



CITY OF
FORESTPARK

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

Monday, December 1, 2025, at 6:00 PM
Forest Park City Hall | Council Chambers
745 Forest Parkway, Forest Park, GA 30297

The Honorable Mayor Angelyne Butler, MPA
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
Randi Rainey, City Clerk
Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney

DRAFT MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Mayor Butler called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL - CITY CLERK

Present

Councilmember Kimberly James
Councilmember Delores Gunn
Councilmember Hector Gutierrez
Councilmember Latresa Akins-Wells
Councilmember Allan Mears

Absent

Others in attendance: Pauline Warrior, Chief of Staff; Josh Cox, IT Director; Rodney Virgil, Level 2 Support Engineer; Javon Lloyd, PIO; John Wiggins, Finance Director; Jeremi Patterson, Deputy Finance Director; Talisa Adams, Procurement; Shalonda Brown, HR Director; Diane Lewis, HR Deputy Director; Nicole Dozier, PCD Director; Rochelle Dennis, Economic Development Director; Charise Clay, Main Street Manager; SaVaughn Irons, Principal Planner; Dorthy Roper-Jackson, Municipal Court Director; Tarik Maxwell, Director of Rec and Leisure; Alton Matthews, Public Works Director; Brandon Criss, Police Chief, and Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS

Mayor Butler stated that, to proceed correctly, the Council would need to address the matter in reverse.

It was moved to add item #1 from the Consent Agenda and placed under New Business on the work session agenda.

The motion was made by Councilmember James and seconded by Councilmember Gunn. Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Gunn, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, and Councilmember Mears.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS

It was moved to remove item #1 from the Consent Agenda and placed under New Business on the work session agenda.

The motion was made by Councilmember James and seconded by Councilmember Gunn. Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Gunn, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, and Councilmember Mears.

V. CONSENT AGENDA (item moved to new business)

1. Council Discussion on Surplus Items from the Public Works Fleet Department-Public Works Department

Background/History:

The Public Works Department would like to declare the items listed in Exhibit A as surplus. The items consist of equipment and vehicles that are either broken or non-operable and occupy space that can be better utilized to secure equipment that is operable.

Director Matthews reported that Public Works is currently conducting an inventory of the equipment stored in the yard. During this process, staff identified several pieces of equipment that are no longer in use and have been sitting idle. He stated that declaring these items as surplus and auctioning them could generate revenue for the City.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember James stated that she did not have questions regarding the surplus items themselves but wanted to raise a related concern. She noted that, in the past, surplus vehicles sold to the public were still displaying the City of Forest Park logo and markings, and she referenced seeing a former Senior Center van still bearing City identifiers after it had been sold. She emphasized the importance of ensuring that all City branding and insignia are removed from any surplus vehicle or equipment prior to sale. She stated that, while she had no objections to the current surplus request, she wanted to ensure this practice is followed going forward.

Mayor Butler requested that staff ensure all City logos and identifying markings are removed from any surplus items prior to sale.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

2. Council Discussion to approve Case # CUP-2025-06- Conditional Use Permit for 5370 Ash Street to establish and operate a Place of Worship within the Single-Family Residential District (RS) in Ward 4-Planning and Community Development Department

Background/History:

The subject property at 5370 Ash Street is located in the Single-Family Residential (RS)

zoning district, where a Place of Worship is permitted only with a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The property previously received CUP approval in July 2023, but has since transferred to new ownership, prompting the current request to reestablish the use under the new applicant. The Planning Commission reviewed this request and voted to recommend approval with conditions on November 20, 2025. The site has historically operated as a religious facility, and the proposed continuation of a Place of Worship is consistent with the property's past use and surrounding residential context. No exterior changes or new construction are proposed, and the existing building, parking, and infrastructure are adequate to support the intended operations. All activities will occur within the existing structure, minimizing potential impacts related to traffic, noise, and neighborhood compatibility.

The request aligns with the City's Comprehensive Plan, which encourages the adaptive reuse of existing buildings and supports faith-based institutions that serve neighborhood needs. Staff finds the proposed use compatible with adjacent residential development and recommends approval with conditions to ensure continued protection of neighborhood character.

Director Dozier stated that the applicant is requesting approval to change the name associated with the existing conditional use permit for the property, which is a church, and to continue operating the site as a church, as it has historically been used. She noted that the application was reviewed by the Planning Commission and was recommended for approval with seven conditions, as outlined in their report. She added that the staff and the applicant were available to answer any questions.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember Gutierrez asked a question regarding code compliance and enforcement as it relates to churches. He inquired whether churches are held to the same standards and requirements as businesses, particularly in situations where elements such as parking lots or site conditions are not in compliance. Director Dozier explained that parking requirements vary based on the specific use, and churches have designated parking ratios under the zoning ordinance. She stated that if a church is found to be out of compliance with parking standards, the matter is brought to their attention, and they are provided with options. These may include applying for a variance, pursuing shared parking arrangements, or taking other corrective steps depending on the circumstances.

Mayor Butler asked Director Dozier to read the condition into the record.

Director Dozier read the seven conditions recommended by the Planning Commission into the records:

1. Use Limitation: The conditional use permit shall be limited to the operation of a place of worship as described in the application. Any substantial expansion, intensification, or change in use shall require City review and approval through the appropriate permitting process.
2. Compliance with Codes: The applicant must obtain all required building, fire, and life safety

permits and inspections prior to occupancy and the start of operations. All improvements must comply with City zoning ordinances and applicable State of Georgia regulations.

3. **Parking and Traffic Management:** The applicant shall maintain off-site parking sufficient for worship services and related activities. For larger events, designated staff or volunteers must manage parking and site circulation to ensure safety and prevent overflow into adjacent residential streets.

4. **Noise and Hours of Operation:** Activities must not create noise, vibration, or disturbances inconsistent with the surrounding residential area. Regular services, meetings, and events shall be limited to the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., unless otherwise approved by the Planning Director.

5. **Property Maintenance:** The site and structures must be maintained in good repair and kept free of debris and overgrowth. Landscaping and buffers must be preserved and enhanced as needed to remain compatible with neighboring residential properties.

6. **Signage:** Any proposed signage must comply with the sign ordinance for the RS – Residential Single-Family Zoning District and must be reviewed through the appropriate permitting process.

7. **Compliance Review:** The City reserves the right to conduct periodic inspections to verify compliance with the conditions of approval. Failure to comply may result in modification or revocation of the conditional use permit under Section 8-8-190.

Councilmember Gutierrez stated that his initial question related to the condition of the parking lot, noting that when he viewed the property on Google Maps, the lot appeared to have cracks and areas in need of repair. He said that while he understands this is not specifically part of the conditional use request, he believes the City should begin holding businesses and high-traffic facilities to consistent standards regarding site conditions.

He added that with the City's ongoing shift toward revitalization and improved commercial corridors, he would like to see the City or one of its boards explore programs or incentives to help property owners bring sites up to standard. He emphasized that places frequently visited by residents should be safe, well-maintained, and visually presentable, and that accountability should be applied consistently. He then asked for confirmation that parking lot improvements are not included in this particular application.

3. **Council Discussion on 2025-RFP-019 Architectural & Engineering Design Services (Annual Contract) — Procurement & Public Works Department**

Background/History:

In 2020, the City entered into on-call contracts with two (2) A&E Design Services firms for as-needed architectural and engineering design services for the City's new constructions, renovations, and capital improvement projects. The Department of Public Works (PW) will manage the annual contract, and the PW Director will serve as the City's Project Leader to support these efforts.

2025-RFP-019 Architectural & Engineering Design Services consists of providing on-call

A&E Design Services for an annual term with two (2) additional annual renewal options. Eight (8) proposals were received. After the evaluation of technical and cost proposals, the Evaluation Committee recommends an award to the highest-scoring proposer:

Precision Planning Inc., 400 Pike Blvd., Lawrenceville, GA. 30046
Estimated Amount: \$500,000.00 – SPLOST and Capital Project Funds

Mrs. Adams stated that the item before Council relates to an annual contract that previously operated under a five-year term, which has now expired. As a result, the contract was re-solicited. She reported that the City received eight proposals. After a thorough review and evaluation process, the evaluation committee scored the submissions and determined that Division Planning received the highest overall score and is being recommended for award of a new three-year contract.

4. **Council Discussion on Purchasing New Police Vehicles from the DOAS Cooperative Contract with Wade Ford—Police Department**

Background/History:

The Police Department is requesting the purchase of fourteen (14) patrol and/or administrative vehicles through the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) Direct Installment Program with a 4.40% interest rate guarantee by December 11, 2025. The vehicles will be purchased from the Department of Administrative Services (DOAS) cooperative contract with Wade Ford - contract #99999-001-SPD0000218-0001 for the total cost, which includes the upfit for all vehicles, is \$956,461.50 from the General fund (Red Speed).

Director Wiggins addressed the Mayor, Council, and Interim City Manager Clemons, stating that the Finance Department is requesting that the item be tabled. He explained that, based on recent meetings and the significant expenses the City is preparing to undertake, he would like additional time to return to Council with an alternative funding source for the proposal. He asked for the Council's consideration and approval to table the item so that Finance can conduct this review and bring back a revised recommendation.

Comments/Discussion from the Governing Body:

Mayor Butler asked whether there was another account or funding source that the Finance Director would prefer the plans be allocated from.

Chief Criss stated that he believed the funding matter had already been resolved, but acknowledged that it still needed clarification. He reiterated that the vehicles are urgently needed and expressed hope that the issue could have been addressed sooner.

Councilmember Gutierrez asked whether tabling the item would affect the locked-in rate guaranteed through GMA. He clarified that approving the item does not require the City to pay the full amount upfront, as the purchase would be financed. He sought confirmation that delaying the vote would not jeopardize the guaranteed financing rate. Director Wiggins clarified that the City would not be required to pay the full amount at once. Based on the plans, the purchase would involve installment payments, and the City would only be responsible for approximately one-third of the total cost upfront. He added that he wants additional time to review and confirm the most appropriate funding source before moving forward.

Councilmember Gutierrez reiterated his question, asking whether tabling the item would affect the interest rate or the financing program offered through GMA. Mrs. Adams stated that the interest rate is guaranteed only through December 11, and the rate may change after that date. She explained that if the city does not move forward before the deadline, the matter would need to be revisited and discussed again under the new rate structure. Director Wiggins added that if the interest rate changes after the December 11 deadline, the City would need to revisit the matter and reenter discussions regarding updated financing terms.

Director Wiggins stated that he would like to expedite the process and confirmed that he intends to bring the item back to Council by the next Council meeting. Mr. Wiggins added that, if necessary, the item could be brought back sooner through a Special Called Meeting to ensure timely action.

Councilmember Gutierrez noted that the next regular Council meeting is scheduled for December 15, which falls after the December 11 interest-rate deadline. He stated that if Finance identifies an alternative funding solution before then, it may be necessary to bring the matter back sooner, possibly through a Special Called Meeting, to preserve eligibility for the current rate.

Councilmember Akins-Wells agreed and suggested that the Council establish a specific deadline for receiving the updated funding information. She stated that setting a firm date would help ensure the City does not miss the financing opportunity and would allow staff to do whatever is needed to meet the interest-rate timeline.

Chief Criss added that the vehicles are currently on hold for the City, and the vendor had anticipated Council action occurring that evening. He stated that he had just learned this information and cautioned that the vehicles may not remain on hold much longer. He said that, while he could not be 100% certain, there is a strong likelihood that the units may no longer be available if the decision is delayed past the current timeline.

Mayor Butler stated that she was unsure how the situation with the vehicle would work and emphasized that the Council needed to determine a plan before adjourning the meeting. She noted that a decision would need to be made regarding how and when to proceed.

Interim City Manager Clemons addressed the Mayor and Council, stating that based on the most recent financial discussions, it is highly recommended that the Finance Department hold additional internal discussions to determine how the City can fiscally support and sustain this purchase. She emphasized the need to carefully identify the most responsible funding path before moving forward.

Councilmember James stated that she did not want the process to be rushed, noting that the City still must address several salary and compensation issues. She said she did not want to place undue pressure on staff to accelerate the funding review and added that she would not be in favor of moving forward simply to meet the December 11 interest-rate deadline. She clarified that her position would remain the same regardless of that date.

Councilmember Gunn stated that she reviewed page 91 of the packet, noting that Ms. Adams

included information from GMA regarding the proposal and lease supplement. She highlighted that GMA will file all necessary forms, including the State UCC-1 and federal 8033. She also pointed out the section in bold, which states that the payment schedule (Schedule B) may change slightly depending on the closing date.

Councilmember Gunn added that, based on the discussion, the interest rate could either increase or decrease, depending on market conditions, if the item is delayed. She stated that, given this uncertainty and based on the financial presentation provided at the previous Council meeting, it may be more prudent to table the item and reconvene after reviewing the City's financial position in greater depth.

Councilmember Gutierrez stated that he did not want the Police Chief to feel blindsided during the discussion and asked the Interim City Manager to ensure that similar situations do not occur moving forward. He added that if Director Wiggins identifies a viable funding solution before the December 11 interest-rate deadline, he would like the Council to be informed, so action can be taken; however, he acknowledged that if no solution is available, he understands the need to wait. He noted that, similar to the Fire Department's experience with long wait times for fire apparatus, specialty police vehicles may also have extended procurement timelines. He expressed concern that delaying too long could cause the city to lose access to the vehicles currently on hold, which would require the department to "get back in line" for future availability. He concluded by stating that he does not want the City to miss out on needed equipment due to avoidable delays.

5. **Council Discussion on Local Funding Commitment for GDOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) – Pedestrian Bridge Preliminary Engineering (PE)-**
Planning and Community Development Department

Background/History:

In December 2024, Planning & Community Development, in partnership with Kimley-Horn, presented the Pedestrian Bridge Feasibility Study to the Mayor and Council. The study evaluated the physical, engineering, safety, and aesthetic considerations necessary to determine whether a pedestrian bridge over Forest Parkway and the railroad tracks could be reasonably constructed, along with identifying the preferred alignment and cost estimates.

On January 27, 2025, Kimley-Horn informed staff that GDOT had opened the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant cycle and noted that, if the city wished to pursue external funding for the pedestrian bridge project, this would be an opportunity to apply. Based on that information, Planning & Community Development, in coordination with Public Works, submitted the TAP application on February 28, 2025.

On September 26, 2025, GDOT notified the city that the project had not been selected; however, the agency later contacted staff requesting additional information for reconsideration. On October 29, 2025, GDOT advised that the pedestrian bridge project was under renewed review and requested further details related to Preliminary Engineering (PE). Staff submitted all required information by GDOT's October 31 deadline.

Most recently, GDOT has requested confirmation of the City's ability to commit the required 20% local match for the PE phase of the project. The total Preliminary Engineering cost is \$1,200,000, of which GDOT would fund 80% (\$960,000) through TAP. The City's required 20% local match is \$240,000. This commitment letter does not obligate immediate expenditure; rather, it confirms that the city can secure the match if the grant is awarded.

To move the application forward, GDOT requires an official commitment letter supported by a Council-approved action identifying the City's intent and identifying the funding source for the match.

Director Dozier explained that staff are seeking the Mayor and Council's support for the Letter of Intent associated with the grant application. She stated that if the City is selected for the award, the official notification would occur in October 2026, although the City may receive preliminary notice as early as the summer of 2026. She noted that this timeline is important because the City would need to ensure it can provide the required 20% match at the time of award. She further stated that the Finance Department has prepared a draft Letter of Intent for Council's review and that Finance staff are present to answer any questions regarding the document.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember Gutierrez asked whether approving the Letter of Intent now would mean that the City is making the formal commitment at this time, or if the actual financial obligation would not occur until 2026. Director Dozier replied Yes.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

(When an Executive Session is required, one will be called for the following issues: Personnel, Litigation, or Real Estate) OCGA is §50-14-1(A)(2).

It was moved to recess into Executive Session at 6:27 p.m. for Personnel, Litigation, or Real Estate.

The motion was made by Councilmember James and seconded by Councilmember Mears. Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Gunn, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears.

It was moved to reconvene the Work Session Meeting at 7:04 p.m.

The motion was made by Councilmember James and seconded by Councilmember Mears. Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Gunn, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Butler adjourned the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

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

DRAFT