City Council Meeting
City Hall – Council Chambers
October 15, 2026
6:00 PM – Work Session / 7:00 PM – Council Meeting

WORK SESSION

Mayor Santini called the Work Session to order at 6:00PM. Mayor and Council Members discussed items from the agenda with the corresponding staff member.

Council Member Hodge made a motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of Personnel and Litigation. Council Member Cooley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

Mayor Santini closed the Work Session at 6:55 PM.

OPENING MEETING

Mayor Santini called the Council Meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Invocation by Council Member Cooley.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Council Member Cordell.

The City Council met in a Regular Session with Matthew J. Santini, Mayor, presiding, and the following present: Kari Hodge, Council Member Ward One; Cary Roth, Council Member Ward Three; Calvin Cooley, Council Member Ward Four; Gary Fox, Council Member Ward Five; Alyssa Cordell, Council Member Ward Six; Dan Porta, City Manager; Julia Drake, City Clerk; and David Archer, Assistant City Attorney.

Absent: Jayce Stepp, Council Member Ward Two

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

1. **October 1, 2026**

Council Member Cordell made a motion to approve the minutes of October 1, 2026, City Council Meeting. Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

PUBLIC HEARING – 1ST READING OF ZONING/ANNEXATION REQUESTS

Mayor Santini recused himself from AZ26-03 and exited the Council Chambers.

Mayor Pro-Tem Cooley calls the next item.

2. **AZ26-03: 37 Old Tennessee Rd.** **Applicant: Highland Development Associates, LLC.**

Randy Mannino, Planning and Development Director, stated the applicant had requested to annex 37 Old Tennessee Road, Tax Parcel 0079B-0003-001, containing 0.75 +/- acres. The current zoning is County R-2, Residential. The proposed zoning is G-C, General Commercial. The applicant wishes to

make this parcel consistent with the larger tract to the south and east at 3 Savoy Lane, known as Savoy Automobile Museum. These parcels have the same ownership. There are currently no plans for development or expansion onto the subject parcel at 37 Old Tennessee Road.

The property does not appear to have sewer service from either the City of Cartersville or Bartow County. City of Carterville water and gas services are in the area.

Planning Commission recommended approval 4-0.

Mayor Pro-Tem Cooley opened the public hearing for the zoning portion of the application.

Marty Sonenshine, 406 Old Mill Rd., came forward to represent the application and to answer questions.

With no one else to speak for or against the zoning portion, the public hearing was closed.

Mayor Pro-Tem Cooley opened the public hearing for the annexation portion of the application and stated that all comments from the zoning portion would be reflected.

With no one else to come forward to speak for or against the annexation portion, the public hearing was closed.

This was the first reading and will be voted on following the second reading on November 5, 2026.

Mayor Santini returned to the Council Chambers.

FIRST READING OF ORDINANCES

3. T26-04 (Applicant: HALU, LLC)

Mr. Mannino gave an overview of the Text Amendment and stated this text amendment is applicant driven. The current zoning ordinance allows for Accessory Apartments in all residential zoning categories with a special use permit except the R-D (Single-family duplex dwelling) zoning district (Sec. 6.6). The current zoning ordinance also provides conditions to be met specific to Accessory Apartments (Sec. 16.4).

The applicant is a real estate investor in the community and is looking to invest in and improve a property located at 114 E. Carter St. The zoning for this property is R-D. The improvements include the demolition of the existing house (completed), the construction of a new house (active) and the addition of a detached garage with an accessory apartment over the garage (pending). The intent is for the main house and accessory apartment to be rental properties. To accomplish the investment goals for this property, the applicant requests the following text amendments:

1) Chapter 26, Zoning, Section 6.6.2 (A), Permitted Uses, for the R-D, Single -Family Duplex Dwelling District:
   Sec. A): Add "Apartment, accessory (SU)* " as a permitted use subject to approval of a Special Use Permit.
2) Chapter 26, Zoning, Article XVI, Special Use, Section 16.4.3, "Apartment, accessory;"
   Sec. A): Add R-D to the list of allowable districts: R-20, R-15, R-10, R-7, R-D (Add), P-D,

P-S, and M-U.
Sec. B(8): Delete the existing requirement for owner occupancy of the principal building on the lot.

The following new items were presented by the applicant to the Planning Commission and the Planning Commission recommended approval.

New Item #1: In the R-D district, an accessory apartment shall only be allowed on properties with a single family detached dwelling

New Item #2: In the R-D district, an accessory apartment shall only be allowed if the accessory apartment adheres to the requirements of the Optional Density Bonus for the R-D zoning district.

Staff is not opposed to these amendments. These actions support affordable or achievable housing initiatives.

Mayor Santini opened the public hearing.

Hans Lutjens, 114 Old Mill Rd., came forward to represent the application and to answer questions from the Council Members.

With no one else to come forward to speak for or against the application, the public hearing was closed.

This was the first reading and will be voted on following the second reading on November 5, 2026.

4. SU-CV26-01: 114 E. Carter St. Applicant: HALU, LLC.

Mr. Mannino gave an overview of the application and stated the applicant requests a special use permit to construct a 661sf accessory apartment above a detached garage. This special use application is dependent on approval of T26-04. The accessory apartment and new house under construction will be for rent.

In accordance with O.C.G.A 36-66, Zoning Procedures Law, the applicant also requests a concurrent variance to Chapter 26, Sec. 16.4.3 (B)(3):

An accessory apartment shall not exceed six hundred fifty (650) square feet in gross floor area.

The concurrent variance request is to increase the allowed accessory apartment square footage from 650sf to 661sf. (16.4.3(B)(3))

Staff does not oppose the application with the following condition:

Condition:

1) *If approved, the approval is per the project data provided on the special use application, the site plan, building elevation and associated details.*

Planning Commission recommended approval 4-0.

Mayor Santini opened the public hearing for the Special Use application

Mr. Lutjens returned to the podium to represent the application.

With no one else to come forward to speak for or against, the public hearing was closed.

Mayor Santini opened the public hearing for the concurrent variance and stated all previous comments would be reflected.

With no one else to come forward to speak for or against, the public hearing was closed.

This was the first reading and will be voted on following the second reading on November 5, 2026.

5. Alcohol Sales – Thanksgiving Sales

Keith Lovell, City Attorney, stated this amendment to Chapter 4, Alcohol Beverages, Sections 4-9 and 4-121 of the City Code of Ordinances is to remove Thanksgiving Day from the list of prohibited days for alcohol sales.

Section 4-9 addresses the sale of malt beverages, wine, and distilled spirits, while Section 4-121 addresses the sale of distilled spirits at package outlets.

The amendments would allow alcohol sales on Thanksgiving Day during otherwise permitted hours. Christmas Day will remain a prohibited day for alcohol sales. Approval was recommended.

This was the first reading and will be voted on following the second reading on November 5, 2026.

OTHER

6. Right of Way Deed of Dedication – Thornwood Drive

Mr. Lovell stated the city requests approval of two Right of Way Deeds of Dedication for property along Thornwood Drive. The dedications include approximately 1.374 acres from Kenneth Wallis and 0.244 acres from Prime Storage Cartersville, LLC, for a combined total of 1.618 acres.

The dedications will convey the designated rights of way to the City of Cartersville for public use. Staff recommends approval of both Right of Way Deeds of Dedication and authorization for the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the necessary documents.

Council Member Fox made a motion to approve the Right of Way Deed of Dedication – Thornwood Drive. Council Member Roth seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

7. Atlanta Regional Commission – Annual Technical Services Payment

Sidney Forsyth, Water Department Director, stated in accordance with the cost-sharing agreement between the City, other regional water suppliers, and the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), signed on November 8, 2024, the City and Bartow County share the cost of the annual technical services payment. The agreement provides the City with voting rights and access to attorney-client privileged information related to negotiations between the water suppliers, the State, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The annual contracted amount is $37,500.00 each for the City and Bartow County. The City's $37,500.00 payment is a budgeted expense.

Council Member Cordell made a motion to approve the Atlanta Regional Commission – Annual Technical Services Payment. Council Member Hodge seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

CONTRACTS/AGREEMENTS

8. Silo Pointe – Certificate of Dedication and Maintenance Agreement (Water and Sewer)

Mr. Lovell stated the Water Department requests approval of the Certificate of Dedication and Maintenance Agreement for the Silo Pointe development. The agreement dedicates the water and sewer facilities and related infrastructure to the City for public use. A maintenance bond in the amount of $237,175.00, equal to 25% of the cost of the public facilities, has been provided by the developer.

Council Member Fox made a motion to approve the Silo Pointe – Certificate of Dedication and Maintenance Agreement (Water and Sewer). Council Member Roth seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

9. New Program Provider Contracts

David Archer, Jr., Parks and Recreation Director, stated this item includes contracts for new Program Providers relating to new programs to be offered through the Parks and Recreation Department.

North Georgia Martial Arts – On an independent contractor basis, North Georgia Martial Arts will provide martial arts training for youth and adults on selected days, beginning in November at the new Recreation Center.

SportsConnect Basketball Training – On an independent contractor basis, SportsConnect will provide basketball training for youth and adults on selected days, beginning in November at the new Recreation Center and other locations, as available.

With both independent contractor agreements, the City will receive 30% of the revenue generated from the services. Approval was recommended.

Gymnastics Booster Club Memorandum of Understanding – This agreement is an update to the previous MOU.

Council Member Fox made a motion to approve the New Program Provider Contracts. Council Member Roth seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

10. Switch, Ltd. Fall Festival Sponsorship Agreement

Dan Porta, City Manager, stated the City of Cartersville Public Relations Department is in the process of receiving sponsorship funds for the 2nd Annual Fall Festival. Switch Ltd requires a sponsorship agreement to be signed before submitting the donation. Approval was recommended.

Council Member Cordell made a motion to approve the Switch, Ltd. Fall Festival Sponsorship Agreement. Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously Vote: 5-0

11. Electric Cities of Georgia Contractor Agreement

Tim Storey, Electric Department Director, stated staff is requesting City Council approval for an agreement that will allow the City of Cartersville to utilize contractors enrolled with Electric Cities of Georgia (ECG) for electrical utility-related work as needed.

The agreement will provide the City with access to qualified contractors through ECG, allowing the City to efficiently obtain specialized services while maintaining appropriate contractor requirements and oversight. Utilizing ECG-enrolled contractors will provide an additional resource for completing necessary work in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Staff recommended approval of the agreement to allow the City to utilize ECG-enrolled contractors when needed.

Council Member Fox made a motion to approve the Electric Cities of Georgia Contractor Agreement. Council Member Cordell seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

BID AWARD/PURCHASES

12. 1,000 kVA Pad-Mount Transformer Purchase Change

Mr. Storey stated at the September 17, 2026, Council meeting, Council approved the purchase of two 1,000 KVA pad-mounted transformers from Utah Transformer Broker for a total amount of $56,220.00. When the order was placed, the vendor provided an invoice that included an additional $51,000.00 in shipping costs that were not included in the original quote.

Due to the additional shipping cost, the Electric Department did not proceed with the purchase and rebid the transformers.

The Electric Department requests that Council rescind September 17, 2026, approval to purchase the transformers from Utah Transformer Broker for $56,220.00 and approve the purchase of two 1,000 KVA pad-mount transformers from Solomon Power Solutions for a total amount of $69,000, including shipping. This purchase was not included in the current budget; however, the expense will be funded through the Electric fund.

Council Member Fox made a motion to rescind the September 17, 2026, approval to purchase the transformers from Utah Transformer Broker and approve the purchase from Solomon Power Solutions. Council Member Hodge seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

13. Peregrine Technologies Annual Subscription

Terry Ellis, Deputy Police Chief, stated the Police Department is requesting approval to renew its annual subscription with Peregrine Technologies, a public safety data integration platform. Peregrine allows officers to search across multiple data sources through a single search, helping reduce staff time and expedite investigative processes.

The annual subscription cost is $82,500.00 and is a budgeted expense funded through the General Fund. Approval was recommended.

Council Member Hodge made a motion to approve the Peregrine Technologies Annual Subscription. Council Member Roth seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

14. Lion Fire Safety Trailer

Hagen Champion, Fire Chief, stated the Cartersville Fire Department is requesting approval to purchase a Lion Fire Safety Trailer to replace the department's 2004 Fire Safety House. The existing unit has served the Fire Department and the community well for many years; however, its age and design have created limitations in the types of fire safety education, training, and drills we are able to provide to local industries, the school system, and our citizens.

The Fire Department solicited bids from three vendors for a replacement unit:
· NAFECO: $315,000
· JHB Group: $274,653.50
· Mobile Concepts: $171,068

Although the Lion Fire Safety Trailer is the highest-priced option, it is the only proposal that provides an all-encompassing training unit capable of supporting fire safety education and training for all age groups, as well as a wide variety of training scenarios and drills. The other proposals do not provide an equivalent combination of props, capabilities, and specifications.

Additionally, the Lion unit will arrive fully equipped and ready for operation, eliminating the need for the Fire Department to purchase additional equipment and training props after the initial purchase. This provides the department with a single-source solution that can be utilized immediately upon delivery.

The new trailer will significantly expand the Fire Department's ability to provide fire prevention and life-safety education to children, adults, businesses, industries, schools, and the community while also providing valuable training opportunities for department personnel.

Based on the capabilities, included equipment, versatility, and long-term value of the unit, the Cartersville Fire Department respectfully requests approval to proceed with the purchase of the Lion Fire Safety Trailer at a cost of $315,000.

This is a budgeted item and was recommended for approval.

Council Member Fox made a motion to approve the Lion Fire Safety Trailer. Council Member Hodge seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

Council Member Fox made a motion to add two (2) items to the agenda. Council Member Cooley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

15. 3rd Quarter 2026 Motorola Radio Invoice

Freddy Morgan, Assistant City Manager, stated Bartow County has submitted the 3rd quarter 2026 invoice for the Motorola radio system used by our Police, Fire, FiberCom, Gas, Electric, Public Works and Recreation Departments. This is a budgeted item, and approval was recommended to pay the invoice in the amount of $43,213.05.

Council Member Fox made a motion to approve the 3rd Quarter 2026 Motorola Radio Invoice. Council Member Cooley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

16. Employee Benefit 2027 Renewal

Mr. Porta stated city staff met with OneDigital, the City's employee benefits broker, to review the employee benefits renewal for the 2027 plan year.

Anthem initially proposed a 29% renewal increase for the City's active employee medical coverage. Following a market review, Anthem provided a revised renewal of 13.7%. After evaluating available fully insured and self-insured options with One Digital, City staff recommend transitioning medical coverage to a self-insured model through Cigna, with an estimated increase of 8.29%.

Council Member Cordell made a motion to approve the Employee Benefit 2027 Renewal. Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

17. Retiree Medical Insurance 2027 Renewal

Mr. Porta stated City staff met with OneDigital, the City's employee benefits broker, to review the retiree medical plan renewals for 2027.

For post-65 retirees, City staff recommends changing the Medicare Advantage carrier from UnitedHealthcare to Humana. The current UnitedHealthcare monthly rate is $488.63. UnitedHealthcare proposed a 2027 renewal rate of $534.37, an increase of $45.74 per month, or approximately 9.36%. Humana proposed a monthly rate of $519.57, an increase of $30.94 over the current rate, or approximately 6.33%. The Humana proposal is $14.80 per member per month less than the UnitedHealthcare renewal with minimum change to the benefit plan. City staff recommends approval of the 2027 retiree benefit renewals and carrier changes as outlined above.

Council Member Cordell made a motion to approve the Retiree Medical Insurance 2027 Renewal. Council Member Cooley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

18. Dog Park Pavilion

Mr. Archer Jr. stated the Parks and Recreation Department requests approval to construct a 24' x 24' pavilion at the new dog park at Etowah Drive/Pine Grove Rd.

Three bids were solicited, and two proposals were received:
- B.E.A.M. Remodeling & Handyman Services – $13,000.00
- Pennant Construction Management – $60,641.93

Parks and Recreation recommended approval of the proposal from B.E.A.M. Remodeling & Handyman Services in the amount of $13,000.00.

Council Member Roth made a motion to approve the Dog Park Pavilion. Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

RESOLUTION

19. Resolution – Acceptance of Summer Hill Complex

Mr. Porta stated the Etowah Area Consolidated Housing Authority approved a resolution on September 23, 2026, authorizing the transfer of the Summer Hill Complex to the City of Cartersville, pending HUD approval.

The proposed transfer is also subject to a mutual agreement regarding the operation, naming, and use of the facilities.

Staff recommended approval of the resolution authorizing acceptance of the Summer Hill Complex, pending HUD approval, and authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the necessary agreements and documents to complete the transfer.

Council Member Cooley made a motion to approve the Resolution – Acceptance of Summer Hill Complex. Council Member Fox seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

Mayor Pro-Tem Cooley and Mayor Santini stated this would be a seamless change, and no changes would be made to the existing programs that are held at this location.

Reference Resolution 42-26

ADDED ITEMS

20. Center Road Moratorium

Mr. Lovell stated on August 8, 2025, Mayor and Council approved a Resolution for a Moratorium on Center Road for a study to be done of this corridor. Bartow County also issued a moratorium, and the Bartow County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) staff were to hire a consultant to study this corridor. Unfortunately, an RFP was not issued until late Spring 2026, and a firm was just hired in September 2026 to conduct the study with the expected date for the report in February 2027.

Due to the delay in getting a consultant on board for this study of the traffic concerns along the Center Road Corridor, Commissioner Taylor has approved extending Bartow County's moratorium until February 2027. This Resolution will extend the moratorium. Approval was recommended.

Council Member Fox made a motion to approve the Center Road Moratorium Extension. Council Member Roth seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

Reference Resolution 43-26

21. Main Street Road Closure – Reopening update

Mr. Lovell stated regarding the incident that occurred that a letter had been sent to GDOT regarding the Main Street Road Closure. In hopes of reopening Main Street, Mr. Lovell asked Mayor and Council to approve the Mayor, City Manager and City Clerk to sign any documents from GDOT to authorize the reopening of Main Street.

Council Member Fox made a motion to approve the Mayor, City Manager, and City Clerk to sign any documents required to authorize the reopening of Main Street. Council Member Roth seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Vote: 5-0

MONTHLY FINANCIAL STATEMENT

22. August 2026 Financial Report

Diana DeSanto, Finance Department Director, reviewed the August 2026 Financial Report and compared the numbers to August 2025.

ADJOURNMENT

With no other business to discuss, Council Member Hodge made a motion to adjourn.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:31 PM.

/s/ _____
Matthew J. Santini
Mayor

ATTEST:
/s/ _____
Julia Drake
City Clerk