



CITY OF
FORESTPARK

**CITY OF FOREST PARK
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION MEETING**

Monday, May 18, 2026 at 7:00 PM
Forest Park City Hall | Council Chambers
745 Forest Parkway, Forest Park, GA 30297

The Honorable Mayor Gwen W. Ellison
The Honorable Kimberly James The Honorable Delores A. Gunn
The Honorable Hector Gutierrez The Honorable Latresa Akins-Wells
The Honorable Allan Mears
Latosha Clemons, Interim City Manager
Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk
Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney

AGENDA

VIRTUAL MEETING NOTICE

Council Meetings will be live-streamed and available on [Forest Park's YouTube Channel](#)

- I. CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME**
- II. INVOCATION/PLEDGE**
- III. ROLL CALL - CITY CLERK**
- IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS**
- V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - 1. Approval of the Mayor & Council Retreat Minutes for May 1 & May 2, 2026**
 - Approval of the City Council Work Session Minutes from May 4, 2026**
 - Approval of the City Council Regular Session Minutes from May 4, 2026**
- VI. CEREMONIAL - Proclamation: Public Works Week; GMA Presentation - Municipal Leader Community and Workplace Culture Certificate Program**
- VII. CITY CLERK'S REPORT**
- VIII. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**
- IX. PUBLIC COMMENTS - (All Speakers will have 3 Minutes)**

X. OLD BUSINESS

2. **Council Consideration to approve a policy governing security details for elected officials from the city's police department.** - Attorney

Background/History:

The request is to adopt a policy governing security details for elected officials from the city's police department.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

3. **Council Consideration to approve a Resolution requiring all city-owned vehicles to have official City of Forest Park decals installed upon receipt.** - Legislative

Background/History:

Fleet Department to have city-owned vehicles installed with official City of Forest Park decals.

XII. CLOSING COMMENTS BY GOVERNING BODY

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION - Personnel, Litigation, Real Estate or Cyber Security OCGA § 50-14-1

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for Council meetings should notify the City Clerk's Office at 404-366-4720 at least 24 hours before the meeting.



CITY OF
FORESTPARK

**CITY OF FOREST PARK
CITY COUNCIL RETREAT**

Friday, May 1, 2026, at 9:00 AM
Kimpton Overland Hotel
Two Porsche Dr. Hapeville, GA 30254

The Honorable Mayor Gwendolyn W. Ellison

The Honorable Kimberly James
The Honorable Hector Gutierrez
The Honorable Allan Mears

The Honorable Delores A. Gunn
The Honorable Latresa Akins-Wells

Latosha Clemons, Interim City Manager (not in attendance)
Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk
Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney (not in attendance)

SUMMARY MINUTES

FACILITATED BY: Michael McPherson, Members Services Consultant with Georgia Municipal Association and Lisa Benjamin with Lexicon Strategies

- I. **CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME** – Mayor Ellison called the meeting to order at 9:17 A.M.
- II. **ROLL CALL - CITY CLERK** – All members were in attendance for Roll Call except Councilmember James and Councilmember Akins-Wells. Councilmember Akins-Wells joined the meeting at 2:15 P.M.
- III. **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA** – Motion to adopt the agenda was made by Councilmember Gunn; seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez. The motion passed unanimously 3-0.
- IV. The Retreat began with brief introductions.

Roles of Facilitators: Keep the conversation focused, be the gate keepers, make sure everyone is heard, protect the participants in this environment, keep a written record, help the group reach a consensus, and answer questions.

Mr. McPherson will cover Governance, and Ms. Benjamin will cover Strategic Planning, noting a Summary Report will be provided.

Ground Rules included: No interruptions, participate honestly, don't bring up any past history, be orderly and considerate, show respect, listen to everyone's opinion, check your titles at the door, think community-wide and focus on broader strategies, trust each other enough to speak,

put on your city council hat and take off your personal interest hat, talk to each other, the media, don't beat a dead horse – dismount, and QTIP – quit taking it personal.

Mr. McPherson stated that in order to have a successful Team Forest Park, you need to be a good example to all cities, stating it would be great if everyone was present for the Retreat, and that the ultimate lesson for today is to communicate, and respect each other's point of view; noting grandstanding during a public meeting is demoralizing to your staff, and you need to allow support the City Manager, and staff to do their jobs without interruption from the elected officials.

Councilmember Gutierrez stated councilmembers need to do a better job of trusting each other, and discuss issues with each other, not in public, noting all members of Council have the same mission, and that is to do good for the citizens of Forest Park.

Councilmember Gunn stated the governing body needs to set a standard, as it is the elected officials responsibility to govern in accordance with the Charter; and noted the officials are many parts, but collectively, one body; and noted that many times members of the community are not equipped with knowing the full scope of information, and make statements without having all the facts, and the officials should not buy in to that, but rather talk with each of our colleagues, and have the respect to be able to hear each other.

Mr. McPherson stated the key word is Respect and stated the success of the city hinges on the members of Council staying engaged with each other, and that you need to be on the same page, as one unified front.

Councilmember Mears expressed the difficulty of having a Council with multiple alpha members who do not understand that it is okay to agree to disagree.

Mr. McPherson stated the city's key priority should always be the Comprehensive Plan. It should be the primary focus and the guide for the city, and the Mayor & Council should do what is necessary to implement the city's Comprehensive Plan, and not doing so is a disservice to your residents and business owners.

There was a group discussion regarding staff turnover being problematic; building a culture of accountability, and the growth of the city seemingly being on the edge of a metro city, and also still having hometown tendencies; and noted there have been issues with the turnover of the City Manager position, as the position has not been steady for several years now.

Mr. McPherson noted the City of Forest Park is a Council Manager Form of Government where the City Manager takes his/her directions from the Council, and issues those directives to staff to implement, noting the City Manager is typically present during retreats, and recommended a full retreat once the new City Manager is brought on board, and to remember that your meetings are online and viewable to the public at all times, and potential candidates are watching.

Mr. McPherson stated that ideally, you should bring forth items for a vote when you have had conversations with your colleagues, making sure that you have support with a majority vote, and referenced the author John Dunn's book "No Man is an Island."

Councilmember Gutierrez stated it would be nice to have a true consensus, not just three votes, and referenced the overt bias that everyone has.

Councilmember Gunn stated she believes in the city's Charter, SOP's, ordinances, and state law.

Mr. McPherson stated organizations must develop trust by: Not interfering with other's roles, make sure written protocols are in place, understanding "good governance", support good management; including effective, efficient, accountable, and equitable delivery of services, insuring a sense of respect for the public and openness to public input, willingness to move on key issues, operating under the comprehensive strategic business/planning process, respecting each other, agreeing on roles and responsibilities, demonstrating a strong commitment to work collaboratively, and following through with commitment to hold regular and timely reviews and feedback on programs or services.

There was a discussion regarding councilmembers giving directives to the Council Aides regarding projects and initiatives, where an example was given where a councilmember made a request to a department, and the Director had already issued tasks and assignment assignments to department staff, but feeling the pressure to rearrange their department's schedule because the request was coming from a member of Council.

Mr. McPherson stated, and the councilmembers agreed, the Council Aides need to copy the City Clerk on communication so that the supervisor is aware of the request(s), and to notify the Directors about issues and concerns within their respective departments for the Directors to resolve the issue, not the Council Aides.

Councilmember Mears suggested a flow chart.

Mr. McPherson referenced the changes in population throughout the country where there is a high population is aging adults, however, today's families are not having multiple children, which means you have to think about your future workforce, future revenue streams and how schools in your community could be affected; stating the city needs to be equipped to continue to provide services and good infrastructure to the community, and while remaining current with technology, create SOP's and not deviate from them, reiterating the focus on the city's Comprehensive Plan; and suggested the city look at adopting an A-I policy.

Mayor Ellison led a discussion regarding revitalizing the city's Comprehensive Plan, developing a Marketing Strategy for the city, and requested that all members of the governing body receive a copy of the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. McPherson expressed the importance of getting in the habit of being open and honest with each other with one-on-one conversations at least once a month to understand each other, and reviewed GMA's City of Civility – 9 Pillars of Civility, noting the city could adopt a Resolution if interested; and viewed a leadership video from Colin Powell regarding creating trust, as was indicated in the video, if people trust you, they will follow you, if only out of curiosity.

Mr. McPherson noted building trust is critical and is sometimes difficult; noting management must set the tone at the top, and that an organization's culture is established by its leadership through the attitude and actions of the council and management, administrative style, and staff's service to the public.

Mr. McPherson showed two examples of "What do you see", where members had different opinions and interpretations of what they saw, highlighting that individuals may not see things the same way as others, and that's okay, and that you need to respect the majority vote, even when you disagree, for the good of the city, and not harp on your view after the vote.

Mr. McPherson closed with the key component of collaboration, noted the governing body needs to communicate and problem-solve with each other; maintain collaborative relationships with fellow councilmembers; preside over and participate in city council meetings adhering to open meetings rules effectively, and not criticize in public, but praise publicly, no grandstanding, reel things in before they get out of order; always interact with and respond to member of the public; and design effective and inclusive processes for engaging the public, noting being transparent is essential.

Ms. Benjamin asked each member a series of questions:

Share Your Why; Write down Your Shared Vision for the City; Envision the Headline for the City of Forest Park in (5) five years; What does Success Look Like for the City of Forest Park? What is Forest Park known for? What are the Values Guiding the Mayor & Council? What type of Leadership does Forest Park deserve? Responses will be included in the Summary Report.

Ms. Benjamin asked the governing body to complete a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis. Responses will be included in the Summary Report. Partial responses included:

Strengths included: Location, Community Engagement, Ft. Gillem, and Mayor Ellison.

Weaknesses included: Lack of marketing, Lack of housing, and Scarce Downtown Businesses.

Opportunities included: Marta, New Leadership and A-I automation.

Threats included: Land Locked and Negative Perception of the City.

Ms. Benjamin asked the governing body to state the top five priorities for the city: Responses were: Housing, Governance Excellence, Efficiency in Operations, Homelessness and Hared Values, Priorities and Collaboration.

Ms. Benjamin referenced Leadership Synergy, stating individual actions reflect on the entire Council/Body and read a Decorum and Accountability Statement, noting each member of the governing body must maintain control on the dais, actively address issues in advance of the meeting, focus on the issues of the city, use the QTIP (Quit Taking It Personal) when necessary (to and from the right person), commit to making a change, take responsibility for each other (fact checking), speak up, if you see something, say something, listen and de-escalate situations as when they arise, and self-check.

Ms. Benjamin asked for takeaways from Day 1 and gave a review of what to expect for Day 2.

Members expressed that there will be a greater willingness to listen, reiterated the need for a marketing plan for the city, noted the importance of reviewing the city's Comprehensive Plan, and has a better understanding of roles and responsibilities, specifically, the role of the City Manager.

- V. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** - Personnel, Litigation, Real Estate or Cyber Security OCGA § 50-14-1
None

- VI. **ADJOURNMENT** – With no further business, Mayor Ellison adjourned the meeting at 3:30 P.M.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for Council meetings should notify the City Clerk's Office at 404-366-4720 at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by:

Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk

Gwendolyn Ellison, Mayor



CITY OF
FORESTPARK

**CITY OF FOREST PARK
CITY COUNCIL RETREAT**

Friday, May 2, 2026, at 9:00 AM
Kimpton Overland Hotel
Two Porsche Dr. Hapeville, GA 30254

The Honorable Mayor Gwendolyn W. Ellison

The Honorable Kimberly James
The Honorable Hector Gutierrez
The Honorable Allan Mears

The Honorable Delores A. Gunn
The Honorable Latresa Akins-Wells

Latosha Clemons, Interim City Manager (not in attendance)
Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk
Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney (not in attendance)

SUMMARY MINUTES

FACILITATED BY: Lisa Benjamin with Lexicon Strategies

- I. **CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME** – Mayor Ellison called the meeting to order at 9:05 A.M.
- II. **ROLL CALL - CITY CLERK** – All members were in attendance for Roll Call except Councilmember James and Councilmember Gunn. Councilmember Gunn joined the meeting at 9:20 A.M.
- III. **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA** – Motion to adopt the agenda was made by Councilmember Akins-Wells; seconded by Councilmember Mears. The motion passed unanimously 3-0.

Ms. Benjamin congratulated the Mayor and Council on a productive Day 1, noting that each response to the question of “why” reflected a love for the city and a heart for service.

Ms. Benjamin noted that the SWOT analysis identified key city priorities and the need for a strategy centered on good governance. She stated that conflict has hindered the city’s ability to conduct business for residents and business owners and emphasized the need for greater collaboration, attention to homelessness, and a focus on shared vision and shared values.

Discussion focused on continuing to build Forest Park’s brand and improve residents’ quality of life. Participants also discussed changing how the Council works by putting the Pillars of Civility into practice, maintaining decorum, remembering QTIP, working for the good of the city, respecting differences, listening, de-escalating conflict, and acknowledging each member’s perspective.

Ms. Benjamin led a video activity in which the group was asked to focus on a specific detail. After the video, members shared their responses. Only one member was able to identify both the requested item and the distraction that appeared in the video. The exercise demonstrated that, although the distraction was clearly visible, most participants focused on the single detailed item, rather than the big picture.

Ms. Benjamin asked each member of the governing body why people come to Forest Park. Responses included easy access to the airport and development opportunities. The group was also asked where they would take visitors. Suggested destinations included the Farmers Market, Starr Park, Spivey Hall, the Porsche Experience, and the new arena at Southlake.

Ms. Benjamin presented information and statistics about the City of Forest Park, including crime, population, and school performance data. Many of the figures were considered inaccurate and will need to be corrected. A key point of emphasis was the city's location and its proximity to the world's busiest airport.

The group participated in several team-building activities and discussions regarding individual and collective agreements. Members were also asked to comment on commitment statements and action planning items to be included in the consultant's summary report.

Ms. Benjamin closed by asking how the governing body felt overall about the retreat.

Responses indicated that the retreat was eye-opening and beneficial. Members said they learned a great deal about their differences, recognized that differing views can both be valid, and emphasized the importance of setting aside differences to work as one unit for the good of the city.

V. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** - Personnel, Litigation, Real Estate or Cyber Security OCGA § 50-14-1
None

VI. **ADJOURNMENT** – With no further business, Mayor Ellison adjourned the meeting at 3:30 P.M.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for Council meetings should notify the City Clerk's Office at 404-366-4720 at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by:

Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk

Gwendolyn Ellison, Mayor



CITY OF
FORESTPARK

**CITY OF FOREST PARK
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING**

Monday, May 4, 2026, at 6:00 PM
Forest Park City Hall | Council Chambers
745 Forest Parkway, Forest Park, GA 30297

The Honorable Mayor Gwendolyn W. Ellison
The Honorable Kimberly James The Honorable Delores A. Gunn
The Honorable Hector Gutierrez The Honorable Latresa Akins-Wells
The Honorable Allan Mears
Latosha Clemons, Interim City Manager
Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk
Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney

SUMMARY MINUTES

VIRTUAL MEETING NOTICE

Council Meetings will be live-streamed and available on [Forest Park's YouTube Channel](#)

- I. **CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME** – The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ellison at 6:00 PM
- II. **ROLL CALL - CITY CLERK** – All members were present except Councilmember Mears.
- III. **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS**
Motion to adopt the agenda as presented was made by Councilmember Gunn; seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.
- IV. **NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Airport South Community Improvement District Expansion** – Presented by: Rochelle Dennis, Economic Development Director

Background/History: The ATL Airport Community Improvement Districts (AACIDs) respectfully request formal approval of the boundary expansion for the Airport South Community Improvement District (ASCID) by resolution, consistent with prior Forest Park expansion approvals, and the appointment of Steve Lackley as the City of Forest Park's representative to the Airport South CID Board.

Director Dennis noted the ATL Airport Community Improvement Districts (AACIDs) operate both the Airport South CID (ASCID) and Airport West CID (AWCID). These districts are. Quasi-governmental entities funded by commercial property owners serving six cities across Clayton and Fulton Counties, are focused on infrastructure improvements, public

safety, and mobility enhancements, the South Metro Atlanta ecosystem, advancing connectivity through beautification, transit solutions, and coordinated public safety initiatives and are driven by the priorities of commercial property owners.

Director Dennis introduced Gerald McDowell, Executive Director, ATL Aerotropolis CID Danielle Bass, Community Outreach Director, ATL Airport Community Improvement Districts, and Steve Lackley, Commercial Operations Director, Estes Services, noting Mr. McDowell will present the 2026 Airport South CID plan and benefits for the City of Forest Park.

Mr. McDowell stated the Airport South CID (Community Improvement District) was formed in 2015, noting in 2014 the Fulton County CID West was formed, and later in 2016 CID was formed in Clayton County, they decided in 2016 to work together and form a new brand, the ATL Airport Community Improvement District, and that is how the plan is presented to the market and communicated. However, individually, there are two separate plans, Airport South in Clayton County, and Airport West in Fulton County, each with their own Board of Directors, and according to the State statute, anytime there is a CID within city limits, they are required to meet with the commercial property owners on their list to find out their needs and interests in working with the CID, and each city appoints an individual from a commercial business to represent their city on the Board of Directors. Mr. McDowell noted there has been a vacancy on the Board for Forest Park for one year, and they have been working with the city's Economic Development Department to encourage commercial business owners to join the CID, noting the reason for the expansion request is that there are a number of projects underway, with others coming online, and similar to cities, they cannot operate the CID outside of their district, and there are a number of businesses in Forest Park who have employees that rely on public transportation, and they can utilize the services that are coming online, but they cannot offer those services until the businesses are included in the CID; noting there have been over 250 businesses that have been identified where the services and benefits cannot be offered to benefit employers and employees in the area without the proposed CID expansion.

Mr. McDowell referenced the Micro Transit Project, where a grant was received from the Atlanta Region Link Transit Authority, in the amount of \$2.6 million dollars, with a CID 30% match and offers a free service, which covers most of Forest Park, and with this service, if you work within the district, similar to Uber and Lyft, you download the app and request service 24/7, a minivan will pick you up for free to transport you to the employers within the Forest Park CID area, noting public transportation services such as MARTA shut down at a certain time of day, and for those individuals who rely on public transportation, this service will be available, for free, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week to provide transportation to businesses within the CID.

Mr. McDowell requested approval to expand the CID into the City of Forest Park, noting a number of businesses have expressed interest to join, and they will continue to seek other businesses to join, noting there are other services to come such as public safety, working with police departments, and beautification projects, noting they cannot do projects outside of the approved district; and once the expansion is approved, the paperwork is submitted to the County, and a Resolution is submitted to the cities of Forest Park and College Park for approval from their respective city, and introduced Ms. Bass to continue with the presentation.

Ms. Bass noted much of the information has been covered by Mr. McDowell as it relates to the CID's ATL Airport South, and Airport West, and noted the Clarifying Roles where they were formerly Aerotropolis, and are now two separate entities, noting Airport South focuses on the South Metro Atlanta ecosystem, beautification, transit solutions and public safety, and is funded and driven by commercial property owners, and is not for profit, and noting Aerotropolis is a Public-Private Partnership focusing on Economic Development and Workforce Development and Education throughout the metro area; referenced the Agenda:

Expansion Overview, Why Now, Benefits for Forest Park, City Considerations (Funding & Role), Board Appointment, Action Requested, and Next Steps (Recruitment & Engagement).

Ms. Bass reviewed the Airport South CID 2026 Expansion Map, referencing the grey area on the map being Ft. Gillem, whose parcels are exempt, and are brought in to help connect with the property owners who have consented to join the CID, and are indicated by the green on the map and consenting, and noted that by Georgia State Statute, there are non-consenting parcels that can be brought in, and those are indicated in red on the map.

Ms. Bass noted there is increased growth and opportunity across the airport corridor, and that there is a need for coordinated infrastructure and mobility solutions, strategic opportunity to support Mountain View and Fort Gillem areas, and leveraging private investments to advance improvements alongside city funding.

Ms. Bass noted the expansion would strengthen Forest Park's commercial tax base, attract private investment in infrastructure, support redevelopment, and create new opportunities, with no financial burden for the city, no general fund request, no city financial obligation created, with AACID's funded through self-imposed commercial assessments by the commercial businesses who have agreed to join the CID.

Mr. Steve Lackley, Commercial Operations Director for Estes Services, stated he has been in commercial operations for the company for 20+ years, and stated the HVAC School, a 10-week program for Service Technicians, where the main criteria is that the student cannot have previously attended an HVAC school or program; and noted participants receive a \$600 tool & boots allowance, must maintain an A/B average, and the most of the graduates work their way up, with the company being able to hire from within, noting the program has an 88% graduation success rate, and is its 25th graduating class, and was pleased to announce that a plumbing and electrical program will start soon.

Ms. Bass requested formal approval of the boundary expansion of Airport South CID Resolution, consistent with prior Forest Park expansion approvals, and for support of the recommended appointment of Mr. Steve Lackley to the Airport South CID Board; noted the city will continue to see her as her focus will be on outreach throughout the city, including the Mountain View and Fort Gillem corridors as they identify property owners ambassadors to support peer engagement, hosts recurring small-group meetings to share CID values and opportunities, and target priority properties for consistent outreach and engagement, noting the Estes corporate office is located here and stated Estes will host recruitment meetings at their location to educate the business owners as part of the strategy.

Councilmember Gunn expressed enthusiasm for the career giveback and suggested a collaboration and partnership with the Estes program and the city's Elevate program and wants to continue the conversation.

Mr. Lackley responded that he would be honored to partner with the city, noting it is hard to find quality labor, and the classroom can hold one hundred participants.

Councilmember James thanked everyone for the presentation and noted her appreciation that there is no request for funding from the city.

Councilmember Gutierrez stated it is a great program, and did not want to take away from the primary request regarding the CID expansion into Forest Park, which he supports, and asked if the Estes program would consider Elevate as well as students attending Forest Park High School who would gain great exposure, and agreed that it is good to see there is no cost to the city.

Councilmember Akins-Wells stated it was a great presentation, agreeing with the sentiments already stated by her colleagues.

2. **Council Consideration to approve a policy governing security detail for elected officials from the city's police department.** – Presented by Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney.

Background/History: The request is to adopt a policy governing security detail for elected officials from the city's police department.

Attorney Matricardi noted the policy would address any threat of an elected official, as determined within the purview of the Polic Chief, and that the Mayor & Council would have to authorize an extension of the security detail beyond thirty (30) days.

Councilmember Akins-Wells stated she supports security detail for all officials whose life has been put into jeopardy, and until the investigation is complete; noted the city needs to update all policies and procedures that are outdated, some of which have been in place for more than fifty (50) years.

Attorney Matricardi noted the current detail is set to end June 1st and the Governing Body would need to approve the security detail to continue.

Councilmember James stated the security detail stems from an incident that occurred in November/December of last year where a rock was thrown at a Councilmember's home, and noted there was discussion from Attorney Matricardi, however, to her knowledge, it was still in limbo, and has since been made aware that the security detail has cost the taxpayers \$97,000, stating each member of the Governing Body needs to be able to answer questions from the public on how city funds are being spent, and that it is not fair for elected officials not to have that information; stated the city needs to look into equitable detail without placing financial burden on the taxpayer for an extended period of time. Councilmember James referenced a section of the policy: INVESTIGATIONS AND CONFIDENTIALITY: *Any active investigations related to threats, criminal trespass, criminal damage to property, or other security-related incidents shall be conducted in accordance with applicable law. Information related to such investigations may be withheld as necessary to protect investigative integrity, officer safety, and public safety.*

Councilmember James stated the policy needs to be in place, noting she had not been made aware that there was a 24-hour security detail in place for a Councilmember until it was recently brought to her attention by a resident; further noting transparency is important.

Councilmember Wells asked that the focus be placed on priority issues for the city; noting elected officials should not be involved with police investigations; and noted there is 24-hour surveillance being provided at Kroger at Ft. Gillem where the cost is \$200,000 - \$300,000; and that the city should focus on what is impacting residents; and noted she would have the contract regarding Kroger surveillance to present at the next meeting.

Councilmember Gutierrez asked if the Council must approve security details.

Attorney Matricardi responded yes, when the security detail is outside of normal meetings and exceeds (30) thirty days, and the ordinance allows the Police Chief to make the determination.

Councilmember Gunn noted that from November 2025 to current, \$97,000 has been paid by taxpayers for the security detail, noting all members of the governing body were included on the email regarding the security detail, and that she is definitely concerned about all her colleagues, noting the event in question not only impacted Councilmember Akins-Wells, but it impacted her household as well, and wants everyone to feel safe as they go to their homes, however, there are restrictions as to how we operate as a city, noting it was mentioned that \$200,000 was spent to secure Kroger, and that \$97,000 was paid out over a six-month period for security detail for a councilmember, stating she absolutely wants the Councilwoman to feel safe going in and out of her home, and that she knows exactly what it feels like having had a personal attack against her, where her home was shot up, prior to becoming a councilmember and not one police car was placed outside of her home.

Councilmember Gunn stated that she understands and sympathizes about the situation, having experienced first-hand an attack at her home and affecting her relatives, with someone having to be relocated, traumatizing her grandchildren who were affected and remain afraid, and that if anybody understands how it feels to be violated in the space of your home, she does, noting she has not received an update on the case after three years.

Councilmember Gunn stated that with that being said, as an elected official, she has to separate herself from personal incidents, and must make good, sound decisions for the city and be fiscally responsible and accountable on how money is being spent, and that everyone has to be good stewards as taxpayers.

Councilmember Gunn stated policies can always be amended, and likes that the proposed policy states that any credible threat that requires security detail must be determined by the Police Chief, again expressing empathy and understanding for the situation and stated this is not an attack, and encouraged the public to review the document and read it for themselves.

Councilmember Gutierrez asked Interim City Manager Clemons for an update regarding the investigation.

V. PUBLIC HEARING - COMMENTS WILL BE HEARD DURING THE REGULAR SESSION MEETING

3. **Council Consideration to approve Case # CUP-2026-02- Conditional Use Permit for 4959 and 4965 West St. to establish a childcare center within the Single-Family Residential District (RS).** Presented by: SaVaughn Irons-Kumassah, Interim Planning and Community Development Director.

Background/History: The applicant is requesting approval of a Conditional Use Permit to establish a childcare center within the Single Family Residential (RS) District in Ward 2.

Pursuant to Sec. 8-8-28 of the City of Forest Park Zoning Ordinance, pre-k facilities and daycare centers require a Conditional Use Permit to operate within the RS District.

On April 16, 2026, the Planning Commission reviewed the request and voted to recommend approval with conditions. The conditions are as follows:

Parking Compliance

The property owner and any operator shall comply with the City of Forest Park Zoning Ordinance parking standards as outlined in Section 8-8-90.

Consistency with Approval

This approval is based on the existing site layout and operational characteristics as presented. Any expansion, site modification, or intensification of use, including, but not limited to increased enrollment or extended hours of operation, shall require additional review and approval by the City.

General Compliance

The property owner shall ensure the use remains in compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations, including licensing requirements for childcare facilities.

The subject property previously received approval for a daycare facility use under a prior tenant. This request has been submitted by the property owner to establish the Conditional Use Permit with the property rather than a specific tenant. Approval will allow the property owner to lease the space to future childcare operators without requiring each tenant to seek separate approval from Mayor and Council, provided the use remains consistent with the approved conditions.

Interim Director Irons-Kumassah noted the case was previously presented, and that the applicant has complied with the condition to stripe and pave the parking lot.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

4. **Consideration of an Ordinance Amending Title 9 (Licensing and Regulation) to Clarify Regulatory Standards, Improve Administrative Processes, and Address Ambiguities in Existing Provisions.** Presented by: SaVaughn Irons-Kumassah, Interim Planning and Community Development Director

Background/History: Staff has conducted a review of Title 9 (Licensing and Regulation) and identified several provisions that are outdated, unclear, or lack sufficient detail to ensure consistent interpretation and enforcement. These ambiguities have created

challenges for both staff administration and public-facing processes, particularly with respect to licensing requirements, application completeness, and regulatory compliance.

The proposed amendments are intended to streamline existing procedures, establish clearer standards for applicants and licensees, and align the City's Code with current operational practices and enforcement needs. Updates include clarifying application requirements, strengthening compliance and reporting obligations, and modernizing regulatory language across multiple chapters.

This ordinance represents the first phase of a broader effort to comprehensively update Title 9. Additional amendments are anticipated and will be presented to Mayor and Council in future phases to further enhance clarity, consistency, and effectiveness of the City's licensing and regulatory framework.

Councilmember Gunn inquired about ordinance updates coming forward following Phase I.

Interim Director Irons-Kumassah stated these are the city's current ordinances, noting Title 9 does not fall under Planning & Development, and this request is regarding Business and Licensing area where the ordinances have not been updated in a very long time.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION - Personnel, Litigation, Real Estate or Cyber Security OCGA § 50-14-1

Motion to convene Executive Session was made by Councilmember Akins-Wells; seconded by Councilmember James. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

Motion to adjourn Executive Session and reconvene the Work Session meeting at 7:00 PM was made by Councilmember Gunn; seconded by Councilmember James. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT – With no further business, Mayor Ellison adjourned the meeting at 7:00 PM.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for Council meetings should notify the City Clerk's Office at 404-366-4720 at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by:

Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk

Gwendolyn Ellison, Mayor



CITY OF
FORESTPARK

**CITY OF FOREST PARK
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION MEETING**

Monday, May 4, 2026, at 7:00 PM
Forest Park City Hall | Council Chambers
745 Forest Parkway, Forest Park, GA 30297

The Honorable Mayor Gwendolyn W. Ellison
The Honorable Kimberly James The Honorable Delores A. Gunn
The Honorable Hector Gutierrez The Honorable Latresa Akins-Wells
The Honorable Allan Mears
Latosha Clemons, Interim City Manager
Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk
Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney

SUMMARY MINUTES

VIRTUAL MEETING NOTICE

Council Meetings will be live-streamed and available on [Forest Park's YouTube Channel](#)

- I. **CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME** – The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ellison at 7:00 p.m.
- II. **INVOCATION/PLEDGE** - Elder Justin Cook
- III. **ROLL CALL - CITY CLERK** – All members were in attendance except Councilmember Mears.
- IV. **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS**
Motion to adopt the agenda as presented was made by Councilmember James; seconded by Councilmember Gunn. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.
- V. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 1. **Council Approval of Work Session Minutes from April 20, 2026**
Council Approval of Regular Session Minutes from April 20, 2026
Motion to approve the Minutes was made by Councilmember James; seconded by Councilmember Gunn. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

VI. **PUBLIC COMMENTS - (All Speakers will have 3 Minutes)**

Mr. Carl Evans stated that he loves the officials with all of his heart, noting he previously had to provide security to officials of the city who received threats and referenced the proposed ordinance for security details, noting that in the city's 118-year history, this has never been needed; he stated that he understands personal things happen, noting the incident that occurred to Councilmember Gunn, a citizen at the time, and stated the police department should investigate these incidents and decide on how to proceed. Mr. Evans stated he has been contacted by city employees, past and present, and citizens because they are afraid of

the governing body and fear speaking up, and he will do so on their behalf, and called for the immediate termination of the Interim City Manager, Public Works Director, HR Director, and to look into financial irregularities relating to the city's finances; stated they are fed up with the intimidation and corruption, and noted that he has stated before that there are too many lawsuits for wrongful terminations and settlements, and stated the people who contacted him are asking for a recall of the entire governing body; stated there are policies that need to be reviewed and updated, and referenced the situation regarding Chief Criss, stating there was not a handbook to go by; and referenced a previous councilmember being terminated for ethics violations, who was then appointed by members of the governing body to the Ethics Board; and stated that if that person could be given a second chance with multiple ethics violations, then Chief Criss deserves a second chance as well.

Ms. Jay Evans stated her appreciation for the lighting at Bill Lee Park, and thanking Councilmember Gunn for the Dog Park; referenced an event hosted by Councilmember Gutierrez, noting it was great to see the area so well-lit and bright like Christmas, noting she loves how it looks, and she felt very safe, and invited residents to come out to enjoy; and commended the Public Works Director Matthews for the work that is being done by the public works department.

VII. CEREMONIAL - Proclamations: National Public Safety Telecommunications Week, Professional Municipal Clerk's Week

Mayor Ellison presented proclamations to members of the city's E911 Team for Telecommunications Week, and the City Clerk for Professional Municipal Clerk's Week; and also recognized for the month of May, National Mental Health Awareness Month, Public Service Recognition Week, National Military Appreciation Month, Asian-American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Haitian Heritage Month, Jewish-American Heritage Month, and Native American & Alaskan Heritage Month.

VIII. CITY CLERK'S REPORT

Clerk Holiday reported Early Voting is underway and will continue through May 15th, noting the Forest Park early voting location is the Senior Center 5087 Park Avenue, and referenced other locations throughout the County, and cited the voting hours: Monday – Friday 8am – 7pm, Saturday 9am – 5pm and Sunday 12pm – 5pm; and stated that on Election Day, May 19th, voters can only vote at their assigned polling location, and to check the MyVoterPage website or contact the Clayton County Elections Office for more information.

Clerk Holiday also offered congratulations to Council Aides Tenisha Dixon and Andre Henry for completing the Georgia Municipal Association HRAC (Human Resources Administration Certificate) program.

IX. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Interim City Manager Clemons reported as follows:

Greetings Madam Mayor and Council,

I would like to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to our Leadership Team and all City employees for their continued dedication, professionalism, and commitment to service. The progress we are making as an organization is a direct result of their hard work, collaboration, and shared commitment to excellence. Each department continues to demonstrate resilience and focus as we move the City forward during this period of transition. I am truly grateful for their leadership and the pride they take in serving the residents of Forest Park.

Nine-Month Progress Update

As we approach the nine-month mark of this interim administration, we have made significant progress in stabilizing operations and strengthening the organization:

- Operational Stability: Departments continue to deliver reliable and consistent services while reinforcing internal processes, accountability, and performance expectations.
 - Fiscal Awareness: Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of departmental budgets have strengthened our ability to identify risks, manage expenditures, and plan responsibly.
 - Leadership Engagement: Director roundtables and leadership discussions continue to promote collaboration, problem-solving, and strategic focus across the organization.
- These efforts have laid a strong foundation for continued growth, stability, and operational effectiveness.

Administrative & Organizational Update

- Director Evaluations: Performance evaluations for all Department Directors have been completed or are nearing completion. This process reinforces accountability, provides meaningful feedback, and supports ongoing professional development within the Leadership Team.
- Budget Review Process: Budget discussions and reviews have been conducted with all Department Directors to ensure alignment with organizational priorities and fiscal responsibility. These efforts position us for the upcoming Budget Retreat with the Mayor and Council, where priorities and financial strategies for the upcoming fiscal year will be further discussed.
- 360 Leadership Evaluation: A 360-degree evaluation of my role as Interim City Manager has been completed by the Leadership Team. This feedback is instrumental in strengthening leadership effectiveness, enhancing communication, and ensuring continued transparency and accountability in my role.
- Department Collaboration: Cross-departmental collaboration continues to be a driving force in improving operational efficiency. Departments are working collectively to streamline processes, share resources, and deliver services more effectively under the “One Forest Park” philosophy.

Permanent City Manager Recruitment Update

The recruitment process for the permanent City Manager is actively underway in partnership with our executive search consultant. At this time:

- A total of 13 candidates have been identified and will be interviewed by the consultant.
- Following the initial vetting process, the consultant will present the top three (3) to five (5) candidates.
- These finalists will then be submitted for review and consideration by the Mayor and City Council.

This structured approach ensures a thorough, transparent, and competitive selection process to identify the most qualified candidate to lead the City of Forest Park into the future.

Fire Department Highlight

Anthony Gallman’s selection as the 2026 recipient of the Georgia Arson Control Scholarship for Fire Investigator Conference and Training recently held in Helen, Georgia.

This recognition honors his commitment to professional development and excellence in fire investigation while representing Forest Park Fire & Emergency Services. The scholarship supported advanced investigative training, current legal and case analysis updates, and strengthened collaboration with fire investigators and public safety partners across the state.

This achievement reflects both individual dedication and the department's continued commitment to maintaining high investigative standards and serving the community with professionalism and integrity.

Closing

In closing, I remain committed to ensuring operational stability, supporting our employees, and maintaining the delivery of high-quality services to our community during this transition. Thank you for the opportunity to serve.

X. NEW BUSINESS

2. **Airport South Community Improvement District Expansion** – Presented by: Rochelle Dennis, Economic Development Director

Background/History: Formal Request for approval of the Airport South Community Improvement District (CID) Expansion, and to appoint Mr. Steve Lackley as the city's commercial property owner representative.

Motion to approve the expansion of the Airport South Community Improvement District (CID) Expansion, and to appoint Mr. Steve Lackley of Estes, as the city's commercial property owner representative was made by Councilmember James; seconded by Councilmember Akins-Wells. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

3. **Council Consideration to approve a policy governing security detail for elected officials from the city's police department.** – Presented by: Attorney Matricardi
Background/History: The request is to adopt a policy governing security detail for elected officials from the city's police department.

Motion to approve the Security Detail Ordinance was made by Councilmember James; seconded by Councilmember Gunn. The motion Failed 2-1-1 (James/Gunn In Favor), (Guttierrez Opposed) (Akins-Wells Abstained). Councilmember James requested the item be placed on the May 18, 2026 meeting Agenda.

XI. PUBLIC HEARING

4. **Council Consideration to approve Case # CUP-2026-02- Conditional Use Permit for 4959 and 4965 West St. to establish a childcare center within the Single-Family Residential District (RS).** Presented by: SaVaughn Irons-Kumassah, Interim Planning and Community Development Director

Background/History:

The applicant is requesting approval of a Conditional Use Permit to establish a childcare center within the Single Family Residential (RS) District in Ward 2. Pursuant to Sec. 8-8-28 of the City of Forest Park Zoning Ordinance, pre-k facilities and daycare centers require a Conditional Use Permit to operate within the RS District.

On April 16, 2026, the Planning Commission reviewed the request and voted to recommend approval with conditions. The conditions are as follows:

1. Parking Compliance

The property owner and operator shall comply with the City of Forest Park Zoning Ordinance parking standards as outlined in Section 8-8-90.

2. Consistency with Approval

This approval is based on the existing site layout and operational characteristics as presented. Any expansion, site modification, or intensification of use, including but

not limited to increased enrollment or extended hours of operation, shall require additional review and approval by the City.

3. General Compliance

The property owner shall ensure the use remains in compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations, including licensing requirements for childcare facilities.

The subject property previously received approval for daycare use under a prior tenant. This request has been submitted by the property owner to establish the Conditional Use Permit with the property rather than a specific tenant. Approval will allow the property owner to lease the space to future childcare operators without requiring each tenant to seek separate approval from Mayor and Council, provided the use remains consistent with the approved conditions.

Attorney Matricardi cited the Public Hearing Rules

Motion to open the Public Hearing was made by Councilmember Akins-Wells; seconded by Councilmember Gunn. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

Speakers in Favor: Ms. Felecia Davis and Ms. Bonita Allen (tenant)

Speakers Opposed: None

Motion to close the Public Hearing was made by Councilmember James; seconded by Councilmember Akins-Wells. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

Motion to approve Case # CUP-2026-02- Conditional Use Permit for 4959 and 4965 West St. to establish a childcare center within the Single-Family Residential District (RS) was made by Councilmember James; seconded by Councilmember Akins-Wells. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

XII. NEW BUSINESS

5. **Consideration of an Ordinance Amending Title 9 (Licensing and Regulation) to Clarify Regulatory Standards, Improve Administrative Processes, and Address Ambiguities in Existing Provisions.** Presented by: SaVaughn Irons-Kumassah, Interim Planning and Community Development Director.

Background/History: Staff has conducted a review of Title 9 (Licensing and Regulation) and identified several provisions that are outdated, unclear, or lack sufficient detail to ensure consistent interpretation and enforcement. These ambiguities have created challenges for both staff administration and public-facing processes, particularly with respect to licensing requirements, application completeness, and regulatory compliance.

The proposed amendments are intended to streamline existing procedures, establish clearer standards for applicants and licenses, and align the City's Code with current operational practices and enforcement needs. Updates include clarifying application requirements, strengthening compliance and reporting obligations, and modernizing regulatory language across multiple chapters.

This ordinance represents the first phase of a broader effort to comprehensively update Title 9. Additional amendments are anticipated and will be presented to Mayor and Council in future phases to further enhance clarity, consistency, and effectiveness of the City's licensing and regulatory framework.

Motion to approve amending Title 9 (Licensing and Regulation) to Clarify Regulatory Standards, Improve Administrative Processes, and Address Ambiguities in Existing Provisions was made by Councilmember James; seconded by Councilmember Akins-Wells. The motion passed unanimously 4-0.

XIII. CLOSING COMMENTS BY GOVERNING BODY

Ward 1 – Councilmember James commented that the city's ordinances and policies are in place, similar to the bible, for the city to operate and govern, and made reference to the Rules of Decorum, read prior to public comments, noting statements outside of the governing body's jurisdiction and personnel matters should not be allowed, and the meeting should be brought into order when such comments occur; noted there are time limits in place for seven residents and/or business owners to speak (3 minutes each) for a total of twenty-one minutes, noting she was instrumental in expanding the time limit, and that when non-residents or business owners request to make public comments, the process is to submit the request to the City Clerk to be placed on the Agenda, to ensure the residents and business owners have proper time to speak during public comments.

Councilmember James addressed the Security Detail Ordinance, noting she was disappointed that it did not pass tonight, noting the item will be brought back to the next Council meeting for consideration, stating the reason that a policy needs to be put in place is for the city to be accountable to the residents on how taxpayer funds are being spent, noting she is not in favor of a 24/7 security detail; and referenced the incident that occurred in November 2025 where a rock was thrown at an elected officials home, and six months later, the city continues to pay for security detail.

Councilmember James read portions of the proposed Security Detail Ordinance: This Policy applies solely and exclusively to elected officials. The Chief of Police is authorized to implement and administer this Policy and to assign security details in accordance with its terms. Nothing in this Policy shall be construed to limit the Chief's authority to respond immediately to emergencies or imminent threats to public safety consistent with law enforcement responsibilities. Definition: A "credible threat" means a threat that is specific, articulable, and verified through law enforcement investigation, intelligence, or reliable evidence. Security Details: A "security detail" means the assignment of one or more sworn law enforcement officers to provide protective services. Authorization of Security Details: When a credible, verified threat exists, the Chief may authorize a security detail for an elected official for a period not to exceed thirty (30) consecutive days. Extension of Security Details: Any security detail extending beyond thirty (30) days shall require approval by a majority vote of the City Council. Termination of Security Details and Limitations and Cost Responsibility: If the need for a security detail arises from criminal activity, illegal conduct, or personal actions of an elected official that are unrelated to official City business, the City may determine, to the extent permitted by law, that the elected official shall be responsible for all or a portion of the costs associated with the security detail.

Councilmember James gave an example that it should not be on the taxpayers to provide protection if an official is involved in a personal altercation, and then seeks security detail paid for by the city, as a result of that altercation, stating that is why there needs to be a policy in place to regulate elected officials, noting having a policy in place would be how elected officials are held accountable, and if not in place, how would the elected officials be held accountable; noting she understood Councilmember Akins-Wells' abstention, as she may have taken this policy to be aimed at her, and it is not. Councilmember James stated she had only learned about the 24/7 security provided for Councilmember Akins-Wells—costing more than \$97,000 so far due to a rock being thrown at her home—when a resident informed her.

Ward 2 – Councilmember Gunn asked that everyone take notice of Bill Lee Park where there are wonderful renovations and improvements being made to include a new playground and other amenities, and thanked Parks and Recreation Director, Tarik Maxwell and his team for all that they are doing to assist; reminded everyone about the Free Food Pantry taking place on the second Monday of each month from 3-5pm at 4891 Philips Dr. (Gateway Restoration Church); referenced the upcoming Mother's Day Tea Party, in partnership with the Senior Center Operator, Ms. Anne Foster, noting the event has been well received, and all eighty seats are sold out, and looks forward to Mayor Ellison's attendance; thanked everyone for coming out, and to enjoy the remainder of the evening.

Ward 3 - Councilmember Gutierrez thanked everyone for coming out today; referenced the Selena Day event, noting the threat of rain may have caused some people to shy away, noting the event was a great success and thanked everyone for attending; thanked Mayor Ellison for supporting a recent event that was held at an extended stay hotel where assistance was provided to residents; referenced the Keep Forest Park Beautiful initiative to help keep the city litter free, asking those groups/organizations that are interested to please sign up; and noted the final Pilates class is taking place on Wednesday, May 13.

Ward 4 – Councilmember stated that her life outside of politics is being a proud mom who has raised very productive children, and gave a special shout out to her son, Jaquez Akins, and his baseball team at Benedict College, for their playoff appearance in Macon, GA, and praised the team for an amazing baseball season; commended her son, Jaquez, noting his combo sports and academics success with A/B Honors, and noted Jaquez is eligible for the upcoming Major League Baseball draft this year.

Councilmember Akins-Wells thanked Mayor Ellison and Clerk Holiday for putting together the Mayor & Council Retreat, noting it was very much needed, and that even with the driving back and forth between baseball games and the Retreat, it was well worth it.

Councilmember Akins-Wells referenced the upcoming Chat, Chew and Connect Initiative, giving a voice to the residents to express their issues and concerns, and will begin visiting neighborhoods throughout the community beginning June 12 at Breckenridge on Old Dixie Hwy., and will be open to all residents in Ward 4.

Councilmember Akins-Wells referenced the security detail, first thanking the officer who has been present at her home, making sure that she and her family are safe; noted she does not take the matter lightly as we are in different times, politically; addressed the cost, stating the officer was on duty and would have been paid whether on security detail or patrolling the city, and stated there has been no adverse impact to response times nor has there been an increase

in crime in the city as a result of the security detail; requested copies of the contracts for 24/7 security for Kroger at Ft. Gillem that will be addressed at the next meeting, noting officers have been providing security; and thanked everyone for coming out.

Interim City Manager Clemons stated she makes sure she defers to the Mayor and remains in compliance with the rules of decorum; and noted both Finance and HR departments are doing a great job, noting there are no missing funds, highlighting that the Finance Department just completed the city's audit with only one finding for correction out of 58, and noted the HR department operates by policy; noted she is serving in the capacity of Interim City Manager under the authority granted by the governing body in accordance with the City Charter; and stated that the responsibilities of the remain the same, and that she will continue to execute those responsibilities with professionalism to the best of her ability.

Ward 4 – Councilmember Akins-Wells thanked the Clerk Holiday for recognizing Council Aides Tenisha Dison and Andre Wells, noting it is not known just how much they do, an appreciates them for their work.

Mayor Ellison wished Councilmember Mears a speedy recovery and thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

XIV. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** - Personnel, Litigation, Real Estate or Cyber Security OCGA § 50-14-1
None

XV. **ADJOURNMENT** – With no further business, Mayor Ellison adjourned the meeting at 7:53 p.m.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, those requiring accommodation for Council meetings should notify the City Clerk's Office at 404-366-4720 at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by:

Vanessa Holiday, City Clerk

Gwendolyn Ellison, Mayor



CITY OF
FORESTPARK

City of Forest Park City Council
Agenda Item Summary
May 18, 2026

Agenda Item #
X2

Requested By Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney	Sponsor(s)
Department Attorney	
Requested Action Ordinance (without public hearing)	
Requirement for Board Action	
Summary & Background The request is to adopt a policy governing security details for elected officials from the city's police department.	
Fiscal Impact	
Exhibits Attached 2026-5-14 FP Res (Security Personnel Policy) (1)	
Staff Recommendation	

STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF CLAYTON

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-_____

A RESOLUTION BY MAYOR GWENDOLYN ELLISON AND COUNCILMEMBERS KIMBERLY JAMES, DELORES A. GUNN, HECTOR GUTIERREZ, LATRESA AKINS-WELLS, AND ALLAN MEARS OF THE CITY OF FOREST PARK, GEORGIA ADOPTING A POLICY GOVERNING SECURITY DETAILS FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS FROM THE CITY’S POLICE DEPARTMENT.

WHEREAS, the City of Forest Park, Georgia (“City”) is a municipal corporation duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of Georgia; and

WHEREAS, the duly elected governing authority of the City is the Mayor and Council thereof; and

WHEREAS, the governing body has a responsibility to protect the safety of elected officials while ensuring transparency, accountability, and responsible stewardship of public resources; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes the need for clear, objective, and uniform standards governing the authorization, duration, oversight, and termination of security details provided to elected officials; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to establish the Policy Governing Security Details for Elected Officials (“Policy”), attached as **Exhibit A**, that balances public safety considerations with fiscal responsibility and equitable treatment of elected officials; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that adoption of the Policy in the best interests of the City and its residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Forest Park, Georgia, as follows:

Section 1. Approval. The Policy Governing Security Details for Elected Officials, attached hereto as Exhibit A, as presented to the Mayor and Council on May 18, 2026, is hereby approved and adopted. This Policy shall be codified in the Police Department’s Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in a manner consistent with the standard numbering and organization of said SOPs.

Section 2. Public Record. This document shall be maintained as a public record by the City Clerk and shall be accessible to the public during all normal business hours of the City.

Section 3. Authorization of Execution. The Mayor is hereby authorized to sign all documents necessary to effectuate this Resolution.

Section 4. Attestation. The Clerk is authorized to execute, attest to, and seal any documents necessary to effectuate this Resolution, subject to approval as to form by the City Attorney.

Section 5. Effective Date. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Forest Park as provided in the City Charter.

SO RESOLVED this 18th day of May, 2026.

CITY OF FOREST PARK, GEORGIA

Dr. Gwendolyn Ellison, *Mayor*

ATTEST:

City Clerk (SEAL)

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

City Attorney

EXHIBIT A

CITY OF FOREST PARK, GEORGIA **POLICY GOVERNING SECURITY DETAILS FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS**

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy Governing Security Details for Elected Officials (“Policy”) is to establish clear, objective, and uniform standards governing the authorization, duration, and oversight of security details provided to elected officials of the City of Forest Park, Georgia (“City”). This Policy is intended to balance the safety of elected officials with the City’s responsibility to ensure fiscal accountability, transparency, and equitable use of public resources.

II. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This Policy applies solely and exclusively to elected officials of the City, including the Mayor and members of the City Council. This Policy does not apply to City employees, appointed officials, staff, contractors, or private individuals, except where otherwise required by law or governed by a separate written policy or directive.

III. AUTHORITY

The Chief of Police of the City (“Chief”) is authorized to implement and administer this Policy and to assign security details in accordance with its terms. Nothing in this Policy shall be construed to limit the Chief’s authority to respond immediately to emergencies or imminent threats to public safety consistent with law enforcement responsibilities.

IV. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this Policy:

A “*credible threat*” means a threat that is specific, articulable, and verified through law enforcement investigation, intelligence, or reliable evidence, as determined by the Chief or the Chief’s designee, and that presents a reasonable likelihood of harm to an elected official. A credible threat does not include generalized fear, unsubstantiated concerns, political disagreement, public criticism, or perceived threats that are not supported by verified information.

A “*security detail*” means the assignment of one or more sworn law enforcement officers to provide protective services to an elected official, which may include residential security, escort services, or continuous protection, as deemed appropriate by the Chief or the Chief’s designee based upon the nature and severity of the verified threat.

V. AUTHORIZATION OF SECURITY DETAILS

When a credible, verified threat exists, the Chief may authorize a security detail for an elected official for a period not to exceed thirty (30) consecutive days. The determination to

authorize a security detail shall be based on a documented threat assessment and shall be proportional to the nature, severity, and duration of the threat. Security details shall not be assigned based solely on perceived threats, public controversy, political activity, or personal preference.

VI. EXTENSION OF SECURITY DETAILS

Any security detail extending beyond thirty (30) days shall require approval by a majority vote of the City Council. Any such approval shall specify a defined end date or a required review period at which the continued need for the security detail will be reconsidered. The Police Department shall provide sufficient information to support the continued existence of a credible threat, subject to applicable confidentiality and investigative limitations.

VII. TERMINATION OF SECURITY DETAILS

A security detail shall be discontinued when the credible threat no longer exists, when the authorized period expires without renewal, or when the City Council declines to approve an extension. Security details are intended to be temporary protective measures and shall not continue indefinitely in the absence of verified justification.

VIII. LIMITATIONS AND COST RESPONSIBILITY

If the need for a security detail arises from criminal activity, illegal conduct, or personal actions of an elected official that are unrelated to official City business, the City may determine, to the extent permitted by law, that the elected official shall be responsible for all or a portion of the costs associated with the security detail. Nothing in this Policy shall be construed to create a vested right to personal security protection at public expense.

IX. INVESTIGATIONS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Any active investigations related to threats, criminal trespass, criminal damage to property, or other security-related incidents shall be conducted in accordance with applicable law. Information related to such investigations may be withheld as necessary to protect investigative integrity, officer safety, and public safety.

X. POLICY REVIEW

This Policy shall be reviewed periodically by the Chief in coordination with the City Attorney to ensure consistency with best practices, applicable law, and the City's fiscal responsibilities.

XI. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Policy shall become effective upon adoption via resolution by the City Council of the City.



CITY OF
FORESTPARK

City of Forest Park City Council
Agenda Item Summary
May 18, 2026

Agenda Item #
XI3

Requested By Legislative Request	Sponsor(s)
Department Legislative	
Requested Action Resolution	
Requirement for Board Action	
Summary & Background Fleet Department to have city-owned vehicles installed with official City of Forest Park decals.	
Fiscal Impact	
Exhibits Attached 2026-5-14 - Hampton Res (Decals)	
Staff Recommendation	

STATE OF GEORGIA
CITY OF FOREST PARK

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-_____

A RESOLUTION BY MAYOR GWENDOLYN ELLISON AND COUNCILMEMBERS KIMBERLY JAMES, DELORES A. GUNN, HECTOR GUTIERREZ, LATRESA AKINS-WELLS, AND ALLAN MEARS OF THE CITY OF FOREST PARK, GEORGIA APPROVING ALL CITY-OWNED VEHICLES TO DISPLAY OFFICIAL CITY OF FOREST PARK DECALS.

WHEREAS, the City of Forest Park, Georgia (“City”) is a municipal corporation duly organized and existing under the laws of the State of Georgia; and

WHEREAS, the duly elected governing authority of the City is the Mayor and Council thereof; and

WHEREAS, the City owns and operates a fleet of vehicles used by various departments in the performance of governmental services; and

WHEREAS, clearly identifying City-owned vehicles promotes transparency, accountability, and public recognition of municipal operations; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council find that the installation of official City of Forest Park decals on all City-owned fleet vehicles is in the best interests of the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Forest Park, Georgia, as follows:

Section 1. Approval. All vehicles owned, leased, or otherwise operated by the City of Forest Park shall display official City of Forest Park decals or markings approved by the City Manager.

Section 2. Administration and Compliance. The Public Works Department, under the direction of the City Manager, shall be responsible for coordinating the procurement, installation, replacement, and maintenance of all required decals. Each department utilizing City-owned vehicles shall cooperate with the Public Works Department to ensure all applicable vehicles are brought into compliance with this Resolution within a reasonable period established by the City Manager.

Section 3. Exceptions. The City Manager may authorize exceptions to this Resolution for law enforcement vehicles, undercover vehicles, or other vehicles for which identification would compromise public safety, security, or operational effectiveness.

Section 4. Public Record. This document shall be maintained as a public record by the City Clerk and shall be accessible to the public during all normal business hours of the City.

Section 5. Authorization of Execution. The Mayor is hereby authorized to sign all documents necessary to effectuate this Resolution.

Section 6. Attestation. The Clerk is authorized to execute, attest to, and seal any documents necessary to effectuate this Resolution, subject to approval as to form by the City Attorney.

Section 7. Effective Date. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Forest Park as provided in the City Charter.

SO RESOLVED this 18th day of May, 2026.

CITY OF FOREST PARK, GEORGIA

Dr. Gwendolyn Ellison, *Mayor*

ATTEST:

City Clerk (SEAL)

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

City Attorney