied units have grown over the last decade only one quarter of Statesboro's units are owner-occupied. The City of Statesboro has a higher student population to municipal population compared to its peer cities of Albany, Valdosta, Hinesville, Carrollton, and Milledgeville. Georgia Southern University's presence in the city leads to a higher rate of rental housing, even compared to other Georgia College cities. Student housing makes up for the largest group of housing followed by single-family detached homes. Statesboro's housing market is relatively low-priced however; there is a lack of new housing accessible to lower-income families. The multifamily growth is taking place in the private student-housing sector rather than traditional multifamily housing development. A concentration of new residential development is located in a 3-mile radius outside of Statesboro City limits. The City of Statesboro has a consistent demand for single-family housing however very few are built within city limits. The Statesboro housing market for new housing units are price-pointed for middle-income households which leaves an opportunity gap at the highest and lowest ends of the housing market. The concentration of "poor" and "fair" housing conditions are in low-income neighborhoods located west and northeast of downtown Statesboro. There are few housing options in Statesboro that appeal to young and middle-class professionals.

Mayor Pro Tem Paulette Chavers joined the meeting at 3:49 pm.

Recommendations include Incremental Development, Subdivision Incentives, Expansion of Housing Affordability, Redevelopment, and Place making.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar stated we have four pages of recommendations for the direction we should go in, when will that be ready for Council to take a look at that.

City Manager Charles Penny stated we are not through, this is the first facet and Council will have to adopt this report.

Planning Director Kathy Field stated the Affordable Housing Plan is coming next and we are planning to present that to Mayor and Council at the August Work Session. The presentation will include recommendations for the affordable housing end of this.

### **Package Sales Options**

City Attorney Cain Smith stated the focus today is on the two considerations of putting forward the ballot referendum to allow package sales. One is examples of expected tax revenue from it. The other one is what is allowed and what has been done in other jurisdictions when it comes to how liquor store ordinances look. Zakia Daniel, the City Managers intern presented a spreadsheet of researched information from peer cities and some counties comparing population, median household and per capita income, the presence of a college or university, if liquor store sales are allowed, and how much alcohol revenues are collected each fiscal year.

Based on the 2021 population estimates, Statesboro is one of only two cities that do not have distilled spirits package sales. A survey of twenty-one comparable jurisdictions that allow package stores shows local ordinances range from the state minimum requirements in zoning standard to extremely regulated. Cities have an option of not regulating beyond compliance with state law or they can regulate zoning districts in which package stores can be licensed. A vast majority of surveyed jurisdictions do so in this manner. A couple of options done throughout the state include mandating the distance between package stores. Distance ranges from 1500 feet to a mile and a half but the most common mandate is 3000 feet. Cities may also limit the number of package stores allowed with a set number in population. Another option would be to mandate minimum size of retail space a licensee must maintain so that only large outlets are licensed.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar asked if anyone would like to make any comments.

Charlotte Spell with the Bulloch Alcohol and Drug Council stated research show that to be a dry community does not necessarily reduce underage drinking. Bulloch Alcohol and Drug Council recommends limiting the number licenses for package sales, mandate TIPS training for employees of off premise outlets, use the zoning ordinance to limit the number of stores and where they can be located, and lastly revive the Alcohol Advisory Board.

Marcus Toole stated this referendum needs to be on the ballot when GSU students are here.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:27 pm.

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Jonathan McCollar, Mayor

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Leah Harden, City Clerk