

CITY OF EDEN, N.C.

The regular meeting of the City Council, City of Eden, was held on Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 308 E. Stadium Drive. Those present for the meeting were as follows:

Mayor:	Neville Hall
Council Members:	Darryl Carter
	Gerald Ellis
	Jerry Epps
	Angela Hampton
	Phillip Hunnicutt
	Bernie Moore
	Bruce Nooe
City Manager:	Jon Mendenhall
City Clerk:	Deanna Hunt
City Attorney:	Erin Gilley
News Media:	Robin Sawyers, Rockingham Update
	Mike Moore, Mike Moore Media

MEETING CONVENED:

Mayor Hall called the regular meeting of the Eden City Council to order and welcomed those in attendance. Pastor Jerry Epps of First Church of the Living God gave an invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Interim Fire Chief Todd Harden.

PROCLAMATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS:

a. Presentation: Rock-ATOP Apprenticeship Program

Career Counselor Lydia Craddock of Rockingham County Schools gave a presentation on the Rock-ATOP Apprenticeship Program. She stated that workforce development in Rockingham County Schools had been in existence for a long time with internships being available in each of the traditional high schools along with dual enrollments with Rockingham Community College (RCC). She introduced Jennifer Lester, apprenticeship coordinator. The internships within the public schools allowed senior students to enter into the worksite for one block of their day for one or two semesters in order to gain work experience. The program had also allowed dual enrollment with RCC to prepare students for college by taking college courses during their junior and senior years. Many of the courses offered were trades and workforce development courses, but they could also take transfer credit courses. Around five years ago, staff noticed a lack, which was how the apprenticeship program came to be. It was marketed as a promising career with a college degree and zero debt. The apprenticeship program had become the flagship of the workforce development program as it allowed students to prepare for work after high school. They could begin the program in the 11th and 12th grades and continue with it after graduation. Within four to five years, they could complete an associate's degree in advanced manufacturing without any cost to the student while working for various companies. The educational partner in the program was RCC, managed by Ms. Lester. The program was growing strong and in its fourth year. In September of 2020, the program had three cohorts with 35 apprentices employed in seven different companies working towards their associate's degree in advanced manufacturing. A fourth cohort was being added that day allowing them to offer pre-apprenticeship positions to 10 additional students who would be receiving notification later in the week. Despite challenges faced with COVID-19 that caused some students and companies to postpone their involvement in the program and some apprentices to be reassigned, the program was growing. Examples of companies who were willing to be part of the program were ABCO Automation, Culp Specialty Fabrics, Amcor Specialty Cartons, Bridgestone, Henniges Automotive, Pine Hall Brick, Dorada Foods, Machine Specialties Inc. and the maintenance department within Rockingham County Schools. Last year, an Eden company joined the program before COVID-19 interfered, so staff was hopeful to regain an Eden company in the next cycle. In general, the program connected students with associate's degree training with employers and career employment in high demand fields at no cost to the student or company. The program was funded through money given by the General Assembly and taxpayer dollars.

Ms. Craddock directed Council's attention to a brochure they were given that displayed a list of questions students were required to ask of themselves before agreeing to apprenticeship. The initial apprenticeship program did not meet all of the needs of its students and companies, so additional apprenticeships were being developed in the top three areas. The current area was advanced manufacturing, but they were also developing them in the medical/CAN to nursing area, educational/teaching area and the criminal justice area. Staff was considering developing an apprenticeship in the electrical area, but all additional apprentices involved several obstacles to cross as well as agreements with compatible companies.

Ms. Craddock said the Rock-ATOP Career Express program was geared towards students who desired to go straight to work in a career. There were companies that needed students ready to go to work in a trained career that did not necessarily require an associate's degree, such as HVAC and plumbing. Those particular fields required licenses and were therefore, completed on a one-to-one basis as there were not many companies seeking that type of apprenticeship. There was a company in Eden that had taken on a plumbing apprentice. While those licenses did not go towards an associate's degree, they would go towards a credential.

Ms. Craddock said the Rock-ATOP Works program currently being developed involved an entry level worker that knew how to work and students that were ready to step into adulthood with a full-time permanent job that would provide money to pay rent, utilities and the necessities to start a life. The event would be on April 21 with companies conducting virtual interviews with seniors desiring to go directly into the workforce in June. The program would connect graduating high school seniors with soft skills training and local full-time career employment after high school. The goal was for each student to find the career path that was right for them. For some students, that would require a four-year college education but the apprenticeship programs allowed staff to work with a two-year degree, which sometimes would lead to a four-year degree. Many companies involved in the program offered tuition reimbursements so if the student working for them decided they wanted to go further, they had not accepted a dead-end job. Morehead High School's Career Development Coordinator Christy Hensley would be working with the school's seniors who were searching for fulltime jobs at the April 21 event.

Ms. Craddock said the Rock-ATOP Connects program would connect sophomores and juniors with local employers who had summer learning and employment opportunities that could help foster growth in and exposure to skilled trades in specific areas of career interest. By providing young students with jobs that were connected to their career goals, it could provide them with a head start in that particular field. The program was looking for employers who were seeking young employees to potentially work during the evenings or weekends in hands-on trades such as construction. She asked Council to please refer any potential prospects to the program coordinators. The goal was to give students an opportunity to be exposed to a wider range of career options before they embarked on a journey of possibly borrowing money to pursue a career.

Ms. Craddock said a staff member would consult with each seventh grader after spring break to assist them with focusing on career areas. While they were aware that students at that age might not know what they wanted to be when they became an adult, it was simply a tactic to help provide them with guidance. For example, it was a measure of helping them figure out if they would rather work indoors or outdoors, with people or with numbers. Staff performed a more in-depth survey with eighth graders in order to help those students take advantage of participating in the high school that offered the academy closest to their career choice. Students were then asked to retake the survey in the ninth grade as things changed. The programs required collaboration, including the lead partner of RCC as they provided the after high school educational piece that the students needed. Other collaborative components included Rockingham County's Board of Commissioners, the County's schools, the Rockingham County Economic Development Department, all of the chambers within the county, the business community and the Citizens for Economic Development. The apprenticeship program was open to any eligible eleventh or twelfth grader within the county, based on grades, including those in public schools, charter schools, homeschools, private schools or virtual schools. The County's Economic Development Department acted as the program's fiscal agent. The Rock-ATOP program was a separate entity in regards to receiving separate grant funds for some of what they did. Even

though the school system was a member of the chambers, Rock-ATOP was a separate member as well. Ms. Craddock acknowledged how supportive the chambers were in getting their messages out. She stated the program was growing and they were striving to make sure they were able to connect all students with what the community needed in terms of economic development. She welcomed everyone to follow the program on social media through Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube. She also advised the coordinators could be reached through email or via their website and would be happy to speak with anyone interested. She added they would like to see the Eden community become more involved and hoped to get some Eden companies engaged with an apprenticeship.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked why some employers did not participate more aggressively as the number of participating employers was relatively small.

Ms. Craddock said some employers did not need associate's degree level work and some companies already had their own system set up where they took entry level employees and progressed them through the company with tuition reimbursement. In other cases, it was simply a new concept where some companies were more hesitant and slower to give it a try. When companies signed up as an apprenticeship site, the U.S. Department of Labor would waive the age requirement of 18 for people entering work in those particular facilities; however, for a few companies, their insurance companies would not waive that requirement. Therefore, they could not pick up those students until after they had graduated high school. The program now had four successful years of operation, so she hoped to see more interest in the near future.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked what the City could do to support the program.

Ms. Craddock said she would like to have all of Council receive their monthly newsletter so they could be aware of what was happening in the program. If the City had an interest in maintenance, she said it might be beneficial to take a maintenance apprentice, just like the County school system did. She also encouraged the City to tag or link the program on its social media accounts. She stated the City was not unresponsive to the program, but simply did not believe the program had found the right component to meet the City's needs. Because several companies did not need the associate's level apprenticeship, she felt they would have more interest now that the Rock-ATOP Works program was available as it would be more accommodating to their needs. She also believed there would be some Eden companies participating in the April 21 event. She encouraged the City to help spread the word. She also expressed interest in speaking to any civic groups about the programs. While the concept was relatively new in the community, it was not a new concept as the programs were based off a model that had been used in Europe for centuries.

Mayor Hall said it was a great program. He recalled in his traveling with Economic Development Director Mike Dougherty that it appeared the concern for job selection places was the workforce. He thanked Ms. Craddock for the presentation.

b. Recognition: Scout Troop #553

Mayor Hall called on Coordinator of Tourism and Special Events Cindy Adams.

Ms. Adams welcomed Scout Troup #553 led by Scout Master Jim Downs. She stated the City was familiar with the troop as they set up a booth at RiverFest each year and it was very much appreciated. She thanked them for coming to learn about how local government worked and for what they, and other Scouts, did in the community because it made a big difference. Many completed their Eagle Scout projects throughout the City, such as the bluebird houses along the Smith River Greenway, the impressive Veteran's Memorial at Freedom Park and the current Clearwater Park project along Bridge Street. The Clearwater Park would include a beautiful view of the river and stone pylon that once stood with the covered bridge, a nice trail, picnic tables and benches. She thanked them for everything they did and would do in the future. She also invited them to partake in the City's river activities and gave them some tokens of appreciation on behalf of the City.

Mr. Downs said another Eagle Scout project that was completed in the City was the bridge along the trail that connected Central Elementary School to Freedom Park.

Ms. Adams said that was an awesome bridge. She invited the troop and public to the Citywide Litter Sweep on April 10 that was in conjunction with the statewide sweep. Participants would meet at Grogan Park at 9:30 a.m. and would be sent to designated areas within the City to clean up before joining back at noon for a hotdog lunch. All participants would have their name put into a drawing for the chance to win a prize. She encouraged all churches, families, clubs and neighborhoods to participate as litter was not only an issue in Eden, but also statewide and nationwide. April 10 was the kickoff for a year-long campaign against littering and there would be more to come in regards to cleanups and what could be done as a community to make the City more beautiful and clean as the goal was to make Eden the best it could be.

Mayor Hall thanked the troop for everything they did and for being present at the meeting.

SET MEETING AGENDA:

Mayor Hall requested to move item 12(j) "Approval of a comprehensive plan Request for Qualifications recommendation" from Consent Agenda to New Business as item 10(c); item 12(k) "Approval to adopt revised Economic Development Policy ED-1 for water connection fee waivers" from Consent Agenda to New Business as item 10(d); item 12(l) "Approval to adopt Economic Development Policy ED-2 for permit fee waiving in municipal service districts" from Consent Agenda to New Business as item 10(e); item 12(m) "Approval for Strategic Planning Commission funding for the Spray Mural Project" from Consent Agenda to New Business as item 10(f); and item 12(n) "Approval to purchase two fire apparatuses to replace aged and irreparable surplus Ladder 1 and Engine 6" from Consent Agenda to New Business as item 10(g). He also removed item 12(i) "Approval to declare items surplus: wastewater pumps and mag meter" from Consent Agenda, noting it would be discussed the next month. A motion was made by Council Member Moore to set the meeting agenda as amended. Council Member Carter seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- a. (1) Consideration of a zoning map amendment request and adoption of an ordinance to rezone 804 N. Van Buren Road from Residential-12 to Neighborhood Mixed Use.
- (2) Pursuant to NCGS 166A-19.24(e), consideration of a resolution adopting a statement of consistency regarding the proposed map amendment request to rezone 804 N. Van Buren Road from Residential-12 to Neighborhood Mixed Use.

Mayor Hall declared the public hearing open and called on Director of Planning and Inspections Kelly Stultz.

Ms. Stultz stated that the City had been through a rehaul of its land use regulations over the last year and it had been previously mentioned that some map and text amendments would need to be made as a result. The amendment in question was due to a majority of the parcel extending a good distance and being more residential in nature. The portion being considered for rezoning was fronting on Highway 14 and was part of a business property. Therefore, City staff asked Council to rezone it to Neighborhood Mixed Use.

Mayor Hall read a message from Eddie Jones, who lived at 240 Pratt Rd. in Eden and was the owner of J-Mart located at 904 Virginia St. He was unable to attend the meeting but was in favor of the rezoning.

Council Member Hampton asked Ms. Stultz to explain Neighborhood Mixed Use.

Ms. Stultz said that Neighborhood Mixed Use was a district that was designed for business uses that backed up to residences and was a transitional district that would allow some residential uses. It was a very low stress type district as the impacts were minimal and therefore, had been applied to many areas. The City no longer had the Business General district, which a lot of business uses were in; however, that district proved to be more liberal than the City's industrial zones in some respects. Neighborhood Mixed Use was a district that had been applied everywhere.

Mayor Hall said the property in question was also known to many citizens as Herman's Gift Shop. As there was no further discussion, Mayor Hall declared the public hearing closed.

A motion was made by Council Member Epps to approve and adopt a zoning map amendment to rezone 804 N. Van Buren Road from Residential-12 to Neighborhood Mixed Use and to adopt a resolution of a statement of consistency regarding the proposed map amendment request. Council Member Ellis seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried.

REQUESTS AND PETITIONS OF CITIZENS:

Mayor Hall asked City Attorney Erin Gilley to read the City's policy regarding public comments.

Kathy Yeatts, 308 Walter Chambers St., said there were three issues that she and her neighbors wanted to speak about. The neighbors in attendance with her were Margaret McGehee, 316 Walter Chambers St., and Stephanie Knight, 312 Walter Chambers St.. Bobby Dement, 324 Walter Chamber St., was also a neighbor but had to work and was unable to attend the meeting. Ms. Yeatts stated that the first issue was in regards to the land beside her home, known to the residents of the street as "the swamp". She said it had been a terrible wet place for several years. The residents had talked to several people about the issue, including Council, Rockingham County Health Department and City Manager Jon Mendenhall. Mr. Mendenhall had said he would take care of it if he could. Mr. Mendenhall had sent out Chief Inspector Bob Vincent who said the area was a spring and the City would have to take some samples in order to determine if it was septic or sewer. The residents were wondering if the City could put a blind ditch in that location to drain it off because in the summertime, it would grow up waist high, creating an environmental issue with snakes, mice and mosquitos. Secondly, there was a sewer issue on that street that the residents had talked to the City about on several different occasions. City crews had checked the manholes in the past and discovered that some of them were full. After the second ice storm, City crews determined the manhole next to Ms. Yeatts was full and had someone come out within minutes to suction it out, which she was appreciative of. However, when they went to Ms. Knight's home, they advised her they were going to blow it up the street instead of suctioning it out. By doing so, she was left with a mess in her bathtub and Ms. Knight was left with things in her front yard from the cleanout pipe that she had never dealt with before. The City told Ms. Yeatts that her issue was on the City's side but Ms. Knight's issue was all on her side. However, Dyer's Plumbing came out and advised it was all on the City's side. She asked if anything could be done about those issues because they felt they were being passed around to different departments.

Ms. Knight said when the residents were having problems with the pipe, the City's crews would come out and suction the manhole which would stop the sewer from going out into the main line. This was causing Ms. Knight to continuously have Dyer's Plumbing come out to clean the line. She felt like something had stopped water from flowing down the road like it should. She brought pictures with her showing where she would take the cap off of the cleanout in order to prevent it from coming into her house, ultimately causing it to come into her front yard.

Council Member Ellis asked how long they had been experiencing the issues.

Ms. Knight said it seemed to be at its worst when the City received a lot of rain because it would fill up the main line very quickly.

Ms. Yeatts said when she would flush the toilet, it would gurgle up into the bathtub.

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Council Member Ellis asked how long each resident had lived at their home.

Ms. Yeatts said six years.

Ms. McGehee said 30 years.

Ms. Knight said one year.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked how long the problem had been going on.

Ms. Knight said mainly the past three to four months but it was getting worse. Recently, there had been more noticeable noises, such as gurgling and knocking.

Council Member Ellis asked Ms. McGehee if she had experienced any problems prior to the past six months.

Ms. McGehee made some comments in reference to the ditches in front of her house.

Ms. Yeatts said they were aware of places in town that had a new sewer line installed and the residents were wondering if that would solve their problem since they had been told it was on the City's side. She said the City crews came out in 2020 to clean out the ditches, in which she stated they did an incomplete job in front of her house, making it worse. She said the crews tried to clean out the ditches on the right side of the road but they did not leave enough room for Mr. Dement to put his mailbox back up and he had to secure it with cinderblocks. She said the crews never finished the ditches, leaving hers, Ms. McGehee's and the apartment located at 302 Walter Chambers Street incomplete, not allowing water to flow.

Mayor Hall said the City had a great Water and Sewer Department and he believed they would do what was right to fix it. The City's goal was to provide the best service it could. If there were any further issues, he instructed Ms. Yeatts to contact Mr. Mendenhall and he would make sure the City did what it legally could; however, if it was on private property, that would be the property owner's responsibility. If it was on the City's side, the City would make every effort to correct it.

April Blackstock, 9636 NC Hwy 700, Ruffin, and owner of property on The Boulevard and Harmon Drive in Eden, addressed Council with some items of concern for The Boulevard. She began by thanking Council for the contributions that had been given to The Boulevard thus far. She also thanked Main Street Manager Randy Hunt for his time, effort, support and consistent communication and knowledge that he had given to The Boulevard. It was the second time the merchants were coming before Council to ask for sidewalk repairs. They were informed at a different meeting that the City desired to create bump-outs. However, the merchants did not feel that would be a good thing due to the fact they currently had minimum parking and the bump-outs could possibly eliminate even more parking when their goal was to establish greater parking. Secondly, the merchants were asking for decorative lighting that would beautify the street while also addressing safety concerns. In addition, the merchants asked for some progression on the lot that was currently vacant so the area could be utilized by the community or the merchants, such as a pocket park. Lastly, the merchants asked for code enforcement regulations to help recruit new investors and potential new businesses. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, The Boulevard had stayed active with its annual Halloween parade for the children in the community and the Thanksgiving giveaway in which they gave to the homeless and elderly in the community. They also had an old-fashioned Christmas lighting and stroll, and she thanked Council for attending.

Mayor Hall thanked the merchants on The Boulevard for continuing to fight to make it a better place to have a business and grow the community. It was appreciated.

Council Member Carter asked Ms. Blackstock how many times the sidewalk issue had been brought to the City's attention.

Ms. Blackstock said the sidewalk issue had come up at all of their meetings with City personnel. She said they had previously had a few meetings with Mr. Mendenhall and Ms. Stultz in which it had been discussed, in addition to all conversations held with City staff. The sidewalks had not been repaired in decades and certain areas were trip hazards.

Council Member Carter asked if there had been any resolution at the meetings in regards to how to fix the sidewalks.

Ms. Stultz said there had been a number of discussions held in regards to the sidewalks and she was aware that Municipal Services Director Paul Dishmon and his crews had been to the area to perform assessments on the sidewalks and planned to do needed repair work. Staff had also asked for money in the upcoming budget that would include The Boulevard.

Council Member Epps asked if the sidewalk could have some type of grinding done to the trip hazards to smooth them out.

Ms. Stultz said she was certain Mr. Dishmon and his staff had identified those specific areas and those would be the first areas to be addressed. She stated there was also some issues related to curbing.

Ms. Blackstock said there was also some granite and old stone embedded in the sidewalks.

Council Member Ellis asked if there were issues with lighting at nighttime on The Boulevard.

Ms. Blackstock replied yes due to the fact the lights were higher than the awnings. The merchants were asking for the decorative lighting which was a little lower and could give off more light under or near the awnings. Businesses on The Boulevard hosted events and church services that were sometimes held at nighttime in which people were exiting during the dark hours when it was dim with the current lighting.

Council Member Ellis asked if there were other merchants and property owners present at the meeting.

Ms. Blackstock answered yes and asked them to stand up in the audience.

Mayor Hall thanked the merchants again for what they were doing on The Boulevard as it was making a difference.

Becky Shomali, 191 Fireman Club Road and owner of Headlines at 130 The Boulevard, invited Council to ride through The Boulevard to give it a glance. The merchants and property owners had hosted several functions in the area and were planning upcoming events. As a group, they had money in the bank to assist with what the City could help them with. They had noticed how things were picking up in the downtown Leaksville area and how the Draper downtown area was being worked on, but all of The Boulevard merchants and property owners had deep feelings about The Boulevard area and desired to bring it back. She thanked Council for noticing their efforts.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- a. Consideration to adopt an ordinance for the demolition of a structure at 617 Spring St. under the City's Human Habitation Ordinance.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Stultz.

Ms. Stultz said the property was a code enforcement action that had been discussed on a number of occasions. She realized that when demolition items came before Council, it might not be understood how long the City had actually been working on the parcel. The first local code actions issued on the 617 Spring

Street property took place in 2001. She displayed pictures taken by Mr. Vincent that same day that showcased how no repairs had been made. She stated that no inspections had been requested or information received on the property. She felt it was in the neighborhood's best interest to demolish the structure.

Mayor Hall pointed out that the City had placed the board over the window that was shown in the pictures, indicating there had not been an effort made to board it up by the property owners.

Council Member Epps asked what the cost was going to be to demolish the property.

Ms. Stultz said the cost was going to be \$4,700.

Council Member Epps said he went by the property on Friday and it looked the same as displayed in the pictures.

Council Member Ellis said the issue had been discussed a few months prior in regards to giving the property owners the opportunity to improve the home and felt that Council had given them enough time. He added that the Planning and Inspections Department worked hard on the case and that the area in Spray deserved to look good.

Council Member Epps said Council had given the property owners the best opportunity to take care of the needed repairs and had hoped they would have done something by now but it did not appear they would.

Ms. Stultz said by the time the demolition items reached Council, City staff had already done everything possible to save the property. The minimum housing code and the non-residential maintenance code, which were now part of the City's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), were specifically designed to protect the housing and building stock in the community.

Council Member Ellis asked if anyone ever questioned about buying and fixing up the houses.

Ms. Stultz said yes but that the City could not authorize it if it was not property the City owned. If it were property owned by the City, they would make such a recommendation to Council.

Council Member Ellis asked if City staff provided interested parties with owner information in those situations.

Ms. Stultz said they provided anything the interested parties wanted to know if they were able to do so as it was in everyone's best interest for the properties to be repaired when possible.

Mayor Hall said when the City had been dealing with a property for 20 years and Council made an agreement with the property owners to work with them if they made a good faith effort to make needed repairs and they did not adhere to their portion of the agreement, the City had no choice but to enforce action or no one would respect the letters received from the City regarding code enforcement actions.

A motion was made by Council Member Moore to adopt an ordinance for the demolition of a structure at 617 Spring St. under the City's Human Habitation Ordinance. Council Member Nooe seconded the motion. Council Members Moore, Nooe, Hampton, Epps, Carter and Ellis voted in favor of the motion. Council Member Hunnicutt voted in opposition of the motion. The motion carried.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ZONING
ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF EDEN

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL of the City of Eden, North Carolina, that, after having fully complied with all legal requirements, including publication of notice of a public hearing and the holding of a public hearing relative thereto, the Eden Unified Development Ordinance of the City of Eden is hereby amended as follows:

Section 1 - Change from Residential-12 to Neighborhood Mixed Use the following tract:

BEGINNING at a point, said point being located at the intersection of the northern edge of the right-of-way of Aiken Road (formerly Aiken Summit Road) and the eastern edge of the right-of-way of N.C. Highway No. 14; thence with the eastern edge of the right-of-way of N.C. Highway No. 14, North 15° 45' 43" West 194.54 feet to a point in the eastern edge of the right-of-way of N.C. Highway No. 14; thence continuing with the eastern edge of the right-of-way of Highway No. 14, North 15° 56' 07" West 87.17 feet to a railroad spike located in the eastern edge of the right-of-way of N.C. Highway No. 14; thence continuing with the eastern edge of the right-of-way of N.C. Highway No. 14, North 18° 24' 12" West 163.36 feet to an existing iron stake in the eastern edge of the right-of-way of N.C. Highway No. 14; thence South 25° 35' 55" East (passing to and through an existing iron stake at 168.92 feet) 346.32 feet to a point; thence North 70° 25' 21" East 12.50 feet to a drill hole located in the western edge of the right-of-way of Virginia Avenue; thence continuing with the western edge of the right-of-way of Virginia Avenue, South 19° 36' 40" East, 50 feet to a railroad spike located in the western edge of the right-of-way of Virginia Avenue; thence South 70° 25' 21" West 55.20 feet to an existing iron stake; thence South 19° 36' 40" East 50.00 feet to a nail; thence with the northern edge of the right-of-way of Aiken Road, South 70° 32' 30" West 15.53 feet to a point at the intersection of the northern edge of the right-of-way of Aiken Road and the eastern edge of the right-of-way of N.C. Highway No. 14, THE POINT AND PLACE OF BEGINNING, as shown on map entitled "Survey Plat for Herbert G. Hopper and W. H. McBride", dated April 20, 1984. Deed Reference: Book 958, page 712.

The property being rezoned is commonly known as 804 N. Van Buren Road and identified by the Rockingham County Tax Dept. as PIN 7070-08-99-0656 and Parcel Number 104913.

Section 2 - The Official Zoning Map of the City of Eden is hereby amended to conform with this Ordinance.

APPROVED, ADOPTED AND EFFECTIVE, this 16th day of March, 2021.

CITY OF EDEN

BY: Neville A. Hall, Mayor

ATTEST: Deanna Hunt, City Clerk

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A STATEMENT OF CONSISTENCY REGARDING
A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE CITY OF EDEN ZONING ORDINANCE
CASE NUMBER Z-21-01 MAP AMENDMENT

WHEREAS, pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes Chapter 160D-605, prior to adoption or rejection of any zoning amendment, the Eden City Council is required to adopt a statement as to whether the amendment is consistent with the Land Development Plan and why the City Council considers the action taken to be reasonable and in the public interest;

WHEREAS, on August 21, 2007, the Eden City Council adopted the Land Development Plan. Plans such as the City of Eden Land Development Plan are not designed to be static but are meant to reflect the City of Eden's needs, plans for future development and to remain in compliance with North Carolina State Law and the City of Eden's ordinances;

WHEREAS, the City of Eden Planning Board initiated an action to rezone property at 804 N. Van Buren Rd. from Residential-12 to Neighborhood Mixed Use;

WHEREAS, on January 26, 2021, the City of Eden Planning Board voted to recommend to the Eden City Council that the rezoning request be approved.

STATEMENT OF NEED:

The subject property was previously zoned BG and was rezoned to R12 in 2020 as part of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The Land Development Plan indicates that the highest and best use of this property is Traditional Neighborhood. The NMX district is intended to provide pedestrian-scaled, higher density residential housing and opportunities for limited scaled commercial and office activities. The principal uses of land in the area are for commercial uses; therefore the zoning change to NMX is in keeping with the plan.

STATEMENT OF CONSISTENCY:

The goals of the 2007 City of Eden Land Development Plan, as amended, are to make smart growth decisions by carefully managing growth to:

- A. Strategically locate new land development in the most appropriate places.
- B. Maintain and enhance Eden's community character and heritage.
- C. Use infrastructure investments as effectively as possible.
- D. Attract new jobs and a more diverse tax base.
- E. Protect natural, cultural and historic resources and open space as we grow.

WHEREAS, the Eden City Council has considered the written recommendation of the City of Eden Planning Board and has held a public hearing on the proposed amendment, and the Council desires to adopt a statement describing why the adoption of the proposed amendment is consistent with the City of Eden Land Development Plan, as amended, and why the City Council considers the proposed amendment to be reasonable and in the public interest;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE EDEN CITY COUNCIL THAT:

- 1. The Eden City Council finds that the proposed amendment to the City of Eden Unified Development Ordinance is consistent with the goals and recommendations of the 2007 City of Eden Land Development Plan, as amended.
- 2. At no time are land use regulations or plans of the City of Eden or any jurisdiction in the State of North Carolina permitted to be in violation of the North Carolina General Statutes.
- 3. Therefore, based upon the foregoing information, the amendment to the Zoning Ordinance is reasonable and in the public's best interest.

Approved and adopted and effective this 16th day of March, 2021.

CITY OF EDEN

BY: Neville A. Hall, Mayor

ATTEST: Deanna Hunt, City Clerk

- b. Consideration of Boards and Commissions appointments.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Stultz.

Ms. Stultz said there were some appointments still needed for the Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Commission.

Council Member Moore appointed Michael Yannotti to the Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Commission for Ward 1.

Council Member Nooe appointed Will Nance to the Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Commission for Ward 2.

Council Member Epps appointed Charlene Poteat to the Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Commission for Ward 4.

Mr. Mendenhall appointed Dr. John Dabbs for the two-year term and Ben Curtis for the one-year term to the Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Commission.

Council Member Nooe appointed Mike Ayers to the Tree Board for Ward 2.

A motion was made by Council Member Ellis to approve appointments of Michael Yannotti, Will Nance, Charlene Poteat, John Dabbs and Ben Curtis to the Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Commission, and Mike Ayers to the Tree Board. Council Member Hampton seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Consideration of an affirmative maintenance community development program.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Stultz.

Ms. Stultz called Council's attention to an illustration that the Planning and Inspections Department's intern assisted with. It displayed how community development was more than just planning, inspections or local code enforcements. It was a combination of all the things listed on the design, such as grants, greenways, recreation, multi-family development and UDO, some of what had been previously mentioned by various Council. It was everything used to find a way to provide the best quality community the City could for its residents and economic development. Ms. Stultz quoted Will Lambe, associate director of the Community and Economic Development Program with UNC School of Government: "In small towns, community development is economic development." In a memo written by Ms. Stultz, she outlined all of the things that were components of community development, such as housing, water and sewer grants. The City had applied for an Urgent Repair Grant, which would be citywide. Recent development successes, attributable to the efforts of Mr. Dougherty and Mr. Hunt, were being showcased through the City. There had been renovations of the former Central Hotel, the recruitment of Nestle Purina, Freedom Park Splash Pad and other park additions, streetscapes, sidewalks, greenery, benches, murals and art in downtown areas, business growth and maintenance. There had been vast improvements in some of the City's downtown areas with more improvements to come to The Boulevard in regards to its sidewalks, decorative lighting with respect to the awnings, urban plantings and creation of a public space in the upcoming fiscal year. Housing rehabilitation was another area of community development. Ms. Stultz showed pictures from 1960 of a piece of property located at 1308 Front Street, which happened to be the house she had lived in. At that time, it had asbestos siding on it. A picture from 2016 showed the property's poor condition compared to the picture from present time showcasing the remodeled home, which happened to be for sale at an asking price of \$140,000. The value of the home in January 2020 was slightly over \$15,000, of which the City collected \$95 in taxes in 2020. However, the City was likely to collect \$800 in taxes from the property if its tax value was anywhere close to the asking price. It proved saving structures and finding a way to keep them from being demolished, while also protecting the neighborhood, was one of the City's highest callings. The City had a Neighborhood Revitalization Community Development Block Grant that she hoped would take off soon, as it had been delayed due to COVID-19. The intention from the City's view was not only for there to be aesthetic improvements, but to also ensure that structures met minimum housing habitability standards. As part of the grant, Ms. Stultz hoped to put the sidewalk back on Front Street with the hopes that the Tree Board would plant some street trees. The grant was in the amount of \$750,000. The City had also applied for an Urgent Repair Grant in the amount of \$200,000, which would be citywide and she hoped to hear of its status by the end of April. Staff was able to complete the application for the grant in-house. A maximum of \$10,000 would be granted at a time and while it might not go but so far, every little bit would help in aiding the City's citizens to make necessary improvements. The City had approximately \$900,000 in COVID-19 CDBG funds to help citizens pay for their utilities, rents and mortgages due to impacts resulting from the pandemic. Staff was in constant communication with the grant representative from the State in regards to why the City had not been able to have its initial meeting as it was anxious to begin helping its citizens. The City's partner in the grant was United Way. There had been quite a bit of new quality multi-housing built at market rates or aimed towards low and moderate income housing that provided people with an alternative to apartment living. As a result, landlords who did not maintain their properties were finding themselves having to maintain them because their renters now had different choices, which not only raised the City's tax base in the community, but also helped its citizens.

Ms. Stultz stated the City had also been involved in pedestrian planning. The City's fairly decent sidewalk system had been in place for many years and there was a Greenway Master Plan, resulting in many trails being built due to the hard work of the Parks and Recreation Department and Ms. Adams. Staff was currently in the midst of a pedestrian planning process, which involved funds received from N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT). The City was partnering with NCDOT on a sidewalk that was

scheduled to be bid out in the spring that would go along Stadium Drive. Ms. Stultz asked Council to fund a comprehensive plan that would be the first one ever completed by the City. A comprehensive plan meant every aspect of local government and City life for the citizens, business community and industries would be combined into one plan so that any department within the City would know if its operations were focusing on what the Planning Board and Council had chosen to be the community's standards for what was next. In her opinion, the UDO was the biggest step taken toward modernizing and standardizing development in the community. Affirmative maintenance involved much more than code enforcements and would become a key tool for community development. Affirmative maintenance meant that sometimes the City would make a conscious decision to repair properties to abate violations before demolition was necessary. If Council decided to allow City staff to make such decisions, the City could still collect money it had spent the same way it could have previously collected it, which was to place it on the tax bill and foreclose on the property. Ms. Stultz showed a picture of a building in the downtown area of Draper that had a bad roof problem that was allowing water to penetrate the neighboring business, causing them damage. An estimate of \$7,600 would allow both buildings to be saved and still have something to sell when it was over if the public's funds were not returned. That would be innovative for the City and something the City should try. One of the things other communities had done was to create a review board other than the City Council that would receive special training to ensure they were experts in deciding such issues. While Ms. Stultz felt it would be beneficial to fall on the Planning Board, Mr. Mendenhall felt it would be better to be part of the Community Appearance Commission's responsibilities as they had expertise in that area. Therefore, she asked for Council to consider allowing City staff to rewrite some regulations and make amendments in order to bring that to fruition.

Ms. Stultz stated that land banking, as previously mentioned by Council Member Hunnicutt, would create situations where properties were brought back to the active tax rolls. The state did not have specific statutes for land banking, but other communities in N.C. had established programs whereby they had a land bank. As shown in the map displayed by Ms. Stultz, there were several vacant lots that the City already owned. If Council were to create an official land banking organization and transfer the properties to the land bank, they could then be marketed and put back on the public rolls, providing a tax base for them again in order to serve the community. Vacant lots could quit being mowed by the City, allowing properties to be redeveloped.

Council Member Ellis asked what other cities had established a land bank.

Ms. Stultz there were probably 50, but named Martinsville and Danville, Va., and Winston-Salem. The bigger cities tended to have land banks while some smaller cities in the eastern part of the state also had some. She stated it was not a novel program to try. She had read copies of what other cities had done and felt it was something Ms. Gilley should review in order for the City to attempt to proceed with it as well. It did not involve only vacant lots, but was also eligible towards other properties that the City might have control over or desired to get involved with. As the properties were sold, the money would funnel back into the land bank. From there, the City would have the ability to retain funds in order to make additional purchases or other programs.

Council Member Hunnicutt added that one of the big advantages of a land bank was it had the legal authority to remove liens from properties so the developers would not have to worry about tax or other liens against it, allowing the opportunity for a quick and efficient flip.

Ms. Stultz said the City could find ways to do that. Another way to intervene between the community, derelict properties or loss of assets, was historic preservation. She had been involved with the City's Historic Preservation Commission since 1990. The Central Hotel building had been part of the society's discussions for many years, including in her first meeting with them, and it was finally seeing a revival. If the City could encourage developers to seek to create historic districts, individual design guidelines would be prepared for such. The City could have a demolition by neglect ordinance, which would give the City the opportunity to step in before something got to the point of needing to be demolished in order to provide protection for the other property owners, which would encourage protection of historic assets. As of present,

the City's Historic Preservation Commission had not met in over a year due to COVID-19, but prior to that, the commission had only dealt with local landmarks. They had never attempted a district but Ms. Stultz hoped Council would give her the ability to instruct them to attempt such.

Mayor Hall asked Ms. Stultz if City staff had talked to any developers interested in repairing 617 Spring Street and how that would fall into the affirmative maintenance community development program if it had been something the City could have acquired.

Ms. Stultz said City staff could have. If it had been decided 15 years ago that 617 Spring Street was worth saving and the property owners were not doing it, the City could have made an offer for it if the owners were willing to sell, had there been money set aside for such projects, which would have allowed the City to own it until selling it to someone who would redevelop it. Through the affirmative maintenance program, staff could be asking Council for authorization to repair a house instead of demolish it. The property owners could in turn reimburse the City or the City could sell it and move forward. The only time she could recall where the City had done something similar was to a house near Monument of Faith Church where the City had been cutting the grass for a long time while the house remained vacant but in decent shape. The City foreclosed on it for the money owed on mowing and Shane Hensley purchased it, turning it into a good quality rental house, proving such projects could be successful.

Council Member Epps said those outcomes would help the City with tearing down houses.

Ms. Stultz agreed. She stated the last thing she wanted to do was see the City tear down buildings in the community as it could possibly cost \$10,000 to tear it down while the lot might only be worth \$2,500; therefore, the City would have lost \$7,500.

Council Member Epps said that was evident on The Boulevard.

Ms. Stultz agreed. She stated that particular building on The Boulevard was going to cost \$156,000 to make it into what Mr. Vincent called a vanilla shell and \$146,000 to demolish it. The City ended up getting the \$10,000 back. The City did not necessarily lose money because there were instances where the City's failure to take care of problems in neighborhoods only created bigger problems in the neighborhoods. Demolition should always be the last resort. The Community Appearance Commission had the ordinance and statute-given right to have plans reviewed and comments made on any type of project that the City or any other government agency within its jurisdiction undertook. That was something the commission had not been doing in spite of being encouraged to do so and therefore, she requested Council require the commission to be the ambassadors that would start looking at such things and make comments in order to help the City. By ordinance and statute, the commission was responsible for making recommendations to Council about issues it deemed important. The commission was instrumental in the original adoption of the housing code. The next steps in community development were putting the City's affirmative maintenance in motion, completing the comprehensive plan, looking at new ways to install trails and river walks that focused on the City's rivers and restoring and rehabilitating buildings in the community, both residential and commercial.

Council Member Hunnicutt said it appeared that the next step would be a steering committee with Mr. Mendenhall, Ms. Stultz and some Council to talk about the program. Ms. Stultz touched on some really big areas of the what-ifs and he commended her for taking it on. The land bank was something he thought would be an opportunity for the City and there was a lot of work to be done, such as who the land bank was. He suggested obtaining input from the commissions mentioned as well.

Ms. Stultz said she and Mr. Mendenhall needed to know if there was any interest from Council in regards to a land bank before she researched the possibility of the City establishing a land bank and before Ms. Gilley spent time researching if it was legal. Rather than waiting until the City had to tear down the building at 144 N. Fieldcrest Road, it would be beneficial to know if the City could consider repairing the roof instead or if City staff could make simple repairs to other properties as initial complaints were received. If

Council was interested in that type of proactive program, it was her recommendation that the City proceed with it. She asked Council if they felt it was the right direction to move towards.

Council Member Epps said he thought it was a good idea to always save instead of tear down.

Mayor Hall asked if it would come before Council if a project was identified within the development program and it was determined that a repair needed to be made.

Ms. Stultz replied that it would come before Council just like demolitions did unless Council decided for it to be presented elsewhere.

Council Member Ellis asked if additional people would need to be hired in order to conduct the program.

Ms. Stultz said there would be no more time allotted of her staff to repair a roof than it would be to request bids for demolition.

Council Member Moore said he was under the assumption such issues would be the responsibility of the Community Appearance Commission.

Ms. Stultz said she had not asked for additional staff in the upcoming fiscal year, but could not promise that she would not ask for additional personnel in the future, such as a planner or some other type of office position. However, what she had proposed in terms of the affirmative maintenance community development program did not require additional personnel; it would simply make the department differently occupied.

Mayor Hall asked if Ms. Stultz was just needing to know if Council supported the forward-looking program.

Ms. Stultz answered yes.

Council Member Hunnicutt made a motion for Mr. Mendenhall and Ms. Stultz to work together to develop a format of how to assess and move forward with the discussed opportunity, which he assumed would include input from multiple sources determined by staff. He wanted them to get underway with it in some type of formal manner.

Mayor Hall wanted to clarify that Council Member Hunnicutt was making a motion in support of the program.

Council Member agreed and said in support of what was described as community development.

Mr. Mendenhall said administration saw the program as a partnership and it was not going to be a City-driven idea; rather, it was going to be a partnership with developers as the City did not want to own the houses. The City would want to partner with people for the houses and commercial buildings. When considering all of the successes to date, the City was a supporter of the private industries and individuals, which was the way the City was going to proceed moving forward.

Council Member Ellis asked if City staff was going to attempt to contact owners of rental properties in order to establish a partnership with them.

Mr. Mendenhall said he felt that would be a great idea as it could establish a partnership with a group of people ready to assist the City in the endeavor.

Ms. Stultz said the Strategic Planning Commission and Ms. Gilley had already initiated some research into seeing if there was anyone the City could attract to the area or if there were local people who were interested in flipping some houses.

Council Member Ellis seconded the motion made by Council Member Hunnicutt. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

- b. Consideration to proceed with accepting ASADRA and SRF funding awards for the Junction Pump Station rehab and Smith Siphon EPA projects.

This item was discussed at the end of New Business.

- c. Approval of a comprehensive plan Request for Qualifications Recommendation.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Stultz.

Ms. Stultz stated Council had approved at the February City Council meeting for her to complete a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) from companies willing to complete a comprehensive plan. The City was mandated by state statutes to have a comprehensive plan in place by July 1, 2022. City staff placed a RFQ onto the planners list serve and received four proposals. One proposal was from a company that Ms. Stultz had chosen not to work with for a number of reasons. Another proposal received was from a company that had never performed any work in Eden. A third proposal was from a company that had never performed work in N.C., but had given a great presentation when contacted about the UDO. The fourth proposal received was from Stewart, who completed the City's UDO and had also completed several comprehensive plans for small cities throughout N.C. Mayor Hall had previously asked Ms. Stultz if the recommended company was the low bidder to which she replied no; they were \$4,000 higher. In a professional service, the City did not have to choose the lowest bidder. When asking for a RFQ, one should look at qualifications before numbers. In addition, there was a need for small area plans to be completed in small areas around the community and while she did not want to bid that into the comprehensive plan, she hoped to work with the same company to get those completed at a later date. The company that had never conducted a comprehensive plan in Eden would ask \$30,000 each for the small area plans that she had outlined in the RFQ that may be asked of them to complete. Stewart was willing to complete the small area plans for \$8,000 each. City staff had worked with them before and knew they would provide a quality product. They had spent a good amount of time in Eden and were familiar with the community and its environs, making it extremely cost effective. She asked Council to allow her to spend contracted services money that was not spent on code enforcement issues in order to fund the plan from April through June. In the upcoming fiscal year's budget, Ms. Stultz asked for \$50,000 to be set aside to finish the comprehensive plan in 2022.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked Ms. Stultz how much money she was requesting.

Ms. Stultz said the total cost was \$80,000 and she hoped to be allowed to spend \$30,000 that was already included in her department's budget for the current fiscal year and the remaining \$50,000 in the next fiscal year. The other company proposed to complete the basic plan for \$76,000.

Council Member Hunnicutt said based on Stewart's fee schedule, they proposed total base services estimate of \$80,000. He asked Ms. Stultz if she anticipated any additional spend on the optional task components.

Ms. Stultz said she did not anticipate spending more than that amount but would come back before Council if something changed.

Mr. Mendenhall asked Ms. Stultz to discuss the small area plans and the intent for the smaller downtown areas.

Ms. Stultz said the small areas that the City hoped to establish plans for were The Boulevard, Leaksville, Draper and the Cook Block. Staff wanted to focus on those areas that were traditional commercial areas in order to find ways to promote development within them. They were aware of some parking and street issues on Monroe Street and other areas in Leaksville. They also knew that a wholesale plan needed to be completed for The Boulevard. One of the great things about The Boulevard was that it was an Eden street,

which meant Council could decide what sort of aesthetic improvements could be made to it. Staff hoped to find a way to obtain control of a piece of property where a building was previously taken down in order to create a public space in which a design would come from a small area plan for that area. Sidewalk improvements were going to be made regardless unless it was determined they could not be repaired. The same was planned for the Draper area as well. The small area plans would be \$8,000 to \$10,000 each and she assured Council that staff would not obtain more than two small area plans within the next year due to the work involved with the comprehensive plan and pedestrian plan. She asked for money to be set aside in the upcoming fiscal year's budget for the Planning Board to use towards small area plans.

Council Member Epps stated that if a roof was leaking, there would not be much time to wait.

Ms. Stultz agreed but said that was a different situation from the comprehensive plan. She did not intend to spend every dollar allotted at the present time, but hoped Council would approve Stewart's RFQ as they had a great reputation across N.C. and had done a great job for the City.

Council Member Moore agreed that Stewart did a great job on the UDO and asked if the same team of people working on the UDO would be the same to work on the comprehensive plan.

Ms. Stultz answered yes because that was part of her deal with Stewart that the City receive the same team that worked on the UDO that was already familiar with Eden.

A motion was made by Council Member Epps to approve Stewart's Request for Qualifications for the comprehensive plan. Council Member Hampton seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

A copy of the RFQ is available in the Clerk's office.

d. Approval to adopt revised Economic Development Policy ED-1 for water connection fee waivers.

Mayor Hall called on Mr. Dougherty.


Mr. Dougherty said the purpose of Economic Development Policy ED-1 was to promote economic development in underused and downtown blighted areas, specifically in municipal service districts (MSDs) in need of revitalization. The policy was for any residential development project located in an established MSD that would create one or more additional water accounts and would require one or more new water meters to be entitled to have the water connection fees associated with new water accounts waived. The water connection fees would include fees for meter and riser connections listed in the water and sewer rates section of the annual budget. The fee waiver would not exceed \$5,000 per project. All applicants for such fee waiver should submit a request to the Main Street Manager and would be subject to approval by the City Manager. The City had seen a proliferation of apartments in the Washington Street area over the past year and City staff hoped that would happen in the Draper area where possible. At the Council's budget retreat in January, it was mentioned that each person who lived downtown spent an average of \$37,000 per year, with a lot of that being spent in the downtown area. Currently, there was a new coffee shop, a restaurant on Monroe Street, a restaurant opening up at the former Ralph Barrow car lot location and a café opening up in Simply MK in the upcoming days. Downtown residents would frequent the restaurants and the coffee shop, spending their money and time downtown. One of the beliefs of the Main Street program was if a city could bring housing downtown, it would bring people downtown, making it safe by keeping people in the area. Having housing downtown would establish residents to the area all the time frequenting its businesses. Barry Carter purchased the former Jones Hardware building after it had been dormant for 12 years and he had the opportunity to put possibly one or two apartments in the upstairs space. There were other buildings located in the area with the same capacity. The policy was meant to encourage development.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked why the intent of the policy was limiting the incentive to the MSDs as that would eliminate eligibility on The Boulevard and in Spray.

Ms. Gilley said the thinking behind that was of a legal basis. In order to have the legal authority to differentiate fees between different citizens, the MSDs had been established and declared by Council as blighted, which gave the City the ability by statute to establish differentiating fees in those areas. That was why she had urged the incentive to be limited to the MSDs. The item was a revision to the original policy that was adopted in 2020, which was limited to the MSDs as well for that very reason. The MSDs were created in 2007 through a process that involved a public hearing and ordinance that declared those areas blighted.

Mr. Dougherty said City staff spoke to The Boulevard merchants and property owners a few months prior to explain that if they implemented a MSD in their area, the average cost to the property owner would be approximately \$32 a year, which equated to \$2.66 a month or \$0.08 a day. It was not an oppressive tax but it gave the property owners and merchants a consistent amount of money, roughly \$1,000, which could be a considerable amount of money when accumulated over time, like what was done in the Draper and Leaksville areas. It was also a way for the property owners and merchants to share with the City in revitalization of that area, which would make all three downtown areas equal. He was unsure as to if there was even an opportunity with the Cook Block to have housing in that area.

A motion was made by Council Member Epps to adopt revised Economic Development Policy ED-1 for water connection fee waivers. Council Member Moore seconded the motion. Council Members Moore, Nooe, Epps, Carter, Hunnicutt and Ellis voted in favor of the motion. Council Member Hampton voted in opposition of the motion. The motion carried.

 <p>ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL</p>		Subject: Economic Development Water Connection Fees Waiver	
		Number: ED-1	Revision: March 16, 2021
Supersedes: September 16, 2020		Neville Hall, Mayor	

ED - 1 Authority:

This policy was approved by the Eden City Council on September 15, 2020, and revised March 16, 2021.

ED - 1.1 Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to promote economic development in underused and blighted downtown areas, specifically the Municipal Service Districts that are in need of revitalization.

ED - 1.2 Policy:

Any residential development project located in an established Municipal Service District that would create one or more new additional water accounts and would require one or more new additional water meters would be entitled to have the water connection fees (fees for meter and riser connection listed in the Water and Sewer Rates section of the annual budget) associated with the new water accounts waived. Such fee waiver would not exceed \$5,000 per project. All applicants for such fee waiver shall submit a request to the Eden Main Street Manager and shall be subject to approval by the City Manager.

- e. Approval to adopt Economic Development Policy ED-2 for permit fee waiving in municipal service districts.

Mayor Hall called on Mr. Dougherty.

Mr. Dougherty said the purpose of Economic Development Policy ED-2 had the same purpose as that of Economic Development Policy ED-1. The policy was for any construction project located in an established MSD that satisfied certain criteria to have City of Eden building, mechanical, plumbing and electrical permit fees waived during the construction period. The project must primarily rehabilitate an existing structure and the total costs of the building improvements calculated pursuant to the N.C. Building Code must exceed \$100,000. It was designed to encourage a developer to invest in downtown areas as the City had seen unprecedented investment on Washington Street in the last 18 months.

Ms. Gilley said the policy was essentially the same thing that was previously voted on in 2019, but was not finalized as a policy. Therefore, Ms. Gilley wanted it set up as an Economic Development policy so the incentives were all located in one place.

Mayor Hall asked Shane Hensley, a property owner on The Boulevard, if he was aware of any intentions to establish a MSD on The Boulevard.

Mr. Hensley said he had previously talked about it with Mr. Mendenhall and Mr. Dougherty and while they had not come to an agreement, he was not opposed to it.

Mayor Hall said as a property owner himself on Washington Street, the property owners agreed that they would tax themselves, enabling them to keep the money and do what they wanted to for themselves. While it was not going to provide enough money to do everything desired, it did make the area part of the MSD, enabling them to be qualified for such incentives and others as well. Mayor Hall stated he had heard that Mr. Hensley was polling other property owners and he wanted him to know that it worked out well for Leaksville and Draper.

Mr. Hensley asked if Draper was a MSD.

Mayor Hall said yes and added that Reidsville had been paying into their MSD for at least 25 years, which had provided them with a significant tax and a lot of money, enabling them to make a lot of major improvements to their downtown area. Their board decided what to do with the money and as a result, they were able to fund a lot of their things. It was the property owners' money and they were using it to improve their streets and property value, which was the thinking behind creating a MSD to begin with.

Council Member Ellis asked Ms. Shomali if she knew about the MSD.

Ms. Shomali said she was under the impression that Ms. Gilley had recommended that just the two MSDs in Leaksville and Draper be involved.

Ms. Gilley said from a legal perspective, a MSD was the only way to differentiate fees between citizens. Being a MSD meant it was an area already declared as blighted, which was what gave such areas the ability to be eligible for such incentives.

Ms. Shomali questioned if The Boulevard would be eligible.

Ms. Gilley said The Boulevard had not declared itself as a MSD yet, but it could declare itself as one and then be eligible for such incentives.

Mr. Dougherty said if the property owners were in agreement, the City would have the property owners come in and City staff could tell them about the program, at which point it could then be voted on. If approved, a separate board would be set up to manage the money. Nothing would be spent unless there were minutes from a meeting. However, Mr. Dougherty said the MSD would have to be set up before the end of the current fiscal year, which was June 30. He stated that he and Mr. Hunt would be willing to present The Boulevard property owners with the same presentation they gave to the merchants a few weeks ago. It equated to a nominal amount of money. Gene Rees, a developer of multiple properties in Mount Airy, said

a MSD was the best tool one could use for downtown and had actually spoke in the past to the other downtown areas before they joined.


Ms. Shomali said as an owner, she would be very interested in hearing the pros and cons of the program.

Mr. Hensley asked if an agreement of 100 percent of the property owners was needed to establish the program.

Mr. Dougherty said no, only a majority was needed.

Mayor Hall thanked Mr. Hensley and said he felt Mr. Hensley would be a good person to head up a MSD for The Boulevard.

A motion was made by Council Member Carter to adopt Economic Development Policy ED-2 for permit fee waiving in municipal service districts. Council Member Ellis seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

 <p>ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL</p>		Subject: Permit Fee Waiving in municipal service districts	
		Number: ED-2	Revision:
Supersedes:		Neville Hall, Mayor	

ED - 2 Authority:

A motion was approved by the Eden City Council in March of 2019 to waive permit fees for projects exceeding \$100,000 in historic downtown areas. That action was revised by this policy enacted on March 16, 2021.

ED - 2.1 Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to promote residential and commercial development in underused and blighted historic and downtown areas, specifically the Municipal Service Districts that are in need of revitalization.

ED - 2.2 Policy:

Any construction project located in an established Municipal Service District that satisfies all the criteria below is eligible to have City of Eden building, mechanical, plumbing and electrical permit fees waived during the construction period.

Criteria for Eligibility:

- a. The project must be primarily rehabilitation of an existing structure
- b. The total costs of the building improvements calculated pursuant to the NC Building Code must exceed \$100,000.

All applicants for such fee waiver shall submit a request to the Eden Main Street Manager with sufficient proof of eligibility and shall be subject to approval by the City Manager.

f. Approval for Strategic Planning Commission funding for the Spray Mural Project.

Mayor Hall called on Ms. Adams.

Ms. Adams stated that Deedy Ramsey approached the City and offered the side of his building for a mural. After meeting with some artists and discussing some ideas, they settled on the vintage Spray license tag as shown in a picture presented at the meeting. The mural would look the same except for the number 77, which would be changed to NC to represent North Carolina and the year would be changed to 1951. The

artists were Brandon and Amy Hardison of Hardison Art Studio. The size would be between 13 and 15 feet long and between three and five feet tall. The price was \$1,800, which included the preparation of the wall, all needed supplies including a protective finish that allowed graffiti to be easily removed, and the actual painting itself. The project was presented to the Strategic Planning Commission (SPC) and voted on unanimously to be paid through the commission. It was presented to the Internal Technical Review Committee (iTRC) and was passed unanimously as well. She asked for permission to move forward with the project with funds coming out of the SPC's funding as the artists were ready to move forward with the project as soon as the weather was favorable.

Mayor Hall said he appreciated the intent to do something for the Cook Block area. The City had nice murals in Uptown Eden and Draper. Mayor Hall said it would be nice to have the Spray area included as well.

Ms. Adams said it was a very visible area where people could walk up and have a picture taken in front of it, which was something a lot of people were doing with murals. It was strategically placed very well.

Mayor Hall said he appreciated Mr. Ramsey for allowing the City to use his building for the mural.

A motion was made by Council Member Carter to approve Strategic Planning Commission funding for the Spray Mural Project. Council Member Hampton seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

- g. Approval to purchase two fire apparatuses to replace aged and irreparable surplus Ladder 1 and Engine 6.

Mayor Hall called on Interim Chief Harden. He stated this was something that had been talked about for quite some time, especially through budget retreat meetings and workshops, and therefore, he wanted to make sure it was under the New Business section to allow for discussion amongst Council.

Interim Chief Harden said at the January City Council meeting, he was asked to contact the Department of Insurance in regards to determining if the City needed to buy one or two fire trucks, in which they recommended the City purchase two fire trucks. The current configuration in place had Ladder 2 stationed at Station 4 and according to Senior Field Inspector Vernon Ward, the Fire Department was providing the City with 67 percent ladder coverage. If one ladder and one engine were purchased, the configuration would go back to one ladder truck at Station 1 and one ladder truck at Station 2 in Draper, which would give the City a 99 percent ladder coverage.

Council Member Carter said he was glad Mayor Hall pulled the item off of Consent Agenda as it was a large monetary item and he felt like the public should know why the City was spending that type of money. Council had previously discussed purchasing the number of fire trucks the Department of Insurance determined the City needed. When considering how the percentage coverages for the citizens and commercial structures within the City went from 67 percent to 99 percent, it left no question that the City needed two apparatuses. He felt it needed to be brought to the public's attention that the City was looking out for their protection and also for their money.

Mayor Hall said it was important to point out that what had happened with the City's firetrucks in the last eight months.

Interim Chief Harden said Ladder 1, which was the City's 102-foot aerial platform stationed at Station 1, was out of service. Engine 6 had a leaking tank and possibly some pump issues that were going to arise in the very near future. Engine 4 was taken out of service due to an incident where it could not be repaired.

Mayor Hall said Engine 4 was totaled due to an accident during maintenance, in which the City was able to collect some insurance money.

Council Member Carter said fire trucks were different from regular passenger vehicles because they were bought to last at least 10 to 15 years if not longer before having to be considered for replacement or rotation, which gave plenty of time to put a longevity program in place.

Interim Chief Harden said the City was in the perfect situation where it had four fire stations and it could buy a new fire truck every five years and after having served on the frontline for 20 years, it could then serve five years in the first reserve spot and then another five years in the second reserve spot, for a total of 30 years in service before being surplus.

Council Member Carter said it would be a long-term item.

Council Member Ellis said the City tried to save the ladder truck and had spent money on it over the past nine years, so it was not a case of just wanting to buy a new one. He asked Interim Chief Harden how long it would be before the City would have to consider purchasing another fire truck after the purchase of the two new fire trucks being discussed.

Interim Chief Harden said at least five to seven years.

Council Member Epps said the City owed it to its citizens of the new businesses as it had already signed off on an agreement to cover a new business in the case of a fire. A ladder truck would be needed at that particular establishment.

Council Member Ellis said the ladder truck was very large in the decision process with Purina. The percentage of coverage that the insurance department provided was a big factor when ensuring that Purina's \$450 million company was protected. The City had been in some predicaments in the past where it had several issues with EPA that it was able to overcome. The City had now overcome the current situation with the fire engines because there was nothing more important than getting to a location in the case of a fire. He recalled what he had once been told by a wise man: "You didn't start the fire, but you can put it out." The fire department was continually growing. Working with the rural departments around the City provided great coverage. In the long run, the new trucks were important.

Council Member Epps said a ladder truck would be needed for the new apartments along Washington Street and behind Walmart and wherever else there were two- and three-story buildings. When people moved into a place that had previously been vacant for years, there was bound to be a mistake and that was why the City needed to be prepared.

Council Member Carter said he hoped that Interim Chief Harden could put in place some type of plan that would prevent the City from being in the same predicament again. While the City did not have a choice with one of the fire trucks, he hoped the City would not be faced with having to buy two apparatuses at the same time in the future. He suggested a longevity plan for the vehicles that would keep Council informed as to where the City was instead of having to approach Council at the last minute with the need to purchase an apparatus.

Interim Chief Harden agreed.

Council Member Ellis asked if there was any chance to save the other ladder truck.

Interim Chief Harden said no.

Council Member Ellis said he wanted the citizens to know that the City had done everything it could to research the possibility of saving the other ladder truck.

Minutes of the March 16, 2021 meeting of the City Council, City of Eden:

Council Member Hunnicutt asked what the plan was in regards to salvaging the two fire trucks being rotated out.

Interim Chief Harden said they could be surplused and put up for sale.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked Mr. Mendenhall to confirm if the total amount for the two firetrucks was \$1,354,000 with a recommendation of 15-year financing.

Mr. Mendenhall said that was correct but there was a question of when the two units would be taken down. There could possibly be one consolidated loan for both units or two loans for two units depending on when the City actually took possession of them. Staff recommended the 15-year financing, which would come back before Council after competitive pricing was obtained. The City would be piggy-backing on the Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Program. The item on the current agenda was to vote on an approval to purchase two fire trucks. The other part of the item was to approve the surplus of Engine 6 and Ladder 1. The financing arrangements would come for review the following months.

Council Member Hunnicutt questioned if there were any grants available to try to fund or offset any of the cost.

Mr. Mendenhall said there was an Aid to Firefighters Grant but it was typically for rural type fire departments. There was not a lot of grant money available for fire trucks because they should be in a rotation plan as Council Member Carter suggested. Most every fire department had a rotation plan and there was not a component of grant funds to supplement what should already be in a rotation for the benefit of the residents.

Council Member Hunnicutt said there seemed to be the possibility of COVID funding being distributed to municipalities. He questioned if there would be any penalties for early pre-payment of loans should the City receive such funds and decide to pay on some of the fire truck debt.

Mr. Mendenhall said Finance Director Tammie McMichael had done an excellent job in the past negotiating such things. Typically, there was a way to prepay on loans but sometimes there was a penalty depending on the loan. In the given scenario, staff would evaluate what the higher interest rate was as there might be another loan the City had that would provide a better return. It would depend on the rate environment.

Ms. Gilley said she had seen a one percent penalty on similar type loans, which was typical, but sometimes there was not any penalty.

Council Member Ellis asked when the apparatuses would be coming off the production line.

Interim Chief Harden said May 1, the ladder would be taken to the Sutphen plant to be completely looked over since it was a demo to make sure it was corrected and would be ready for delivery around May 15.

Council Member Ellis asked Interim Chief Harden to explain how Sutphen sent their equipment out.

Interim Chief Harden said Sutphen built their demo trucks to be sent throughout the country as a model for speculation. The demo provided a savings of roughly \$20,000 to \$30,000 versus having a truck built by certain specs. If a demo truck was not preferred, the build time for a ladder truck would be between 15 and 18 months before completion. An engine would take approximately 12 to 15 months to be built. The benefits of the demo truck was that it was currently ready for purchase and would provide the City with a truck immediately as it was already in desperate need.

Council Member Moore asked if the demo truck came with a new warranty.

Interim Chief Harden said yes.

Council Member Ellis asked if the demo truck was a Sutphen like the City's other platform.

Interim Chief Harden said yes but the latest ladder truck was not a platform, it was a stick.

A motion was made by Council Member Moore to purchase two fire apparatuses to replace aged and irreparable surplus Ladder 1 and Engine 6. Council Member Carter seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

- b. Consideration to proceed with accepting ASADRA and SRF funding awards for the Junction Pump Station rehab and Smith Siphon EPA projects.

Mayor Hall called on Director of Public Utilities Terry Shelton.

Mr. Shelton said City staff was seeking Council's approval to accept the loan package for financing of the two remaining EPA remediation projects, the Junction Pump Station rehabilitation and the Smith River sewer siphon replacement along with any associated rehab of sewer lines and assets related to the siphon structure. In February, the City received word it had been funded through the Division of Water Infrastructure on the application submitted in September of 2020. The funding offered was a Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) loan for \$2,116,609 and a second loan offer through the Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act (ASADRA) in the amount of \$5,042,373. Both of the loans would be issued at a maximum interest rate of 0.1 percent. The City did not score high enough with its application to receive any of the limited amounts of principal forgiveness but did score high enough to qualify for a 50 percent limit on principal forgiveness; however, there was not any principal forgiveness left as it had already been given out. Therefore, they transferred that over and gave the City a point reduction in the interest rate. The loans would have been at a 1.1 percent interest rate but it was discounted to a tenth of a percent, which was basically the best deal they could get on a loan. In the upcoming fiscal year's budget, the City would retire several large loans, freeing up \$1,141,250 that it had been paying annually for outstanding water and sewer loans. The debt service released from the repayment of the current loans had been earmarked to pay the new debt for the EPA remediation projects and the SoVa water line project, leaving \$277,800 of available debt service that could be applied to the two new loans that totaled \$7,158,982. The debt service for the two loans over a 20-year span would be \$361,719. Mr. Shelton provided Council with an outline of the debt service management and annual payback on the EPA remediation plan and the SoVa water line project. The orange block at the top of the outline was the total debt service of \$1,141,250 that would be freed up. To the left side of the outline, there were five listed that itemized the costs of the projects and if there was any principal forgiveness. The Connect NC bond money for EPA projects and the SoVa water line had zero interest loans involved. In the yellow block, it listed the debt service for each of the projects, which added up to \$1,225,103. If the debt service that was scheduled to be retired was subtracted from the total, the difference would be \$83,853, signifying the shortfall between the old debt service and the new debt service. The new water and sewer services for Purina were estimated to be \$228,000 to \$238,000 per year beginning in FY 2022/23. Staff proposed that the new revenue stream be used to pay the annual \$83,853 difference in debt service, which would hopefully allow the City to complete the EPA remediation plan in late 2022 or early 2023. With the acceptance of the two loans, Mr. Shelton hoped to be able to contact the EPA to negotiate the deadline, extending it out long enough to complete the projects financed by the two new loans.

Mayor Hall said the loan package was one the City had applied for and he appreciated Mr. Shelton's work towards obtaining the approval.

Mr. Shelton said if the loan package were accepted, the City would be working with a new project engineer that used to work for the Division of Water Infrastructure. The engineer explained to Mr. Shelton that the City could apply for principal forgiveness in the next round of funding, which was scheduled to take place in the fall and would be separate from the two loans. There was a chance the City might be granted principal forgiveness that could be used to go against the loans.

Council Member Hunnicutt asked Mr. Mendenhall to confirm that the City had \$7 million of obligation pursuant to the Administrative Order that it did not have the funds for, so the City needed to borrow money through Mr. Shelton's recommendation and good work. He questioned if that was what the motion needed to be as he was concerned with making any sort of obligation in regards to how money coming from Purina would be spent.

Mr. Mendenhall said the motion could be as simple as accepting ASADRA and SRF funding awards, leaving it very generic.

Council Member Hunnicutt said he appreciated Mr. Shelton's work and layout as to how the debt could be paid. However, he did not want to encumber money that the City had not yet received as it related to the motion.

Mr. Mendenhall agreed.

Ms. Gilley said there was a resolution that needed to be included in the motion because it would have to be sent to the state.

Mr. Shelton said the resolution was the actual acceptance of the loans.

Mayor Hall asked if that could be made in one motion.

Ms. Gilley said a motion could be made to approve the resolution.

Council Member Hunnicutt made a motion to proceed with the two loans and approve a resolution accepting ASADRA and SRF funding awards for the Junction Pump Station rehab and Smith Siphon EPA projects. Council Member Hampton seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EDEN

- WHEREAS, the North Carolina Clean Water Revolving Loan and Grant Act of 1987 has authorized the making of loans and grants to aid eligible units of government in financing the cost of construction of wastewater treatment works, wastewater collection systems, and water supply systems, water conservation projects, and
- WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources has offered a State Loan and Grant from the Water Infrastructure Fund in the amount of \$7,158,982 for the construction of wastewater treatment works and wastewater collection system rehabilitation (DWI Project No. CS370458-08), and
- WHEREAS, the City of Eden intends to construct said project in accordance with the approved plans and specifications,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EDEN:

That City of Eden does hereby accept the State Loans offer of \$7,158,982.

That the City of Eden does hereby give assurance to the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources that all items specified in the loan and grant offer, Section II - Assurances will be adhered to.

That Jon Mendenhall, City Manager, and successors so titled, is hereby authorized and directed to furnish such information as the appropriate State agency may request in connection with such application or the project; to make the assurances as contained above; and to execute such other documents as may be required in connection with the application.

That City of Eden has substantially complied or will substantially comply with all Federal, State and local laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances applicable to the project and to Federal and State grants and loans pertaining thereto,

Adopted this the March 16, 2021, at Eden, North Carolina.
CITY OF EDEN
BY: Neville Hall, Mayor
ATTEST: Deanna Hunt, City Clerk

Mr. Shelton said the City had engaged a senior environmental biologist with Dewberry to take care of obtaining the necessary permits for the repairs at Matrimony Creek. He felt the City would secure what was needed to get started on the repairs on or before May 1.

REPORTS FROM STAFF:

- a. City Manager's Report

Mayor Hall called on Mr. Mendenhall.

Mr. Mendenhall said staff was moving through the budget process with the intent to present Council with a budget in April. There were some shortfalls that would require some reductions from what was presented at the budget retreat but he was pleased to report things were making progress. He stated that Mr. Shelton's hard work on the utility side of the budget with the funding awards obtained from SRF and ASADRA was a component to that. He also wanted to highlight for the public that a very important milestone would occur in the upcoming fiscal year with the final projects of the EPA Administrative Order. He thanked Council for their dedication and diligence and Mr. Shelton and staff for their hard work on the projects. The new budget would reflect such as there would be a lot of payback required for the loans.

Mayor Hall thanked Mr. Mendenhall for his report and said he had extra copies of the City Manager's report available.

City Manager's Report
March 2021
City Manager Jon Mendenhall

ADMINISTRATION

Eden Youth Council

The City is accepting applications for the 2021-22 City of Eden Youth Council through April 30. Membership is open to individuals who live in the Morehead High School Attendance Zone (MHS, college, homeschool, or private school students) and are between the ages of 14 and 20.

This experience provides our youth with:

- Service opportunities
- Development of leadership and professional skills
- Networking amongst civic leaders
- Coordinating opportunities for Eden youth
- Great experience to list on resumes and college applications

Applications are available online on the City's website.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Commercial

Former Wachovia Bank building on Washington Street

This building, located at the corner of Washington and Hamilton Streets, has been purchased. A new retail store will be announced soon.

Dollar General—Corner of Harrington Hwy and Hwy 135

This newest Dollar General store opened in February. It will replace the store located in the former Winn Dixie Shopping Center on Hwy 770. For many years, people, understandably, have missed the grocery store in west Eden. The condition of the former Winn Dixie, low sales volume of that store when it was operating (1/3 of the weekly sales of the Meadow Greens Winn Dixie Marketplace) and a declining number of independent supermarkets have prevented this space from being backfilled with another grocer.

The new Dollar General has dairy, frozen foods, produce, bakery and grocery items. While not completely fulfilling the consumer needs for a grocery store, it does provide many essential items for those Eden residents.

Industry

Karastan Rug Mill

Karastan will close in July after more than 90 years in operation. In 2003, Karastan had employed more than 600 people, but in the ensuing years, changing consumer tastes dramatically reduced demand for traditional rugs and lowered employment. In 2015, Karastan added aviation carpet to the Eden facility with N.C. Senator Phil Berger being largely responsible for the plant remaining open and expanding. Experts claim that it took two years for the aviation industry to recover after the 9-11 terrorist attacks. The post-COVID-19 aviation industry recovery could take years. Businesses have learned to hold meetings via platforms, such as Zoom, and will certainly want to take advantage of the cost savings involved with digital communication. Therefore, expensive business aviation travel may not be considered as essential as before the pandemic. All Karastan operations will be consolidated into other Mohawk Industry plants.

The City of Eden elected officials and staff extend their condolences to the 100+ employees who will lose their jobs, but we are thankful that more than 1,200 jobs have been added in Eden and Rockingham County since mid-2019. More employment opportunities are available now than we have seen in decades and the City and County Economic Development Departments are working with Karastan management to provide information on job opportunities.

We thank the many dedicated Karastan employees who worked diligently for almost a century to manufacture the finest carpets available in the world. This Eden institution will indeed be missed.

Nestle Purina

The Plant Manufacturing Excellence Manager position remains available for the Eden plant. Visit www.nestlepurina.com to apply. More positions will be added as the plant evolves into a world-class pet manufacturing facility.

Main Street Update

The Blacksheep Quilting Boutique: Eden Chamber of Commerce March Member of the Month

The Blacksheep Quilting Boutique shop is located in the heart of Uptown Eden at 651 Washington Street. It can't be missed with its bright, cheery Tiffany-blue colored brick and eye-catching sheep logo. Originally built in 1940 as a jewelry store, the 13-foot-high ceilings are perfect for displaying the quilt samples and the old vault is still in use for

displaying fabric and sewing notions. The proprietors, Kevin and Paula Thompson, have added other vintage touches, such as an oversized 1940s chandelier and antique furniture used for displaying items, all centered around a huge refurbished farm table that serves as their cutting table. Customers from as far away as Roanoke, Va., are patronizing this unique shop. Visit their website at <https://blacksheepboutiquequiltco.com/> or call 336-944-5245 for more information.

WGHP-Fox-8

On March 8, WGHP-Fox-8 Reporter Charles Ewing came to Eden to do a story on Eden downtown revitalization efforts, specifically the Central Hotel renovation. The report aired later that week.

Entrepreneurship

Your Idea, Your Business, Your Future Begins Now class

Rockingham County Small Business Manager Adam Mark is holding an on-site or Zoom class to help small business owners think like an entrepreneur. The class will draw from eight core concepts to enable participants to learn the first-hand experience of real-world entrepreneurs who share their knowledge and experience throughout the course. Participants will learn to identify and evaluate opportunities that others overlook while transforming a simple idea into a sustainable success, embracing the entrepreneurial mindset as a life skill.

The class will take place on Tuesday, March 23 and extend for five weeks until April 20 at 425 NC Hwy 65 from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. or via Zoom. Registration deadline is March 17. Call Mark at 336-342-8134 for more information.

Other

N.C. State Revenue

The state's economists from the Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) and the General Assembly's Fiscal Research Division released the 2021 Consensus General Fund Revenue Forecast. It projects that N.C. will have *17.6 percent more* revenue this year than was projected last year, with the FY 2020-21 revenues exceeding the May 2020 consensus forecast by \$4.1 billion. The consensus forecast anticipates a total of \$55.8 billion for the next biennium, which would include \$27.4 billion for FY 2021-22 and \$28.5 billion in FY 2022-23.

ENGINEERING

FY 2020-21 Street Resurfacing Contract, No. 2

A request to award this contract will go to the Eden City Council for approval on March 16. If approved, construction could start as early as April.

NCDOT Road Resurfacing – Kings Highway

The N.C. Department of Transportation has Kings Highway from Fagg Drive to Boone Road rescheduled to be resurfaced in the spring. APAC-Atlantic, Inc. will be the primary contractor. This work is scheduled to be completed during daytime hours, so traffic delays should be expected.

NCDOT Road Resurfacing – Washington Street

The N.C. Department of Transportation will soon be accepting bids for the resurfacing of Washington Street from Bridge Street to Hamilton Street. According to NCDOT District Engineer Jason Julian, this work is scheduled to be completed at night with a completion date of June 30.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

The City of Eden has a code red message alert system to inform citizens of holiday closings, trash collection schedule changes, weather alerts, missing people and road closures due to construction. If you would like to receive these alerts, please call Georgette at 336-623-2110 ext. 3030. She will be glad to add your number to the list. This is a free service to all City residents.

PARKS AND RECREATION

COVID-19 Updates

All Parks and Recreation facilities are open in a limited capacity due to Governor Roy Cooper's restrictions regarding COVID-19. Please note, at all open indoor facilities, staff will have participants sign in, answer questions regarding symptoms of COVID-19 and pass a temperature check before they are allowed into the facility. Staff will also sanitize the facility before, during and at the end of each evening.

Baseball & Softball Programs

Staff is now registering for youth boys and girls baseball and softball programs, as well as the adult softball program. Practices are as follows:

Co-ed Peanut Baseball (ages 4 - 6) will begin practicing on Tuesday, March 30 at 4:30 p.m.

Dixie Youth Coach Pitch (ages 7 - 8) will begin practicing on Monday, March 22 at 4:30 p.m.

Dixie Youth Minors (ages 9 - 10) will begin practicing on Tuesday, March 16 at 4:30 p.m.

Dixie Youth Ozone (ages 11 - 12) will begin practicing on Tuesday, March 16 at 4:30 p.m.

Pony Baseball (ages 13 - 14) will begin practicing on Friday, April 9 at 4:30 p.m.

Girls Softball (ages 7 - 8, 9 - 10, 11 - 12 and 13 - 15) will begin practicing on Monday, March 22 at 4:30 p.m.

All of the above practices will be held at Freedom Park.

Bridge Street & Mill Avenue Recreation Centers

These two facilities will be open Monday through Friday from 2 p.m. until 7 p.m. There will be a maximum of 25 participants allowed at any given time.

During the past month there were approximately 320 visits at Bridge Street and 900 visits by residents at Mill Avenue that participated in the following activities: exercise classes, basketball (Around the World), basketball (Horse), pickleball, walking track, playground and weight lifting. The after-school program continues at the recreation centers with a maximum of 25 people.

Citywide Playgrounds

All playgrounds are open.

Eden City Hall

City Hall is now open to individuals needing to conduct business within the Finance Department. In order to comply with social distancing guidelines, we ask that you wear a mask and remain six feet apart from others as there will be markings in the lobby appropriately spaced.

Staff from other departments within City Hall can meet with individuals in the lobby or in the front Conference Room if needed.

Facility Rentals

There will continue to be no facility rentals due to the limited number of individuals allowed in a facility only being 25.

Freedom Park

The park will continue to operate by maintaining social distancing during the use of the park by citizens. This includes the walking track, basketball courts, skateboard park, nature trail and dog park. There will continue to be no shelter rentals at this time.

The 2021 Freedom Park schedule of events has been completed. There will be weekend tournaments scheduled at Freedom Park ballfields running through December 6. Included in the schedule of events is a N.C. Dixie Youth Baseball State Tournament from July 16-22.

Freedom Park and all other greenways and trails are closed each day from dusk until dawn unless there is an event planned. The gates at Freedom Park will be locked accordingly.

Freedom Park Nature Trail

Council Member Phil Hunnicutt talked with the N.C. Forest Service about grants and was awarded a Learning Tree grant at the Freedom Park Trail. The application will be a self-guided tour through the wooded area and will include "kiosks" identifying each tree at each learning station.

Garden of Eden Center

This facility is operating with a limited capacity of 25 participants indoors and 50 outdoors at any given time and will be open to the public Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.

February was a busy month at the Garden of Eden Senior Center with over 500 visits. They began offering tax assistance and thanks to a wonderful group of VITA volunteers, they were able to complete 235 tax returns for people, free of charge. The drop-off service will continue to be offered until April.

Minutes of the March 16, 2021 meeting of the City Council, City of Eden:

Currently, staff is offering paint classes, exercise classes, knit and crochet, craft classes, corn hole, Mahjongg, BINGO, Friends Club, pickle ball, technology help and legal aid.

They have also held many workshops for seniors, such as Food Lion and Walmart instruction on how to order groceries online. The Five Languages of Love workshop was held for people in person and virtually.

Staff also held an advocacy event at the center on February 4. It was a drive-thru event where staff offered prizes and had participants fill out Valentine's cards to send to our legislators to let them know how much the center meant to them, thanking them for their support and asking for continued support. Staff also sent Valentine's cards to the center's participants and sponsors letting them know how important they are and that staff was there for them during these hard times.

Senior Games registration has begun and will end on March 19. The games will begin on April 13 and will run through May 14, ending with an outdoor celebration with boxed lunches at Freedom Park. Awards for participants will be given out at this event.

Kickball Program

Staff is beginning a new program in April. They hope to start an Adult/Child Kickball program. Practices will begin in late March with games scheduled in April. Children ages 9 - 15 will be allowed to play, as well as their parent, grandparent or guardian. Participants may come to a practice and be placed on a team or an individual can create their own team.

RV Pad

The RV Pad is open for business due to numerous calls received over the last few weeks looking for sites to camp.

PLANNING & INSPECTIONS

Boards and Commissions

The Planning Board met as the steering committee for the Pedestrian Plan project. This was the kick-off meeting for the group with the consultants. Discussion topics included existing structures and identifying areas where sidewalks and trails were needed.

Comprehensive Plan

At the February City Council meeting the City Council authorized the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Comprehensive Plan. The submissions were due on March 4 and the recommendation for the contract will be presented at the March City Council meeting. Staff expects to begin the plan in April.

COVID-19 CDBG Assistance to Low and Moderate Income Citizens Grant

Staff received notice of the grant agreement and package being sent from the Housing Finance Agency. There has been no release of funds thus far.

Draper CDBG

The environmental review was completed and its record was posted on the City's website, advertised in the Rockingham Now newspaper and is available for review at City Hall. The comment period for the environmental review record has ended and the report has been sent to the N.C. Department of Commerce with a 'Request for Release of Funds' for the grant.

General

Department staff has continued picking up "snipe" signs or signs in the right-of-way.

GIS

ArcGIS updated its ArcGIS Pro program, changing the method that staff was using to develop the solid waste routes. Training on the changes was conducted on March 1.

Maps have been designed and provided to numerous staff members during the past month for projects.

Historic Landmark Request

The City received a request for a local landmark designation for the John B. Ray/Central Hotel building. Staff is currently working on the request.

Nantucket Mill Project

At the present time, the City is awaiting an answer from the N.C. Housing Finance Agency. City staff is continuing to pursue grant funds for the project.

Ongoing Projects for Inspections:

The Purina renovation project is well underway. They are currently in the footing stage for support of the new roof elevation. Plan review continues as new documents are released.

The Ray Commons project (formerly the Central Hotel) continues to progress. Final inspections on the third floor are expected this month.

Construction has begun on the two story preschool addition at Osborne Baptist Church with the sanctuary addition to follow.

The new Reynold's Brewery is in the trim-out stage. However, the opening date is still unknown at this time.

Team Projects

A group of department heads has been working on a project concerning property owned by the City and the County at the end of New Street. The first issue was creating an access road to the former sewer plant, which is now a pump station that is owned by the City. It is located behind the former Decorative Bedding/MGM plant, which is now Gildan. The second issue was the potential for the creation of a mountain bike trail.

The core team and Interim Director of Parks and Recreation Terry Vernon have been working on a potential community/senior center to be included in the redevelopment of Spray Cotton Mills.

Staff has also been working on policies related to economic development in the traditional downtown (MSD) areas.

POLICE

All sworn Eden police officers will attend driver training throughout the month of March, which will consist of both day and night training conducted by NCLE certified driving instructor Sgt. Andy Johnson. Deputy Chief John Edwards will be present during each training day to act as a safety officer and assist Sgt. Johnson.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

The 2020 Drinking Water Quality Report is Now Available

The City of Eden Water Filtration Plant has released their 2020 Water Quality Report, detailing specific information pertaining to the quality of drinking water that it provides to its customers. As part of a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency mandate, water utilities across the country produce annual reports that are designed to educate and inform consumers. This report is an opportunity for the public to understand what is involved with making the water safe.

The report is available on the City of Eden website at:

<https://www.edennc.us/DocumentCenter/View/12563/2020-Water-Quality-Report>

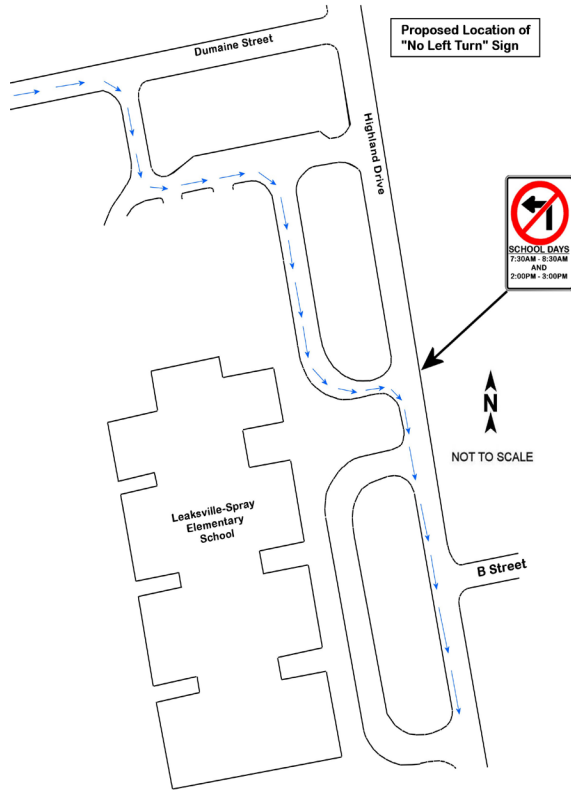
If you would like a printed copy of the report, it is available in the Finance Department at City Hall.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. Approval and adoption of the (1) January 20, 2021 Budget Retreat and (2) February 16, 2021 Regular Meeting minutes.
- b. Approval to award the FY 2020-21 Street Resurfacing Contract, No. 2.

Director of Transportation Engineering Tammy Amos provided a copy of a street list and bid tabulation for the FY 2020/21 Street Resurfacing Contract, No. 2. Out of five bids received, Waugh Asphalt, Inc. was the lowest bidder with a bid amount of \$205,988.83. The date of availability for the contract was April 5 with a substantial completion

Sergeant Jim Robertson wrote in a memo that a traffic study was conducted at Leaksville-Spray Elementary School (LSE) due to traffic leaving the school having the option to turn left onto Highland Drive creating three issues: (1) crossing a lane of traffic created a heightened risk; (2) waiting for two lanes of traffic to be clear was inherently longer than waiting for just one lane of traffic to be clear; and (3) traffic was being routed back towards narrow residential streets/neighborhoods. It was the recommendation of the Police Department to create a no left turn for traffic exiting Leaksville-Spray Elementary School at the car exit during school days for the hours of 7:30-8:30 a.m. and 2-3 p.m.



AN ORDINANCE DECLARING NO LEFT TURN ONTO HIGHLAND DRIVE

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL of the City of Eden, North Carolina, pursuant to authority granted by N.C.G.S. § 160A-300 that:

Section 1 - The City Council of the City of Eden has determined that in order to ensure pedestrian and motor vehicle traffic safety during the hours of peak school traffic exit, a no left turn shall be established at the car exit for traffic exiting the Leaksville-Spray Elementary School and entering Highland Drive.

Section 2 - It shall be an infraction to make a left hand turn onto Highland Drive from the car exit at Leaksville-Spray Elementary School during the hours of 7:30 am to 8:30 am and 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm.

Section 3 - Signs shall be placed, erected or installed at the intersection of the car exit at Leaksville-Spray Elementary School and Highland Drive giving notice of the no left turn during the aforementioned school hours.

Section 4 - The OFFICIAL TRAFFIC MAP of the City of Eden is hereby amended to conform with this Ordinance.

Section 5 - All ordinances in conflict with this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

APPROVED, ADOPTED AND EFECTIVE, this 16th day of March, 2021.

CITY OF EDEN

BY: Neville Hall, Mayor

ATTEST: Deanna Hunt, City Clerk

d. Approval of Budget Amendment #8.

Assistant Director of Finance Amy Winn wrote in a memo that \$30,000 was requested for current downtown projects in order to encourage development as the Economic Development Department’s general fund allocation had been depleted for FY 2020/21. The funds were originally requested from the Strategic Planning Commission but Mr. Mendenhall preferred for the funding to come from the contingency allocation in the current fiscal year’s budget.

	Account #	From	To	Amount
General Fund Expenditures				
GF Contingency	10-9990-99100	\$ 400,000.00	\$ 370,000.00	\$ (30,000.00)
Façade Grants	10-4135-77001	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 30,000.00
				<u>\$ -</u>

Appropriates contingency funds for Façade and Building Rehabilitation grants.

Adopted and effective this 16th day of March 16th.

Attest:

Deanna Hunt, City Clerk

Neville Hall, Mayor

e. Approval of a Request for Qualifications for water treatment and wastewater treatment plants’ engineering.

Mr. Shelton wrote in a memo that the water and wastewater plants required engineering consultants to handle large and small projects on the spur of the moment on occasion. Staff desired to issue a RFQ in order to line up the services of an engineering firm that could be available to consult on problems, wants, requirements, design solutions for issues and administer a project to completion.

f. Approval to award the FY 2020-21 Auditing Contract to Rouse, Rouse, Rouse & Gardner, LLP.

Ms. McMichael wrote in a memo that she was seeking approval for the FY 2020/21 audit contract. The contract amount was \$55,900. If City personnel completed the items listed in the contract, the amount would be reduced to \$49,900, which would be a five percent increase when compared to the \$47,485 that was paid last year. The Rouses’ and their staff have been conducting the City’s audit for 40 years. Their love and compassion for the City of Eden showed in their willingness to assist in any way they could to make sure the City’s Finance Department operated in the most efficient and effective way of providing accurate financial information. They had always been very faithful and dedicated to the City. Staff called on them for assistance with day-to-day questions that came up or for special projects. They never billed the City for anything extra. Ms. McMichael stated it was very nice to know that the City had someone that could be called anytime. If the firm did not have the answer immediately, they never referred the City to someone else; rather, they always took the time to make telephone calls on the City’s behalf. They looked after the City’s best interest in making sure that the City received any needed answers. They kept the City updated on Governmental Accounting Standards Board and Internal Revenue updates. They also kept the City updated on any classes/seminars they felt would be beneficial to the finance staff. Based on their experience and dedication, along with the City’s longtime desire to do business locally, Ms. McMichael could not make a better recommendation than to award the FY 2020/21 audit contract to Rouse, Rouse, Rouse & Gardner.

A copy of this contract is on file in the Clerk’s Office.

g. Approval to award installment financing to BB&T for police vehicles, a dump truck and financial software.

Ms. Winn wrote in a memo that City Council had previously approved the purchase of a dump truck for the Streets Department, financial software for the Finance Department and eight vehicles for the Police Department. It was set up in the budget for all of the items to be financed. On February 24, Ms. Winn requested bids from the local banks for the financing and received the following quotes: (1) BB&T: 1.27%; (2) First National Bank: 1.61%; (3) FNB Commercial Leasing: 2.60%, (4) Government Capital: 2.15%; and (5) United Financial (Home Trust): 1.34%. The total cost of the 2021 dump truck was \$111,371.11. The total cost of the financial management software was \$87,275.

The total cost for the eight police vehicles was \$350,182.17. Ms. Winn respectfully requested that Council approve BB&T as the successful bid for financing.

- h. Approval to amend the Employee Rights Paid Sick Leave and Expanded Family and Medical Leave Under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act Policy.

Ms. McMichael wrote in an email that at the January City Council meeting, Council approved to extend the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act, part of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act which was passed in March as the federal government's first response to the COVID-19 crisis, to June 30, 2021. The Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act provided 80 hours of pay for absences related to COVID-19. The 80 hours was what most full-time employees worked in a two-week period. However, it did not account for full-time employees who worked shift work, such as the Fire Department and the Police Department. She requested Council approve to amend the policy to add a section to accommodate shift workers under the Duration/Compensation section in order to establish equivalency for a City employee who worked shifts during a two-week period who were absent due to COVID-19. It would also address any shift worker who had been negatively impacted on shift work shall have 30 days from the date of adoption of the amended policy to petition Human Resources for relief.

- i. Approval to declare items surplus: wastewater pumps and mag meter.

This item was removed from the Consent Agenda.

- j. Approval of a comprehensive plan Request for Qualifications recommendation.

This item was moved to New Business as Item 10(c).

- k. Approval to adopt revised Economic Development Policy ED-1 for water connection fee waivers.

This item was moved to New Business as Item 10(d).

- l. Approval to adopt Economic Development Policy ED-2 for permit fee waiving in municipal service districts.

This item was moved to New Business as Item 10(e).

- m. Approval for Strategic Planning Commission funding for the Spray Mural Project.

This item was moved to New Business as Item 10(f).

- n. Approval to purchase two fire apparatuses to replace aged and irreparable surplus Ladder 1 and Engine 6.

This item was moved to New Business as Item 10(g).

- o. Approval to amend the Council Review of Manager, Attorney and Clerk Policies (Council-2).

Mr. Mendenhall wrote in a memo that in November of 2019 City Council enacted policies that would ensure the City Manager, City Clerk and City Attorney would receive annual reviews by the City Council. There were separate policies for each employee and each were written to require the annual reviews to take place in separate months, which would require three separate closed session meetings. As a matter of convenience, Mr. Mendenhall proposed to conduct the reviews in a single meeting in March of each year or as soon as possible after March. It would provide Council with a little more flexibility in the reviews without relieving them of the obligation to conduct them.



COUNCIL ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL		Subject: Annual Review of the City Manager, City Clerk and City Attorney	
Number:	Revision:	Effective Date:	Page:
Council 2.0	1	March 16, 2021	1
Supersedes: November 19, 2019		Neville Hall, Mayor	

4.1 Purpose.

The purpose of this policy is to establish an annual review of the previous year's performance and consider any change in the employees' salary or benefits for the following employees: City Manager, City Clerk and City Attorney. This annual review will provide an opportunity for all members of Council to participate in the oversight of these employees.

Council 4.2 Guidelines.

The Annual Review for each employee will be conducted in March of each year, or as soon thereafter as possible, in closed session. The Mayor will provide each member of the Council an evaluation form for each employee prior to the closed session meeting, which Council Members will complete and return to the Mayor prior to the meeting. The Mayor will consolidate the individual evaluation forms and return the consolidated forms to Council for review at the meeting. The Mayor will conduct the closed session meeting for the Council Members to review the evaluation and discuss any changes to the evaluation, discuss any changes in the coming year's salary for the employees, and discuss any changes the Council would like to see in the employees' performance or his/her participation in the City's operation. When the Council's deliberation is complete, the employees will be advised of the evaluation, changes in compensation, or changes Council would like to see in his/her performance or participation in the City's operation.

- p. Approval for Facilities and Grounds to purchase a zero-turn mower.

Mr. Mendenhall and Interim Parks and Recreation Director Terry Vernon wrote in a memo that the Facilities and Grounds Department was seeking approval to purchase a zero-turn mower that was budgeted in the current fiscal year before mowing season began in the upcoming weeks. The cost of the Toro mower and vacuum bagger would total around \$15,000 from Eden Lawnmower. The division was responsible for mowing all city park areas, City Hall, all welcome signs coming into Eden, the two recreation centers, the Garden of Eden Senior Center, the Boone Road Community Center, the river landings, the Smith River Greenway, the Matrimony Creek Nature Trail, all water towers and pump stations, the homeless shelter and any abatements and nuisances from the Planning and Inspections Department.

A motion was made by Council Member Carter to approve the Consent Agenda. Council Member Ellis seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Council Member Carter announced his grandson, Carter Tate Underwood, celebrated his first birthday at the first of the month.

Council Member Ellis said he was pleased to hear the schools were opening back up and that students may attend in-person.

Ms. Adams stated that on Tuesday, March 23 at 1 p.m., a parade of City and County officials, staff and anyone wanting to participate would drive by Paul Prewitt's home, located at 207 Grant Street, to help celebrate his 101 birthday. Mr. Prewitt was a WWII veteran in remarkably good health. She welcomed anyone wanting to participate to make signs or balloons to join in. There would be a sign in his yard and he would be sitting under a tent waiting for everyone to come by.

Mayor Hall thanked Ms. Adams for organizing the event.

CLOSED SESSION:

- a. Closed Session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(6) personnel.

A motion was made by Council Member Hampton to go into closed session. Council Member Moore seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Council Member Moore to return to open session. Council Member Hampton seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of the motion. The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

As there was no further business to discuss, a motion was made by unanimous consent to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Deanna Hunt
City Clerk

ATTEST:

Neville Hall
Mayor