



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Monday, March 03, 2025 at 6:00 PM
Council Chambers and YouTube Livestream

Website: www.forestparkga.gov
YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3c28p0A>
Phone Number: (404) 366.4720

FOREST PARK CITY HALL
745 Forest Parkway
Forest Park, GA 30297

The Honorable Mayor Angelyne Butler, MPA

The Honorable Kimberly James
The Honorable Hector Gutierrez

The Honorable Latresa Akins-Wells
The Honorable Allan Mears

Ricky L. Clark Jr, City Manager
Randi Rainey, City Clerk
Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney

APPROVED MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME: Mayor Butler called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL - CITY CLERK: A quorum was established.

Attendee's Name	Title	Absent	Present
Angelyne Butler, MPA	Mayor, At-Large		X
Kimberly James	Council Member, Ward 1		X
Hector Gutierrez	Council Member, Ward 3		X
Latresa Akins-Wells	Council Member, Ward 4		X
Allan Mears	Council Member, Ward 5		X

Pauline Warrior, Chief of Staff; Joshua Cox, IT Director; Rodney Virgil, Level 2 Support Engineer; Javon Lloyd, PIO; John Wiggins, Finance Director; Jeremi Patterson, Deputy Finance; Shalonda Brown, HR Director; Nicole Dozier, PDC Director; Marsellas Williams, Economic Development Director; Dorthy Roper-Jackson, Municipal Court Director; Tarik Maxwell, Rec and Leisure Director; Alton Matthews, Public Works Director; Nigel Whatley, Public Works Deputy Director; Latosha Clemons, Fire Chief; David Halcome Deputy Fire Chief; Brandon Criss, Police Chief, Derry Walker, Code Compliance Director, and Danielle Matricardi, City Attorney.

ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS:

It was moved to amend the agenda to remove Item Number 2-Council Discussion and Approval of a one (1) year extension for On-Call Electrical Contractor Services and Item Number 3-Council Discussion and Approval to enter into a contract for the On-Call Real Estate Appraisals and Right of Way Acquisition Consultant Services from the consent agenda.

The motion was made by Councilmember James and seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA WITH ANY ADDITIONS / DELETIONS:

It was moved to approve the agenda.

The motion was made by Councilmember James and seconded by Councilmember Gutierrez.

Voting Yea: Councilmember James, Councilmember Gutierrez, Councilmember Akins-Wells, Councilmember Mears

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **Council Discussion and Approval of a Fee Proposal to provide ROM (Rough Order of Magnitude) cost estimate for Starr Park-Executive Offices- there was no discussion on this item.**

Background/History:

Croft Architects has completed contract documents and technical specifications for the Starr Park Renovations. In a prior bid, the city received only one bid that exceeded the project budget. Staff determined that it would be in the City's best interest to revise the drawings and obtain the assistance of a cost-estimating firm to prepare a cost estimate for each of the buildings/structures and for the three separate sites of the project before rebidding.

2. **Council Discussion and Approval of a one (1) year extension for On-Call Electrical Contractor Services– Procurement/Public Works Departments-REMOVED FROM AGENDA**

Background/History:

The Department of Public Works is requesting approval to extend the contractual agreements with the following three electrical contractor companies for an additional 1 year:

- Bell Electric Services LLC
- Brown Electrical Services, LLC
- MBEC Atlanta, Inc.

These contractors were originally selected following a request for qualifications conducted by the Department of Procurement and have been providing on-call electrical services as needed. They supplement Public Works by performing specific task orders and supporting the department's operations.

The City will continue to engage these contractors on an on-call basis, either through competitive bids for specific projects or by rotating assignments across various City sites, including for the City's boards. This 1-year extension will allow the City to maintain a consistent pool of qualified, reliable electrical contractors to ensure uninterrupted services.

Funding: Costs will be incurred by the user Department as needed.

3. **Council Discussion and Approval to enter into a contract for the On-Call Real Estate Appraisals and Right of Way Acquisition Consultant Services –Public Works/Procurement Departments-REMOVED FROM AGENDA**

Background/History:

The Department of Public Works requests the City Council's approval of a contractual agreement with Colliers Engineering and Design, Inc.

In March of 2022, the Procurement Department conducted a Request for Proposals (RFP) for consultant

services to assist the City in acquiring property and easements for various projects, including those funded by the Federal and State governments. For federally and state-funded projects, compliance with

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Real Estate Division are required.

Colliers Engineering and Design, Inc. provides essential services to ensure the City complies with these regulations. This contract extension is necessary to continue the City's sidewalk projects and maintain uninterrupted services.

Funding: Cost is to be determined on a project-by-project basis

NEW BUSINESS:

4. Council Discussion and Approval – ELEVATE Workforce Development Initiative– Executive Office

Background/History:

The Executive Office seeks approval to implement an initiative to empower displaced, unemployed, and underemployed individuals within the City by providing them with the necessary skills, resources, and comprehensive support systems to achieve sustainable employment, financial independence, and reintegration into society. The initiative, also known as ELEVATE, would foster dignity and economic stability through strategic community partnerships and holistic support systems.

City Manager Mr. Clark Jr.- introduced the Elevate program, a workforce development initiative to transition individuals from homelessness to stability through partnerships with organizations like the Atlanta Center for Self-Sufficiency, Calvary Refuge Center, and educational institutions. Mr. Clark Jr. noted that the program will initially support 20-25 participants by providing mental health assistance, financial literacy, job training, and employment opportunities, to equip residents with the skills needed for jobs in the community. Mr. Clark Jr. also noted that the Atlanta Center for Self-Sufficiency will oversee the program, offering their expertise at no cost to Forest Park. Mr. Clark Jr. invited Ms. Dana Inman, CEO of the Atlanta Center for Self-Sufficiency, to further elaborate on the program's implementation.

Ms. Dana Inman, representative of the Atlanta Center for Self-Sufficiency- expressed gratitude for the opportunity to address the governing body and thanked Mr. Clark and the mayor for their invitation. She explained that the Atlanta Center for Self-Sufficiency is a workforce development agency dedicated to assisting financially vulnerable individuals, including those who are unemployed, underemployed, unhoused, returning from incarceration, or living in subsidized housing. Ms. Inman noted that their mission is to help these individuals secure stable employment by providing career assessments, vocational training, soft skills development, and connections to job opportunities that offer livable wages. Ms. Inman conveyed enthusiasm for partnering with Calvary Refuge and other collaborators within the Elevate initiative to bring these essential services to the residents of Forest Park.

Mr. Clark Jr.- highlighted the partnership with Clayton County Public Schools, emphasizing the recognition of many parents within the district who are either staying in extended-stay facilities or are unhoused. The Elevate program aims to create a clear pathway for collaboration with the school district, addressing workforce needs and supporting families in crisis. Mr. Clark Jr. expressed that he hoped the program would also serve as a marketing tool for Calvary Refuge, a local organization currently utilizing only 50 of its 160-plus rooms, to expand its capacity and better serve the unhoused population. Additionally, participants in the program will have access to vocational training at Clayton State University and Atlanta Technical College, offering exposure to higher education and life-

changing opportunities for skill development and personal growth.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember James- expressed her excitement and inquired about the timeframe it would take to complete the program. Mr. Clark Jr. explained that the Elevate program will be highly individualized to address the unique needs of each participant. He noted that some individuals, particularly those recently falling into hard times, may progress through the program more quickly, while others with more complex challenges may require ongoing support and assistance. Mr. Clark Jr. noted that the program is designed to be flexible, ensuring all participants receive the tailored resources and guidance needed to achieve stability and success. This personalized approach aims to maximize the initiative's effectiveness for everyone involved.

Councilmember Gutierrez- expressed excitement and gratitude for the Elevate program, thanking the city manager and the team for their dedication. He emphasized the importance of community-driven initiatives, particularly for individuals who have fallen on hard times or face challenges such as reentry after incarceration. Councilmember Gutierrez highlighted that homelessness and housing insecurity are not isolated to the City of Forest Park but are regional issues affecting surrounding areas like Jonesboro, Riverdale, and beyond. Councilmember Gutierrez hoped the program would serve as a model for other municipalities and the county to adopt, fostering broader support and collaboration. Councilmember Gutierrez took pride in Forest Park's leadership in providing opportunities and second chances, underscoring the belief that many individuals need a chance to succeed.

Councilmember Akins-Wells- expressed deep gratitude to everyone present, particularly thanking Mr. Clark Jr. for spearheading the Elevate program and bringing it before the governing body. Councilmember Akins-Wells acknowledged the critical need for such an initiative in the community, emphasizing that governments and communities often overlook vulnerable populations. Councilmember Akins-Wells expressed gratitude for Forest Park's commitment to addressing these needs and ensuring that no one is forgotten, closing with heartfelt thanks to all involved for their efforts and dedication.

Councilmember Mears- thanked everyone for being present and sharing insights from their background in skilled trades. Councilmember Mears highlighted a critical workforce need, citing statistics that project a shortage of around 30,000 skilled trade workers by 2030. Councilmember Mears emphasized the importance of initiatives like Elevate, which can help refresh the skills of individuals with prior trade experience or introduce new participants to skilled trades. He appreciated the program's potential to address this gap and create valuable opportunities for retraining and new trade career pathways, underscoring its significance for the community's future. Mr. Clark Jr. elaborated on the three core goals of the Elevate program, aligning with Councilmember Mears' emphasis on skilled trades and workforce development. Mr. Clark Jr. noted that the first goal is to provide job readiness training and professional skills development, ensuring participants have the tools to succeed in the workforce. The second goal is building strong collaborations with local partners to facilitate meaningful job placements, leveraging community resources to create opportunities. The third goal aims to mitigate employment barriers by offering holistic support services, including transportation assistance through MARTA passes and ride-share programs like Uber and Lyft, as well as addressing housing instability and mental health challenges. Mr. Clark Jr. emphasized the importance of these components in helping individuals secure jobs, maintain stability, and thrive in their personal and professional lives.

Councilmember Gutierrez- expressed a strong interest in revisiting the conversation about addressing the limited availability of rooms at Calvary Refuge Center. He suggested mobilizing

community volunteers to help with upgrades or repairs, emphasizing that many residents are eager to give back meaningfully. Councilmember Gutierrez also highlighted the potential for volunteer-driven projects, such as facility improvements, to significantly impact the center's capacity to serve the unhoused population. They encouraged the partners to identify specific needs so the community could unite to bring the facility up to par, demonstrating a commitment to collaborative problem-solving and community engagement.

Mr. Boutin representing Calvary Refuge Center- expressed gratitude for the opportunity to address the governing body and outlined several pressing needs for the facility. Mr. Boutin noted that these included deferred maintenance, such as roof repairs to address leaks and the need for a new commercial stove. He then emphasized the center's commitment to helping individuals transition from homelessness to stable living situations, providing them with the necessary tools and support. Mr. Boutin acknowledged the challenges faced by their population, including mental health issues and individuals who have fallen on hard times. Mr. Boutin noted that while outside fundraising and volunteer efforts are being explored to address facility improvements, he reaffirmed their dedication to moving forward with the Elevate initiative, stressing the importance of community support in helping their residents reintegrate into society.

Councilmember Gutierrez- requested a detailed wish list from Calvary Refuge Center, including specific facility needs and desired resources. He suggested that having this information in writing would help identify community partners and streamline efforts to address the center's requirements. By clearly outlining the needs, such as roof repairs, a commercial stove, or other resources, the community and potential partners could better align their support to make a meaningful impact. Councilmember Gutierrez emphasized the importance of collaboration and ensuring that the center has the tools necessary to continue its vital work in helping individuals transition from homelessness to stability.

5. **Council Discussion and Approval to enter into a contract with Aeras MEP for On-Call HVAC Equipment Repair, Installation, and Maintenance Services (Annual Contract)-**
Procurement/Public Works Departments

Background/History:

Since 1997, the City has utilized the SWC vendor ABM for monthly maintenance services for the HVAC systems in City-owned facilities. Over the years, facilities have been added, and HVAC equipment has aged, causing frequent repairs. 22 pieces of equipment over 20 years old were replaced in 2022, and 2 locations were added - the Public Safety bldg. and the 696 Community Center. Public Works decided to expand the services to include repairs and new installations for HVAC units and allow for the addition and/or deletion of City-owned facilities.

On-Call HVAC Equipment Repair, Installation, and Maintenance Services (Annual Contract): Request for Bid No. 2024-RFB-004 for use by the Public Works-Facilities Department. It provides citywide equipment repairs, installations, and maintenance services for HVAC units in various city-owned buildings. Three (3) bids were received. Request award approval to the lowest, responsive, and responsible bidder: Aeras MEP, 217 Fulton Street, Peachtree City, GA 30269

Estimated Monthly Amount: \$10,322.00 General Operating – Various departments

Mrs. Adams, Procurement Manager- explained that a formal request for bids was issued to secure a new contract for maintenance and repair services. As previously noted by the mayor, the existing contract covered only monthly maintenance for existing units. Mrs. Adams noted that the department expanded the scope of the new contract to include repairs as needed and the installation of new equipment when necessary, particularly as older equipment becomes obsolete. Mrs. Adams said that after evaluating three

(3) bids and conducting reference checks, the lowest responsive and responsible bidder was identified as Areas MEP of Peachtree City. Mrs. Adams recommended moving forward with Areas MEP to fulfill the expanded service requirements.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember Gutierrez- inquired about the nature of the RFPs (Request for Proposals), asking whether they were newly issued or updated to previous ones. Mr. Clark Jr. clarified that ABM has been the city's long-standing vendor, but all bids now go through a centralized procurement system called OpenGov. Mr. Clark Jr. confirmed that the process is transparent and accessible through this platform. In response to Councilmember Gutierrez's inquiry, the city manager mentioned plans to host a symposium on March 21 to engage potential vendors and community partners interested in doing business with the city. This event aims to provide information and foster collaboration, ensuring the procurement process is inclusive and well-communicated. Mr. Clark Jr. reiterated that all bids and procurement activities are managed through OpenGov, maintaining accountability and accessibility.

Councilmember Gutierrez- requested that staff notify the governing body when RFPs (Requests for Proposals) are issued rather than requiring councilmembers to constantly monitor OpenGov. Mr. Clark Jr. acknowledged Councilmember Gutierrez's request and confirmed that an internal process has been developed to ensure councilmembers are notified when bids are issued.

Councilmember Akins-Wells- expressed support for the process of opening up opportunities for more vendors to do business with the city but raised concerns about the high costs associated with outsourcing certain services. Councilmember Akins-Wells suggested exploring the possibility of hiring qualified employees to handle tasks like electrical work, similar to how the city previously had in-house staff for such roles. Councilmember Wells emphasized that bringing these services in-house could save the city significantly over time, reducing reliance on external contracts. Mr. Clark Jr. agreed with Councilmember Akins-Wells' suggestion to bring services in-house where feasible. He noted that an employee is currently working toward obtaining certification to perform electrical work but is not yet qualified. Mr. Clark Jr. noted that for smaller tasks, such as HVAC maintenance, the city's Public Works department handles minimal issues, while the contracted company, ABM, primarily services the units to defer larger maintenance needs. Public Works Director Mr. Matthews noted that staff handles all building maintenance in-house and uses the on-call for the bigger issues. Mr. Clark Jr. acknowledged Councilmember Akins-Wells' suggestion to bring in-house additional services, such as pest control, noting that these tasks often require only simple certifications. He emphasized the city's preference for handling minor services internally, where feasible, and supporting employees in obtaining the necessary certifications. However, Mr. Clark Jr. also highlighted the importance of balancing liability concerns, ensuring that the city does not take undue risk. By investing in employee training and certification, the city aims to reduce reliance on external contractors for smaller tasks, ultimately saving costs and improving efficiency. He expressed gratitude for Councilmember Wells' input and reiterated his commitment to exploring in-house solutions where appropriate.

6. **Council Discussion and Approval to enter into a contract with Hatley Plans, LLC for Impact Fee Study-** Procurement/Planning & Development Department

Background/History:

The City would like to consider the option of implementing impact fees. The City has not conducted an Impact Fee study in over ten years. The study will categorize key changes such as updated fee levels, expanded scope of the usage of funds, and improved transparency and administration for the following city departments: Parks, Recreation, and Open Space; Roads, Streets and Bridges; Planning &

Development; Police, Fire EMS; and any other services which the consultant believes qualify for impact fee consideration.

Impact Fee Study: Request for Proposal No. 2024-RFP-008 for use by the Planning & Development Department. It provides a comprehensive Impact Fee study consistent with the Georgia Development

Impact Fee Act of 1990. Two (2) proposals were received. After evaluating technical and cost proposals, the Evaluation Committee recommends an award to the highest-scoring proposer: Hatley Plans, LLC, 3175 Madison Ave. NE., Brookhaven, GA 30319, for a total of \$96,500.00.

Mrs. Adam, Procurement Manager- explained that a formal Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued and extended by an additional week to allow more firms to participate. A market survey was also conducted to engage additional vendors, but it revealed limited availability of organizations with the required expertise. Mrs. Adams noted that only two (2) submissions were received when the proposal period closed. After evaluation, Hadley Plans achieved the highest score and was selected as the vendor for the project. Mrs. Adams explained that this process underscores the city's efforts to ensure transparency and competitiveness in procurement, even when the pool of qualified vendors is small.

Mr. Clark Jr- added that while the impact fees are being considered due to the community's development potential, the study associated with the project will not move forward immediately, even if approved. He noted that the study, which has the lowest bid of \$95,000, will be deferred until the new budget cycle begins in July of this year. Mr. Clark Jr. explained that this delay is for budgeting purposes, ensuring that the city allocates funds appropriately and aligns the project with its financial planning. Mr. Clark Jr. emphasized the importance of strategic timing to manage costs effectively while still addressing the community's needs.

7. **Council Discussion to approve Case # CUP-2025-01, Conditional Use Permit to combine the existing W.A. Fountain Elementary School and existing Unidos Language School to construct a new expanded elementary school located within the Single-Family Residential District (RS)-** Planning and Community Development Department

Background/History:

The applicant for 5215 West St. is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to expand the existing W.A. Fountain Elementary School in response to projected community growth. The project will partially demolish and expand to accommodate a combined population of W.A. Fountain Elementary School and Unidos Language School. The land use and zoning will remain unchanged, and improvements will include a new driveway, better circulation, parking, landscaping, and a new stormwater system.

Although the property has operated as a school for many years, a CUP is required due to the scope of the work. The project will not negatively impact public services and will enhance safety and circulation. It will also involve work within a floodplain and stream buffer, with necessary

erosion control and permits. Post-construction stormwater management will improve runoff and water quality. The design respects the site's history by preserving significant features and maintaining vegetative areas, with exterior features chosen to blend with the area's character.

On Thursday, February 20, 2025, the City of Forest Park Planning Commission voted to approve the conditional use permit request. If the Mayor and Council approve the proposed Conditional Use Permit Request, The applicant will be able to move forward with their partial demolition plans and begin the combination and construction of the new expanded elementary school within the **Single-Family Residential District (RS)**.

Ms. Dozier, PCD Director- highlighted that the project involves consolidating two schools into a new facility equipped with advanced technology and modern amenities to better serve students. She

assured the governing body that staff is available to answer any questions regarding the project, emphasizing its potential to enhance educational opportunities and infrastructure for the community. Ms. Dozier stated that this recommendation reflects the planning commission's support for the initiative and alignment with the city's goals for improving educational facilities.

Comments/Discussion from Governing Body:

Councilmember James- expressed excitement about the project but raised concerns regarding a nearby property, possibly a church, where Ms. Ford had previously complained about kudzu overgrowth and stormwater-related issues. Councilmember James questioned whether the new project would address and potentially eliminate these problems, particularly through the planned cuts or drainage improvements. Councilmember James emphasized the importance of ensuring that the project benefits the school and resolves longstanding issues for the surrounding community. They sought clarification on whether the design plans include measures to mitigate kudzu overgrowth and improve stormwater management in the area. Mr. Clark Jr recalled that the kudzu overgrowth issue, which Ms. Ford frequently mentioned, had been partially addressed.

Councilmember Gutierrez- expressed excitement about the project but sought clarification on the future of the existing building, given that the school is relocating to Fountain and expanding there. He questioned what plans are in place for the current building once the transition is complete, emphasizing the need to ensure that the property is repurposed or maintained effectively. Ms. Dozier acknowledged that the plans for the current building were not specified in the proposal and offered to inquire further to provide Councilmember Gutierrez with more detailed information. Mr. Clark Jr. said he does not think a decision has been made. Councilmember James noted that the building will become an early learning center. Deputy Superintendent Dr. Simpson expressed that there are plans for an early learning center.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: (When an Executive Session is required, one will be called for the following issues: Personnel, Litigation, or Real Estate). **There was no executive session.**

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Butler adjourned the meeting at 6:33 p.m.

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

